HANSEL AND GRETEL
by James Marshall
Themes: Fairy tales, siblings
Grade Level: K-3
Running Time: 14 minutes

SUMMARY
In this delightful retelling of the classic fairy tale, Hansel and Gretel show intelligence and determination to get out of tricky situations. Colorful illustrations reveal the characters’ true personalities and intentions. Children will be delighted by Hansel and Gretel’s quick thinking and adventuresome spirits. This movie stays true to the classic tale in simple, yet entertaining language and animation.

OBJECTIVES
• Students will become familiar with the elements of a fairy tale.
• Students will learn about problem solving.
• Students will compare and contrast fairy tales.

BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES
Elicit background knowledge about fairy tales.
Guiding questions:
• What is a fairy tale?
• What fairy tales do you know?
• What happens in the fairy tales that you know about?
• What do you like about fairy tales? What don’t you like?

Read aloud several well-known fairy tales. Identify the main elements of fairy tales: magic, good and evil characters, trickery, and an ending in which justice is served (“happy ending”). Make a chart with these elements and guide students to fill it in for the fairy tales that you read aloud. Encourage children to look and listen for these elements as they view the movie. Introduce problem solving to the students.

Guiding questions:
• Have you ever been in a sticky situation you had to use your brain to get out of? Describe what happened. How did you solve the problem?

Present students with different scenarios of problems to solve. Give them choices of reasonable and unreasonable solutions. Discuss why some solutions are more reasonable than others. Ask students to suggest other solutions that you did not suggest. Tell students to watch for how Hansel and Gretel solved their problems in the movie.

AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES
Use the fairy tale elements chart that you created in the Before Viewing activity to identify the elements in Hansel and Gretel. Then, use a Venn Diagram to compare and contrast the elements from different fairy tales. For example, both Hansel and Gretel and Snow White have witches in them, but there is no prince in Hansel and Gretel. Have students create their own fairy tales using these elements. This could be a whole class exercise in which the students work together to create characters and a plot. Work through the writing process to write at least two drafts. You can transcribe the story for developing writers and the students can illustrate it. Then, you can bind the pages together to make a published piece.

Discuss how Hansel and Gretel solved their problems in the story. Guiding questions:
• What did Hansel do the first time the children were sent into the woods?
• Why didn’t Hansel’s plan work the second time? What do you think happened to the bread crumbs that he dropped along the way?
• How did the children keep the witch from eating Hansel?
• How did Gretel trick the witch into putting her head into the oven?
• Could Hansel and Gretel have solved their problems in other ways? How?

Analyze the characters in Hansel and Gretel.
Guiding questions:
• Who are the good characters? What do they do or say that makes them good?
• Who are the bad characters? What do they do or say that makes them bad?
• Are there any characters that are both bad and good? (If students have no answer, suggest that the father does both bad and good things).
• Do any of the characters change throughout the story? How?

Put on a class play of a fairy tale. You can use Hansel and Gretel and expand parts of the movie to either change the story or further develop the characters. For younger children, you can rewrite these parts for them, or older children can help to do this. Alternatively, students can act out one of the fairy tales that you read aloud or the one that was written by the class.

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