

About the Guide

This Winslow Press Teacher Guide has been designed to be of use to the classroom teacher by offering enrichment activities and discussion materials to complement *The Feet in the Gym*. These activities can help students to better understand and enjoy the story as well as assist teachers in implementing strategies and experiences that support their district's learning standards for language arts.

The Guide presents a story synopsis and outlines pre-reading activities. It also presents some concepts related to the story and includes: a brief discussion of related curriculum areas; a list of vocabulary words; class discussion questions; and independent study ideas related to *The feet in the Gym*. The activities are designed to cover a range of language arts skills development that meets the needs of multiple learning styles. The final part of the Guide lists additional resources (books, museums, reference materials, related Internet Web sites) for both teachers and students.

The interdisciplinary activities were developed to support the New York State Learning Standards for English Language Arts. The Standards can be downloaded from the New York State Education Department's Web site at <http://www.nysed.gov/rscs/stds/contents.html>. If you have questions about specific standards applied to these activities, please call Winslow Press at 800-617-3947.

We hope this Teacher Guide will be a useful and positive part of your teaching experience!

Sincerely,

Diane F. Kessenich
Chief Executive Officer and
Publisher

Introduction

The Feet in the Gym depicts a day in the life of an elementary-school custodian. We see Bob attempt to keep the gymnasium floor spotless as all kinds of children—doing all kinds of things!—track their messy footprints all over it. This rhyming story offers a look at a busy school and at a busy man who takes pride in his work.

Critical Thinking Questions

Knowledge: Who works at your school? What jobs do they do?

Comprehension: Why is each of these jobs important?

Application: If you worked in the school, what job would you want to do?

Analysis: What kinds of things might you need to know in order to do the different jobs at your school? What kinds of equipment do you think you would need?

Synthesis: What can you do to help the people who work in your school?

Evaluation: What do you think it means to take pride in your work? How do you do the best job you can do?

Related Concepts

Themes/General Impressions

- **Consideration for others**
- **Pride in your work**
- **School life**

The Feet in the Gym offers a lighthearted look at a school custodian's day, but it can also provide a context for discussing such topics as pride in one's work, consideration for others, and the daily life of a school.

“Handy Bob” is someone who takes his work seriously and takes pride in the results. He knows that his job matters and he tries to do it well, despite the difficulties he faces. Talk with students about what it means to do a job well. What do they think this means? Discuss specific jobs—for instance, what do students think it means to be a good teacher? A good custodian? A good firefighter? A good dancer? A good president? Talk with students about the practical requirements of these jobs, as well as the kind of interests and/or talents one might need in order to do them. Each job has its own special requirements, yet the concept of “quality” is applicable to all.

It's easy to speak in platitudes about “doing one's best,” and students may already have heard these—but as they look carefully at a diverse group of occupations, the idea of “doing one's best” becomes less abstract, more relevant to their lives. It may help students to develop a more immediate sense of what it means to do good work if they can connect it to the concept that people in a community have an impact on each other's well-being.

Students can think about the “life” of Lakeside School and compare it to the life of their own school. School is a lesson in community, in how groups of people do jobs (as teachers, custodians, administrators, etc.) that are different, yet interrelated. Each job has its own importance—each

Related Concepts

person has his or her role to play within the school structure in order to make it run successfully. Being a student can itself be considered a job.

An important element of a successful community is respect and consideration for others. How do we demonstrate respect? What does it mean to be considerate? Talk about daily life in your school. How can we make life a little bit better for each other? Students can suggest different ways in which they might help each other. Talk about how they can show their appreciation for the jobs that people do.

For Discussion

- What kinds of clubs or groups are there in our school? Why are these activities important? What kinds of things do we learn from them?
- Different kinds of activities can require different kinds of shoes. Think about the different things you do—what kinds of special clothes or shoes do you wear when you do them?
- What kind of jobs do you want to do when you grow up? How will you prepare yourself to do them?

Vocabulary

Selected Vocabulary Words and Phrases

amble	grime	shimmers
brownies	grit	shuffling
cleat	gym	slide trombone
clog	handle	slime
crumby	knobs	specks
curling	lightbulbs	spy
dab	lose my wits	strum
delay	mass	suds
douse	planks	swab
figure eights	plop	swiftly
fling	polka dots	swirling
footprints	pride	Swiss cheese
freeze with	rainbow	tattered
fright	rinsing	troupe
galore	sandal	
glints	scrape	

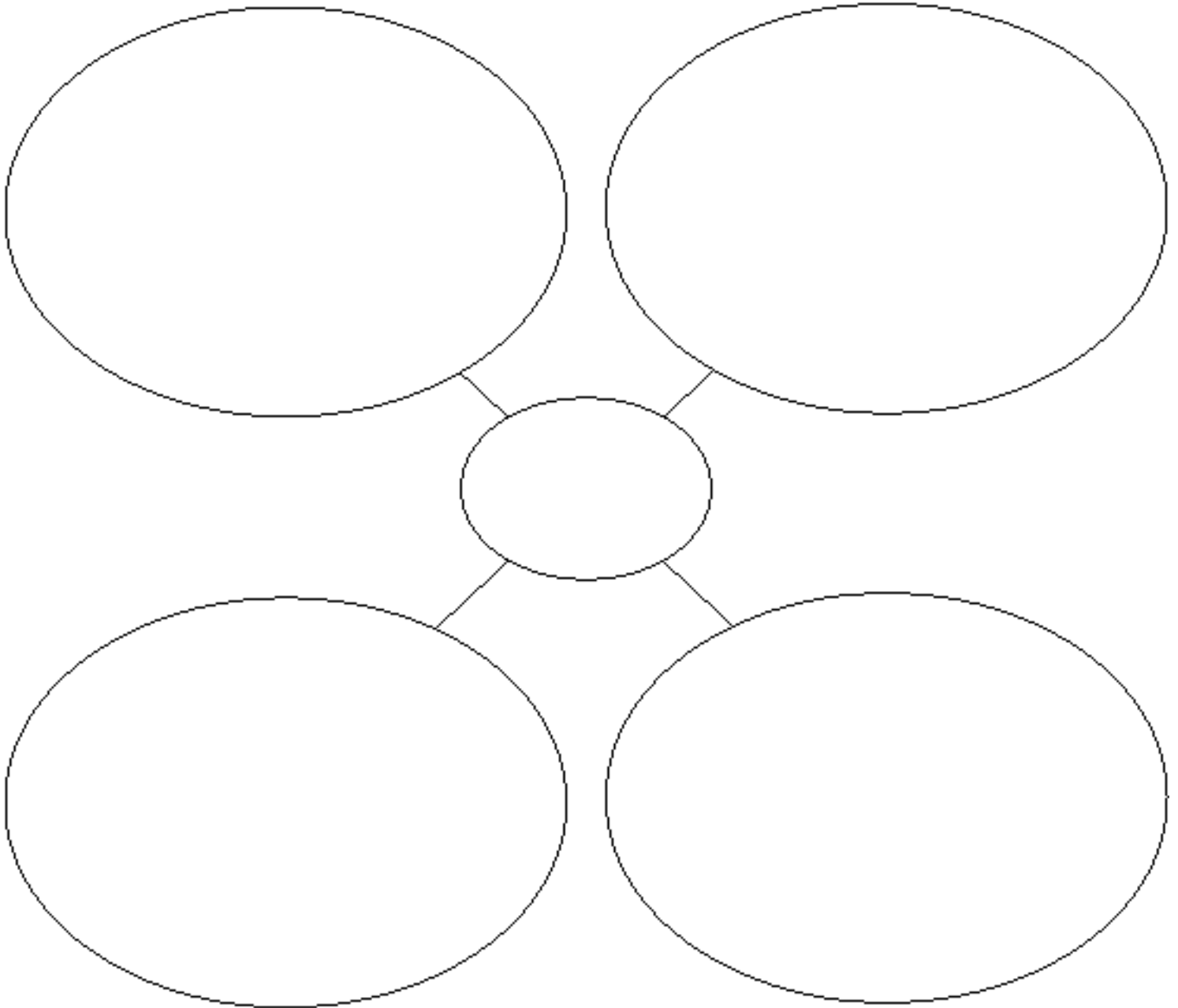
Independent Learning

To help facilitate independent study, we have provided a starting list of ideas as well as Special Project Planning Sheets to help children get started. Some areas of interest may include the following:

Name: _____

My Special Project Learning Web

Group related topics together using the Learning Web below.



Name: _____

My Special Project Planning Sheet

Some things I want to know about are:

My plan for finding facts/sources of information:

List of important facts:

Independent Learning

Some Independent Learning topics

Shoes

Careers

Collect shoes for those in need

Tools used by custodian

Dance/Choreography

Footprints

The things we do with our feet

Interdisciplinary Activities

1. The Feet in Your School

- a) Talk to students about how things come in groups. Have students pair up—how many feet are there in a “pair?” How many pairs of feet are there in a group of two students? How many pairs of feet are there in the class? (And how many individual feet?) If there are “X” number of feet and hands, how many toes and fingers are there in the classroom?
- b) Post pairs of students in different locations around the school and assign them to count the number of feet that pass during a five- or ten-minute period. Students may survey different classes: how many kids per class, and how many feet?

IRA/NCTE Standards: 4, 7

2. Fingerprint Study

As a class, do a study of fingerprints: their individuality, their usefulness as a means of identification, etc. Learn to identify some different elements of a fingerprint (loops, whorls) and discuss how each person’s fingerprints are unique. Students can be “fingerprinted” and compare their prints with their classmates’.

ELA Standards: 7, 12

3. Messy Footprints

- a) This activity should occur outside so that cleanup is simplified and students can be hosed down afterward! Fill a series of dishpans with mud, damp sand, tempera, honey, or other substances. Students take turns stepping into each pan and then putting their footprints on a giant roll of paper. Compare the look and texture of their prints depending on what they’ve stepped in, and what different patterns they’ve created.

Interdisciplinary Activities

- b) Homework: Have students collect the footprints of pets and/or family members. Bring in prints and classify them (according to type of pet, type of family member, etc.). Create a chart on a bulletin board illustrating the different classifications. Tape or tack the footprints onto it.

ELA Standards: 4, 7

4. Shoe Chart

- a) Have the class examine its shoes. Classify shoes according to type (athletic, street, etc.) and create a big graph illustrating how many of each type of shoe can be found in the classroom. Students can then make lists of the different types of shoes they own and add them to the graph.
- b) Using crayon, students can make rubbings of the soles of their shoes. Compare and contrast the different patterns you find. Do shoes intended for certain purposes have similar soles?

IRA/NCTE Standards: 4, 7

5. Foot Music

Using the sounds identified in *Feet* as a starting point (have students help to list them), create a rhythm band, with each student or pair/group of students taking responsibility for a certain sound. Students can use voices or hands or sticks to make their sounds; they might even want to take their shoes off and use their feet as rhythm instruments. Once students have “perfected” their sounds, they can trade with another group and practice new ones. Have the class, as a rhythm band, beat the rhythm of the story, inserting their special sounds in the appropriate places.

IRA/NCTE Standards: 3, 4, 12

Interdisciplinary Activities

6. Walk This Way

- a) As a class, make a list of the action words found in *Feet* and then act them out (shuffle, march, wipe, search, etc.). For younger children, it may be fun to turn each word into a variation on the Row, Row, Row your Boat song, as children “shuffle” or “march” around the room.
- b) For older students, this activity may be transformed into a game of charades, with each student (or pair) drawing a “secret” action word from the book (the teacher can write action words on slips of paper and put them into a basket or hat from which students can draw). Students act out their words for the class, in hopes that classmates will “guess my verb.”

IRA/NCTE Standards: 3, 4, 12

7. Foot Words

- a) Older students can use their list of action words from *Feet* as the basis for a writing exercise by choosing three or four and using them in a paragraph.
- b) As a class, identify some different types of words used in *Feet* and in other recently read books—onomatopoeia, comparison words, similes, metaphors, etc.—and have students choose one or two of these forms around which they can develop short writing assignments.

IRA/NCTE Standards: 3, 4, 5

8. Tribute to the Custodian

- a) Interview the school custodian(s). Find out what they like and dislike about their jobs. What are the best/worst things that have happened to them? The biggest messes they have ever had to clean up? (As a class or as a group) come up with a list of questions and invite the custodian(s) in for an interview, with the class as audience.

Interdisciplinary Activities

- b) Students can develop a tribute program for the school custodian(s). This may include the interview activity above. They will need to plan a program including songs or other performances (perhaps a speech?), plan a snack or treat for the occasion, and create an award or certificate of appreciation. Kids can “give a hand” to the custodian by tracing the outlines of their hands on paper (all together on a large sheet/banner, or individually, as cards) and decorating them. They can even do the same thing with their feet!

IRA/NCTE Standards: 3, 4, 5, 12

Extended Learning Opportunities

(Note: We strongly recommend that teachers preview materials before sharing them with students)

Books

- Agell, Charlotte. *Dancing Feet*. New York: Harcourt Brace, 1994. This fun picture book celebrates the body in rhyme and illustrates the body in motion.
- Girotti, Eugenia. *Footwear*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1997. Richly illustrated look at more than two thousand years of footwear, from the shoes of a Pharaoh to Ferragamo sandals. Children will appreciate the pictures (and adults may find the text interesting).
- Hutchins, Pat. *Rosie's Walk*. Thirtieth Anniversary Edition. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998. Rosie the chicken takes a walk, never knowing that she is being followed by a hungry fox. She takes him on a wild walking adventure.
- John, Light. *Odd Jobs*. Childs Play Intl. Ltd., 1991. Kids watch their dad as he attempts (with comic results) to do some home repairs.
- Keats, *The Snowy Day*. Picture Puffins Series. New York: Puffin Books, 1972. This classic picture book follows a boy as he walks and plays his way through the snowy city leaving angels and funny footprints in his wake.
- Nobisso, Josephine. *Hot-Cha-Cha!* Delray Beach/New York: Winslow Press, 1998. City kids enjoy a rhyming, foot-stomping adventure when they discover the key to a playground.
- Park, Barbara. *Junie B. Jones and the Stupid Smelly Bus*. Illustrated by Denise Brunkus. First Stepping Stone Books. New York: Random House, 1992. Told in the words of its six-year-old narrator, the story of Junie B.

Extended Learning Opportunities

Jones's first day in kindergarten and her attempt to avoid riding the bus home, which includes hiding in a supply closet and a call to 911!

Seuss, Dr. (Theodore Seuss Geisel). *The Foot Book*. New York: Random House, 1987. Dr. Seuss tackles the topic of feet—in full color, and with his usual inventive rhymes.

Walker, Niki and Bobbie D. Kalman. *Community Helpers From A to Z*. Crabtree Publishing, 1997. An illustrated introduction to many of the people who work in (and for) the community, including firefighters and sanitation workers. Stresses the importance of many different jobs.

Web Sites

What Do They Do?

<http://www.webquarry.com/~lgfd/>

“Learn about what people do at work and how they make our world a better place.” For kids, this site offers a list of different occupations (from actor to firefighter to lawyer paleontologist to radio announcer to speech therapist) for kids to explore—by clicking on each occupation they can find a story about the life of that person and what s/he does in a day. Teachers will need to read these to young children.

American Ballet Theatre's Online Dictionary


<http://www.abt.org/dictionary/>

Offers a list of 170 ballet terms (adagio, battement, etc.) illustrated/performed by members of ABT in QuickTime movies.


Foot and Shoe Facts! (Bata Shoe Museum)

<http://www.mtarch.com/bsmfacts.html>

For teachers, little-known (and often odd) facts about feet and shoes brought to you by Toronto's Bata Shoe Museum (see Museums, below). Many of these will fascinate stu-



dents (“The average person walks the equivalent of three-and-a-half times around the earth in a lifetime.”)



Bata Shoe Museum

327 Bloor Street W.
Toronto M5S 1W7
Ontario, Canada
(416) 979-779

Located in Toronto, this award-winning museum offers a comprehensive look at the history of footwear, including ancient Egyptian and Roman shoes, medieval boots, 18th-century French dancing pumps, and more. The museum also features an exhibit devoted exclusively to children’s shoes. Other exhibits include a look at celebrity shoes (Elvis Presley’s patent leathers, Elton John’s platforms, Princess Diana’s pumps, and more) and shoes made for special purposes (scary-looking chestnut-stomping boots from Canada, Teflon boots made by NASA, and others).

The TUSPM Shoe Museum

Temple University School of Podiatric Medicine
Temple University
Philadelphia, PA
(215) 625-5243

This small museum owns about 800 pairs of shoes, many of which are on display to visitors. The focus is on 19th and 20th-century footwear—Among the shoes in this collection are ballet slippers, the shoes of a circus giant, shoes belonging to celebrities and U.S. presidents, and a pair of iron diving boots. Visitors can also look at many other examples of shoes of different cultures (and periods) as well as those made for special purposes.