

Apt. 3

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By Ezra Jack Keats (MacMillan)

Themes: City Living, Friendship

Grade Level: K-2

Running Time: 8 minutes, iconographic

Summary

APT. 3 focuses on the journey a boy named Sam and his younger brother take through the corridors of their city apartment building. Sam and his brother are searching for the source of the harmonica music played by one of the apartment dwellers.

As the story unfolds, the reader is introduced to the sights, sounds, and smells of apartment living. Sam meets apartment dwellers in corridors, sniffs the air outside various apartment doors, and listens intently in order to identify where the beautiful harmonica music is coming from.

Eventually, Sam and his brother discover that the harmonica is being played by the blind man who lives in apartment three. Sam and his brother are frightened at first, as meeting a blind man is a new experience for them. Slowly they come to see that the man's experience is as rich and satisfying as their own. The story closes with the blind man responding to Sam's offer to take a walk the next day.

Objectives

- Children will explore city life
- Children will examine the importance of overcoming fears
- Children will learn about the joys of new friendships

Before Viewing Activities

Share the book Apt. 3 with children. Talk with children about city versus country living. Ask: In what ways do you think city living is different from country living? Where would you prefer to live? Why? What would you like most about living in an apartment building with lots of other people? What would you like least?

Play a variety of instrumentals in your classroom. See if children can identify the different musical instruments playing the music they hear. After each piece, encourage children to talk about the ways the music makes them feel and what the music makes them think about.

After Viewing Activities

Help children explore what it might be like to live without sight. Have them close their eyes and discuss what they can hear, smell, touch or taste. Stress to children how much information can be obtained by using our senses other than our sense of sight.

Record a variety of sounds, including pot covers banging, a dog barking or cat meowing, a door

slamming, water running from a faucet, a vacuum cleaner vacuuming, a person clapping. Have children listen carefully to the sounds and try to identify each one.

Talk with children about the fear Sam felt before he knew the blind man. Ask: Have you ever been afraid of someone you did not know? What made you feel afraid? How did you feel when you got to know the person? What did the person do to make you feel better about himself/herself? What can you do to help people feel comfortable when they first meet you?

Paint a large apartment building on a piece of kraft paper. Include a large number of windows on the building. Then give children crayons that they can use to draw people in the windows. Have children invent a history for their apartment dwellers and share them with their classmates. Later, give children an opportunity to construct a story about the people who live in this apartment building.

Other book based films and videos about city living are available from Weston Woods. These include:

GOGGLES! by Ezra Jack Keats

NOT SO FAST, SONGOLOLO by Niki Daly

PET SHOW by Ezra Jack Keats

THE TRIP by Ezra Jack Keats

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