

The
Early Years Count
Literacy
Connection



**Rabbit's Snow
Dance**

As told by James and
Joseph Bruchac
Illustrated by Jeff Newman

Preschool edition

Overview of Book

Selfish Rabbit loves snow. When Rabbit wants something, he wants it NOW. Rabbit uses his knowledge of the traditional Iroquois drum dance to make it snow in summer. What could possibly go wrong?

Genre: Fable, picture book

Vocabulary

Books are a rich source of words new to children. Here are some words from *Rabbit's Snow Dance* to introduce in your classroom:

forest	Grouse
Lynx	satisfied
Otter	shelter

Each time you read the book, choose 2 or 3 words to highlight.

Use age-appropriate definitions and/or the illustrations to help children gain an understanding of each word's meaning.

Use these new words throughout the day, reminding the children, "That's a word from our story!"

**Connecting with the
HighScope Curriculum**

COR Advantage 1.5

Approaches To Learning
Item B (Solving problems with
materials), Item C
(*Reflection*)

Language, Literacy and
Communication
Item N (*Phonological
awareness*)

Creative Arts
Item Z (*Movement*)

Science and Technology
Item DD (*Natural and
physical world*)

Reading Tips

Three readings are recommended to familiarize children with the story. Each reading provides an opportunity to introduce new vocabulary words, pose open-ended questions, and engage children in activities that make the story "come alive."

Ask the children to tell you what they know about rabbits. If no one mentions the tail, ask about that. Tell the children the story is a "fable"- an old story that tries to explain why the rabbit's tail looks the way it does. Show the children the two repetitive parts of the text- the chant and "song" the rabbit says. Do them together a few times so the group is familiar. Then, each time they appear in the story, ask everyone to say it together. Ask questions about snow in summer- up to the tops of the trees! What about that?

Throughout the Routine

Refer to the book throughout the day and use new vocabulary words in meaningful ways. Active engagement with the story helps the content come alive.

Give everyone a drum and a rhythm stick and be Rabbit at **Large Group Time**. Bang the drums and do Rabbit's chant while marching around the circle. Ask children what they are wishing for.

Have children choose to move like Rabbit, Lynx, Otter or Grouse for **transitions**.

Place snow (if available) or ice cubes, sticks or small branches and forest animal figures in the Sand and Water Area at **Work Time**.

Around the Room

Highlight the book's content and build on the children's excitement in a variety of locations.

Place other fables in the **Book Area**. Include "The Lion and the Mouse" by Jerry Pinkney, "The Little Red Hen" and "Chicken Little".

Paint with ice cubes (or snow if it is available) in the **Art Area**. Have a variety of surfaces to use (wax paper, coffee filters, cardboard...) and encourage children to try different ways to mix paints and apply to their chosen surface.

Open-ended Questions

Enhance active engagement and early critical thinking skills by asking open-ended questions. These questions encourage children to explain why or how things happen, make predictions, or brainstorm possibilities rather than give one "right" answer.

Here are some questions you might ask for *Rabbit's Snow Dance*:

What do you do if you want something "right now" but can't have it?

What else do you think Rabbit could have done to get to the treetops for the tasty leaves he wanted?

For more information on how to use books and stories with children to enhance your curriculum, contact
The Family Connection:

website—
www.famconn.org

Facebook—
@famconnsjc

phone—
574-237-9740

@ Home

Since many of the children in our county will have this book at home, use it as a way to further the home-school connection. In your daily contact—in person or by text, email or other notes home—encourage families to share *Rabbit's Snow Dance* with their child. Here's a sample message you can send:

While reading this story with your child, talk about how it feels when we can't have what we want "when we want it now". Use feelings terms (frustrated, mad, disappointed, etc...) to help your child label and then to better understand these feelings. Talk about how the other animals in the story are impacted by Rabbit's selfishness. This is a great way to begin talking about how our words and actions affect others. Share appropriate examples so your child knows we all have to learn this. As you read, ask your child questions like, "What do the animals think of rabbit?" or, "What else could Rabbit do?" This is a story that can be used to start many important conversations.