

MISS SMITH'S
INCREDIBLE STORYBOOK
K-3

Written and Illustrated by
Michael Garland

Published by Dutton Children's Books

Story Summary

Zack is sure second grade will be boring, but that is before he meets his most interesting new teacher. Miss Smith has a knack for telling tales---when she reads to the class from her incredible book, the stories seem to literally spring to life. After each tale ends, the fantastic characters slip back into Miss Smith's mysterious book, leaving Zack and his classmates wide-eyed with wonder. One day Miss Smith is late for school and the principal takes over story time. See what happens when many books come to life at once and what it takes to restore calmness in the class.

Objectives

1. The children will learn to distinguish between reality and fantasy in this story.
2. The children will develop verbal expressive and descriptive language skills through analyzing the author's illustrations.
3. The children will develop confidence in creative dramatic presentation.

Before viewing the video

Tell the children that they will be viewing a video of Miss Smith's Incredible Storybook. While they view the video they should think about all of the ways in which Miss Smith is different from other teachers they know. Discuss the meaning of the word "incredible" and how it might apply to this story. While viewing the illustrations, they will see many different expressions on the children's faces. Ask them to think about the emotions and feelings associated with these expressions. What do you think this class would be like if your favorite storybook characters came to life and were here? Watch this video and see what happens in Zack's class.

Questions to ask after viewing the video

1. Why did Zack think Miss Smith was different from his other teachers as soon as he met her?
2. What surprise did the class get when Miss Smith sat at her desk and started to read from her book?
3. What happened when Miss Smith finished reading?
4. What happened when the principal read to the students?
5. Why did the characters remain in the classroom when the principal read the story?
6. Instead of running for help, what should Principal Rittenrotten have done?
7. What happened when Sue Ann started reading another story?
8. Why did the classroom continue to get so crowded?
9. Zack made a good suggestion but no one was listening. If the children had listened to him, what would have happened?
10. Why was there a tug-of-war between the children and the characters?
11. How did Miss Smith solve the problem?

Activities

1. Develop two lists with the children. Which parts of this storybook could happen in school and which could not? Distinguish between fantasy and reality.
2. Initiate a discussion about all of the different storybook characters in this book that come to life in the classroom. Name the books Miss Smith must have been reading to the class. Have the children select their favorite character and tell what they would say to this character in their classroom.
3. Ask the children to look carefully at all of the expressions on the faces of the children, the teacher and the principal throughout the book. Develop a list of descriptive words that express the varied emotions they feel.
4. Develop a dramatic interpretation of part of the story. Have one child play the part of Miss Smith reading a storybook to the class. Select others to portray the characters from the book coming to life. Rehearse a brief dialog between the characters and the children in the classroom.