

THE MITTEN

K-3

Adapted and Illustrated

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Story Summary

When Nicki drops his white mitten in the snow, he goes on without realizing it is missing. One by one, woodland animals find it and crawl in; first, a curious mole, then a rabbit, a badger and others, each one larger than the last. Even a great big bear squeezes into the mitten. All the while, Nicki does not realize what an adventure his mitten is having. You will see how the mitten is finally returned to Nicki.

Objectives

1. The children will develop an understanding of a different culture.
2. The children will compare similarities between Nicki's culture and their own.
3. The children will develop their own adventure about a mitten.
4. The children will learn to distinguish fact from fantasy.

Before viewing the video

Tell the children that they are going to see a video of a Ukrainian folktale. They can think about which parts of the story could be true and which parts might have been changed as this story was retold many times. As they view the video they should look carefully because each illustration is filled with many things to see. They will learn some things about the part of the world from which this story comes. If a map is available, point out the Ukraine to the class.

Questions to ask after viewing the video

1. Nicki's grandmother, Baba, did not want to knit white mittens at first. Why not?
2. What happened to one of Nicki's mittens soon after he left the house?
3. Why were all of the animals so happy to find the mitten?
4. Why did the mole and the rabbit make room for the big hedgehog?
5. Why did the mole, the rabbit and the hedgehog make room for the owl?
6. Why did the mole, the rabbit, the hedgehog and the owl make room for the badger?
7. When all of these animals saw the fox, why did they decide to let him in?
8. Why did all of the animals decide to let the bear in, even though they were so crowded?
9. How did the last animal to come along squeeze in?
10. What happened that finally got all of the animals out of the mitten?
11. What do you think gave Nicki's grandmother a clue that something happened to one of the mittens?

Activities

1. Have the children draw a pair of mittens by tracing around each hand. Draw some animals that they would like to see inside their mittens.
2. Ask the children to describe how Nicki's home looks different from theirs. Ask them to describe how Nicki's clothing looks different from theirs. Use their observations to create a classroom collage of a Ukrainian village with children dressed in that style.
3. Ask them to talk about the things Nicki was doing while he was walking in the snow. Are these different or the same kinds of things they like to do?
4. Have a classroom discussion about which parts of this folktale could be true and which parts became changed over the years.

5. After viewing the video, write a class story about what it might be like to live in the Ukraine. Talk about the weather, the village, the clothing you would need.