

Classroom Connections & Additional Activities

1. Make a Spring Watch bulletin board. About a month before Spring comes to your region, begin to watch for signs. Take regular walks and as students notice signs of Spring, take a photograph, draw a picture or write signs on cards. Watch the bulletin board grow. You might record the daily temperatures for a month. Discuss hopes and anticipation of things to come. (This works for any season.) **SCI**
2. Discuss nocturnal animals, and make a collage showing examples. **SCI**
3. Learn owl calls. Many owl calls are easy for children (and teachers) to mimic. Your local library may have tapes of bird calls, or call your state wildlife agency for assistance. Check with nature centers, aviaries or museums for owl resources. Some loan mounted specimens to schools. **SCI**
4. Identify the next holiday or important school event such as Open House for Parents, Thanksgiving, winter break, or summer vacation. Make a calendar and mark off the days as the event approaches. From time to time discuss the feelings of hope children are experiencing. **SS**
5. Have children stand in a circle and coach them through this exercise: How do you look when you are filled with hope? Everybody fill yourself with hope. How do you walk when you are empty of hope, discouraged, hopeless? Take a partner and skip through the room together, both of you full of hope. Freeze and become hope sculptures. **PE**

Owl Moon

Jane Yolen
 Illustrated by John Schoenherr.
 1987
 New York: Philomel

HOPE
 USA
 Reading Time: 7 minutes

CONCEPTS

Hope
 Respect
 Patience

SUMMARY

Observing wildlife in nature requires generous helpings of hope and patience. A young girl experiences this when she and her father go owling on a snowy, moonlit night. Respect for the Great Horned Owl, the special bond between father and child, and their relationship with the natural world make this gentle story memorable. Exquisite watercolor paintings capture the magic of the adventure.

OBJECTIVE

The student will be able to define and discuss hope, patience, and respect as they apply to this story. The student will recognize personal hopes and the patience they may need to attain them.

After the Story

Owl Moon

DISCUSSION

1. What is the little girl hoping for? What do you think the word "owling" means? Do they know for sure they will see an owl? How do you think the girl would have felt if they hadn't seen an owl that night? Do you think she would keep on hoping and try owling again?
2. What are some of the things you have to do if you want to see an owl? What does it mean to be patient? When have you had to be patient for your hopes to come true? What did you do while you waited?
3. The girl has been waiting a long time to go owling like her older brothers. What are some things you are waiting and hoping to be able to do when you get older? What could you do now to get ready?

ACTIVITIES

1. Act out how the little girl in the story walked through deep snow. Remember that she was cold and had to be very quiet. Can your class stay very quiet for one whole minute?
2. Incubate chicken eggs obtained from a farm or agricultural service, marking off days on a calendar. Discuss hope, expectations, and anticipation as the 21 days pass. (Plan ahead for a future home for the chicks.)
3. Plan a trip to your school yard, an environmental center, a nearby park or even a grassy field. List ahead of time animal life you hope to see (animals, birds, insects). Plan to sit very quietly for 3 or more minutes and observe. List what children see, and talk about patience. (You may wish to hand out the reproducible "Nature Hunt" found in the Respect section of the Teachers Manual.)

WRAP-UP

In My Heartwood Journal, draw a picture of something you will do when you are older.

EXTENSION

1. With a grown-up, go outdoors or visit a park, and sit quietly for five minutes, listening and looking for an animal. This is especially fun on a moonlit night. Ask a grown-up to help you write down what happened. Share with your family and/or classmates.
2. Send home the Heartwood Family Newsletter on Hope.

VOCABULARY

clearing
meadow
owling