

Mama, Do You Love Me?

Barbara M. Joosse
Illustrated by Barbara Lavallee
1991
San Francisco: Chronicle Books

LOVE
North American/Inuit
Reading Time: 4 minutes

CONCEPTS

Love
Caring

SUMMARY

A mother's unconditional love reassures a child who is testing her limits in this tender story set in the Arctic. This carefully researched narrative will introduce young children to a distinctly different culture, showing that the special love between parent and child is a bond that transcends all boundaries. Vibrant watercolors enhance the lyrical text.

OBJECTIVE

The student will be able to define and discuss love and caring as they apply to this story. The student will recognize words and actions that show love from caregivers and recall times they gave love to others.

Classroom Connections & Additional Activities

1. In a shoe box, create an arctic scene. Cotton ball snow, sugar cube igloos, clay animals, and popsicle stick dog sleds are possibilities. **ART** **SS**
2. Make animal masks (paper plates, paper bags, feathers, yarn, tempera) and have a parade. **ART**
3. With eyes closed and relaxed breathing, imagine you are with someone who loves you. Wrap your arms around yourself and give a polar bear hug. Imagine giving a hug to the person who loves you. **PE**
4. Label a bulletin board "People Caring" and post pictures of people showing kindness and caring. Add an envelope full of paper slips and ask children to add names of people at school who act in a kind and caring way. Option: draw or write what they do. (Don't forget custodians, cafeteria workers, principal ...) **SS** **ART**
5. Learn and sing "I Love You a Bushel and a Peck." **MUSIC**
6. Share stories of caring and being cared for. Illustrate and make an album. **LA** **ART**

After the Story

Mama, Do You Love Me?

DISCUSSION

1. What is happening in the story? Why do you think the little girl asks "How much?" or "How long?" or "What if I..?" even though she knows her mother loves her?
2. Look at the picture of the salmon in the parka. How would you feel if you were Mama? How could Mama be angry or sad or scared and still love her little child?
3. How many times do you like to hear someone say, "I love you?" Who says it to you? Who could you say it to?

ACTIVITIES

1. Copy the words "I Love You" on a card or paper. Cut a piece of yarn as long as both arms outstretched. Tape the card to the middle of the yarn and take it home to wrap around someone you love.
2. Recall the story and Mama's response to the question "How much?" Ask children if their mothers would talk about ravens or dogs or whales. List phrases with animals the children might use if someone asked "How much do you love me?" Examples might be: as much as a robin loves a worm, or as much as a honey bee loves a flower.
3. Look at the patterns on clothing in the book. Create a design of your own using crayons, pattern blocks, or stamps. Make a bookmark by copying one of your designs on a strip of paper. Give to someone you love (laminated if possible).

WRAP-UP

In My Heartwood Journal, draw a picture of yourself with someone you love very much.

EXTENSION

1. Ask a grown-up to tell about the kindest, most caring person he/she knew as a child.
2. Retell the story at home. Think of a creative way to tell someone how much you love him/her.

VOCABULARY

igloo
lemming
mukluk

umiak
puffin