

EMILY'S FIRST 100 DAYS OF SCHOOL

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by Rosemary Wells

Themes: School, Friends, Family, Learning, Growth and Change

Ages: 3-8

Running Time: 36 minutes

SUMMARY

Emily is ready and excited for the first day of school. She has a lot to learn! Her teacher, Miss Cribbage, makes the alphabet, counting, writing, drawing, singing, and dancing exciting and fun. On the 100th day of school, Miss Cribbage promises a big party. But that seems awfully far away! In the meantime, Emily makes new friends, teaches her little brother Leo, and spends time with her Granny and Aunt Min. She learns about Australia, New York, and New Mexico. Before Emily knows it, the 100th day rolls around. All of her classmates prepare special 100th day presentations. Emily is especially proud of hers, which she keeps a secret right up until the end.

OBJECTIVES

- Students will compare and contrast their school experiences with Emily's.
- Students will create a "100 Project."
- Students will write and send a letter to a friend or family member.

BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Brainstorm with children the types of activities that they do at school. Record students' answers on chart paper. Then, supply students with old magazines that they can cut up. Have them look for pictures that depict school activities. They can work with partners or independently to create a "School Days" collage. Hang the students' art in the classroom.

Practice estimation. Fill containers with different sized objects. Have students make educated guesses at how

many objects are in the container. Talk about different ways of estimating (counting a sample size, comparing to a known amount). Record the students' guesses and then put students into teams to count the objects in the containers. Have the students who had the closest estimate share the method that he/she used. Alternatively, have students estimate the number of objects drawn on a piece of paper. This may be easier for younger students to do more accurately. Start with a small number that is easy to estimate or count, then show pictures that depict multiples of that number. Work your way up to 100 objects so that students can visualize a number that seems very big to them.

AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Encourage students to think of and create "100 Projects" like the ones that Emily and her classmates made in the movie. Provide materials such as masks, socks, beads, beans, and buttons. Also, give students the opportunity to perform dramatic, musical, or athletic activities. Have students prepare and practice to present their projects to parents and other students. Alternatively, the students can hold a fundraiser for which they each make 100 items to be sold. These can be art projects, baked goods, or coupons for services.

Talk to students about family members and friends who live far away. Ask students how they stay in touch with people who live far away. Students may suggest telephone, email, and letters. Tell students that they will work on writing a letter to someone that lives far away that they miss. Remind students that Emily used both pictures and writing to compose her letters to her friend, Diane Duck. Start a list of simple words that students may want or need for their letters, such as: Dear, Love, I, you, me, miss, and play. Practice writing and saying these words aloud so that students can begin to develop them as sight words. Then, have students write rough drafts of their letters using both words and pictures. Meet with each child and help him/her with clarifying their letters. Provide a nice piece of stationery and an envelope for students to write their final drafts on. Ask parents to send the names and addresses to school so that students

can address their envelopes. If possible, take a walking trip to the local post office to mail the letters. Alternatively, students who are too young to write at all can record oral letters on tape to send to a loved one. Have them draw a picture to accompany the letter.

Explore the different seasons that Emily experiences throughout her school year and the different activities that she, her friends, and family do during those seasons. Elicit students' background knowledge with a circular diagram divided into four parts. For each part, ask students to describe the weather and climate. Sketch a drawing showing the weather for each of the four seasons in the diagram. Then, ask students to recall the activities that the characters in the movie did during each season. Put a star next to any of the activities that Emily did that the students also participate in, either at school or with their families. Evaluate activities that all or most students have not participated in and determine whether or not they would be feasible to do at your school in the upcoming year. For example, perhaps the class could plan a garden in the spring, collect money during the holidays for UNICEF, make holiday cookies for the children's hospital, or take a trip to the state capitol building. Adjust the activities to suit the resources of your school.

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