

Chicken Sunday

Patricia Polacco
1992
New York: Philomel Books

RESPECT
U.S.A.
Realistic Fiction
Reading Time: 9 minutes

CONCEPTS

Respect
Love
Trust
Loyalty
Courage

SUMMARY

Three friends are mistakenly accused of an act of vandalism. As they attempt to prove their innocence, trust and respect are built and new friendships are born. Rich images of African-American, Ukrainian, and Jewish traditions are interwoven through Polacco's vibrant pencil-and-wash line drawings.

OBJECTIVES

The student will be able to identify, define, and discuss respect, love, trust, loyalty, and courage as they apply to this story. The student will become aware of the importance of trust in relationships with family and friends.

Interdisciplinary Ideas

LANGUAGE ARTS

1. In pairs, find words for grandparents in different languages. (Keyword: grandparents names languages) List on a chart and post in your classroom.
2. Write an essay titled "My Best Older Friend." Illustrate with drawings or photos.
3. In small groups, research to learn about the author (see www.patriciapolacco.com, author information, Who am I?). Find out how her early life experiences influence her writing, especially *Chicken Sunday*. Share information with the class.

SOCIAL STUDIES

1. Find recipes for the food dishes served by Miss Eula, such as hoppin' john and collard greens. Try some out at home or in the classroom.
2. In pairs or small groups, research Pysanky eggs. (Keyword: Pysanky eggs) Together write questions about the eggs, such as "How did this tradition begin?" Find answers to your questions online or in books. Make a "Q and A" poster about Pysanky eggs, decorate it with pictures or drawings of the eggs, present to the class, and post for all to see.

* Visit www.heartwoodethics.org and choose Teaching Heartwood, Activities, Primary, for story paper.

ART

1. Decorate hard-boiled eggs by making designs with wax or crayons. Dip in food coloring (younger children can decorate eggs with markers). Invite someone from the Ukrainian tradition to demonstrate how to make Pysanky eggs or watch the video *Rechenka's Eggs* (Reading Rainbow).
2. Create paper hats for students' "grammas." (Keyword: Easter bonnet paper patterns)

After the Story

Chicken Sunday

DISCUSSION

1. What happens on Chicken Sundays? Look at the picture of the Sunday dinner: What does this scene show about how the characters feel about each other? What is the relationship between Stewart and Winston and the girl telling the story?
2. What causes the problem in the story? Why do you think the bigger boys throw eggs at Mr. Kodinski's door? Do they think about how their actions hurt Mr. Kodinski? Talk about thinking things through before taking action.
3. Why does Mr. Kodinski telephone Miss Eula? How does Miss Eula feel when Mr. Kodinski calls? Does she believe her grandchildren? Talk about her trust, her advice to the children, and her respect for Mr. Kodinski.
4. Have you ever been accused of doing something you didn't do or stood up for someone who was wrongly accused? Tell about it.
5. What do the children do to show Mr. Kodinski he is wrong about them? How do they show respect to Mr. Kodinski? How does Mr. Kodinski show respect for the children's courage and their devotion to Miss Eula?
6. How does Miss Eula become the girl's 'gramma'? Besides your family, who are the special people in your life? What makes them special to you?

ACTIVITIES

1. Locate California, Russia, and the Ukraine on the world map. Compare the sizes of Russia and the Ukraine to each other and to the United States.
2. In small groups, talk about ways you can earn someone's trust through your words and actions. Together make a "Who You Trust" booklet. On story paper,* complete the sentence "I trust _____ because..." Illustrate your sentences, compile pages, make a cover, and make copies of the booklet for the class.
3. Create a bulletin board titled, "Chicken Sunday, a Heartwood Book." Under the title place a Heartwood attribute poster. Together find examples of all the Heartwood attributes in the story, write examples on strips of paper, and post beside the appropriate attributes.

WRAP-UP

1. In *My Heartwood Journal* write about a time you showed respect by listening to advice from a grandmother, grandfather, or special member of your family.
2. Write three personal goals for showing respect this week. Follow up at the end of the week with a written paragraph beginning with: "I showed respect when..."

EXTENSION

1. Complete Home Connection pages and take home to share with families.
2. Talk with your school principal and/or parent organization about holding a Respect Week. Invite grandparents, adopted grandparents, and older community members to share stories and sayings.

VOCABULARY

solemn
ceremony
babushka

collard greens
hoppin' john
Pysanky eggs

chutzpah
intricate
Ukrainian