

ACTIVITIES FOR KATHY STINSON'S BOOKS FOR EARLY READERS

A POCKET CAN HAVE A TREASURE IN IT

Make your own book or mural about things that can go into other things.

THE BARE NAKED BOOK

THE BARE NAKED BOOK and THE DRESSED UP BOOK are both illustrated by Heather Collins. Both books are about parts of the body. Compare the ways in which Heather chose to arrange the words and pictures on the pages of the books. Why do you think she designed them differently? What other choices did the author and illustrator make because of the different aged kids they expected would be reading the two books.

BIG OR LITTLE

For adults working with groups of kids --

Have students create life-size paintings of themselves doing things that make them feel big and smaller than life-size paintings of things that make them feel little. Cut out the figures to create a 'BIG OR LITTLE' mural.

THE DANCE OF THE VIOLIN

- Make some music of your own with found objects around your home or classroom.
- What's the biggest mistake you ever made? Can you make up a story about it?
- Find some Joshua Bell music on the Internet and listen to it. Make a picture about what you hear.

THE DRESSED UP BOOK

On every page of the book is a list of questions. Pick a question and let your imagination run free in search of answers to it. Communicate your answers in the form of a story, a poem, a painting, or a collage.

HARRY AND WALTER

Make a picture of something you and your best friend like to do together. Or make four pictures — one for each season.

I FEEL DIFFERENT: A BOOK ABOUT BEING ADOPTED

(published previously as STEVEN'S BASEBALL MITT)

Write a letter to the boy in this book. Tell him about your family. Do you live with your birth parents, your adoptive parents, or does someone else take care of you? Do you have any brothers or sisters? Do they live with you or someone else? Tell the boy what you like about your family and what you sometimes wish was different. Tell him how reading about him and his family made you feel.

THE MAN WITH THE VIOLIN

- Write about a time you noticed something and wanted to pay closer attention to it but someone older didn't think it was important.
- Was there anything in this book that you noticed that someone else might have missed if you hadn't pointed it out?
- Find some Joshua Bell music on the Internet and listen to it.

MOM & DAD DON'T LIVE TOGETHER ANY MORE

Write a letter to the girl in this book. Tell her about your family. Do your parents live together or apart? Are there other people in your family you wish you could see more often? What do you like doing on weekends and on holidays? Tell the girl how reading about her family made you feel.

RED IS BEST

For adults working with groups of kids --

On separate sheets of bristol board, write 'Red Is Best', 'Yellow Is Best', etc, with an appropriately coloured marker or crayon (of course!) Have students collect pictures and glue-able objects to stick to each one. Then have students vote for their own 'best' colour and make a graph (or different kinds of graphs) to show the results.

For kids working on their own --

On a sheet of bristol board, write 'Red Is Best', 'Yellow Is Best' - or whatever colour you like best - with a marker or crayon of that colour. Collect pictures and glue-able objects to stick to it.

TEDDY RABBIT

Make a story and/or picture about you and your special stuffed animal. If nothing terrible has ever happened to your teddy, imagine the worst thing and then write or draw as if it really had happened. Be sure your story/picture has a happy ending. Pick a day when everyone brings their teddies to school. Have a picnic, and read the stories and show the pictures to your teddies.

THOSE GREEN THINGS

- Have a Green Day at school or a Green Party. Encourage everyone to wear something green and bring sandwiches for lunch that contain green things only. Give green prizes (stickers? markers? copies of **THOSE GREEN THINGS**?) for the sandwich with the greenest bread, the sandwich containing the highest number of different green foods, the most unusual green-things sandwich, and for the sandwich voted most popular with students or party guests.
- Compare the 1985 and 1995 versions of the book. Talk with friends or class-mates about why you think the publisher and the illustrators made the decisions they did about the layout of the book and its pictures. Do you like one version of the book better than the other? Talk about why.

WHO IS SLEEPING IN AUNTY'S BED?

Most people have trouble sleeping sometimes. Write a short story about one night when you had trouble sleeping. Be sure to show your readers what caused you to have trouble sleeping, what you tried to do about it, and how you finally managed to get to sleep. Put your story together in a book with your classmates' stories and put it somewhere in the classroom that people can read it whenever they have a moment. If you have room, put a mattress on the floor and surround it with other good 'bedtime' reading.

Visit www.kathystinson.com for more information about Kathy Stinson and her books for young people, or to find out how you can arrange a school or library reading, writing workshop for children or adults, or conference presentation!