

The Early Years Count Literacy Connection



At The Mountain's Base

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Preschool edition

Overview of Book

Described as a "lullaby-like poem," *At the Mountain's Base* shows how a loving Cherokee family finds strengths together to help them through their long and worrisome wait for a loved one's return. The story is based on the only Native American woman pilot in World War II.

Genre: Poetry/Historical fiction

Vocabulary

Books are a rich source of words new to children. Here are some words from *At the Mountain's Base* to introduce in your classroom:

base	savory
weaving	cozy
protecting	defending

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

*(Problem solving
with materials)*

Physical Development
and Health

Item J
(Fine-motor skills)

Creative Arts
Item X *(Art)*

Social Studies
Item FF

*(Knowledge of self and
others),*

Item HH *(History)*

Reading Tips

Read this poem slowly to best tie the pictures with the text. Whisper as you ask questions like "Why is the grandma worrying?" and, "Why does the pilot plead for peace? What does that mean to you?" On the last page ask, "What is happening here?" Allow time and several readings for the children to think about this story.

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."

At the end of each reading, display the book in the book area so children can read it on their own.

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.

Use a ball of yarn at **Greeting Time** for children to pass to peers, say hello and weave a "community web".

Have different color yarn, string pieces, popsicle sticks and tape in every child's **Small Group Time** basket for creating weaving patterns like the grandma in the story.

Fly like pilots during **Transitions** or at **Outdoor Time**.

Around the Room

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

Tape up pictures of "old fashioned" and "new/modern" items in the **Book Area** for the children to compare. Examples from the story include stove, pots and pans, cabin, and airplanes.

Add materials to the **Art Area** that encourage children to try weaving or braiding.

Place small planes in the Block Area.

Add related books to the **Book Area** like *Wemberly Worried* by Kevin Henkes and *When Lions Roar* by Chris Raschka

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 *At the Mountain's Base*:

Sometimes people use the expression, "to weave a story." What do you think that might mean? How did this story get woven together?

Where are some places you go to feel peaceful?

What do you and your family do together that brings you joy?

*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 *At The Mountain's Base* with their child. Here's a sample message you can send:

At the Mountain's Base was inspired by the true story of the only Native American woman pilot in the Air Force Service during World War II. The words and drawings show how the family left at home worries, sings, weaves and cooks together waiting for the pilot's return. Reading this story with your child opens the door to talk about family members or friends who are serving our country now or served in the past, to discuss how your family works through difficult times together, or to talk about things that might be worrying to your child. Together, gather three colors of yarn to braid or twist together like the grandma in the story. It's a good way to twist some worries away.