

THE THREE ROBBERS

The Three Robbers

by Tomi Ungerer (Atheneum)

Themes: Scary Stories

Grade Level: K-2

Running Time: 6 minutes, animated

Summary

The Three Robbers is the story of three men who roam about at night frightening and stealing from people. Each night, the robbers would carry their stolen loot to their cave in the mountains.

One night, the robbers stop a carriage, only to find nothing to steal except one very unhappy little girl who is delighted to be carried away. Eventually, the robbers snatch up all of the abandoned, unhappy children and use their stolen money to buy a castle where they could all live together.

As time passes, the children grow to adulthood and build homes around the castle. The story ends with an entire village being created around the castle of the three robbers. The villagers, all former abandoned children, erect three tall towers in honor of their three foster parents--the three robbers.

Objectives

- Children will enjoy the mystery and suspense of a scary story
- Children will investigate their own feelings regarding what they consider to be appropriate and inappropriate behavior
- Children will explore the different ways people demonstrate caring towards one another

Before Viewing Activities

Share the book, *The Three Robbers*, with children.

Then ask:

Since the robbers didn't think about spending the money they stole, why do you think they wanted to do it in the first place? Do you think their feelings about stealing changed at the end of the story? Why? Why not?

Talk with children about scary stories they are familiar with. Ask: What was it about the stories that made them seem so scary? How did you feel while you were listening to/reading/watching the story? As children watch, encourage them to think about the ways the music, colors, and quick-paced action contribute to the scary feeling of the story.

Play a variety of musical pieces for children. Include in your selections music that creates a suspenseful or frightening mood. As children listen to each piece, have them describe the way the music makes them feel.

After Viewing Activities

Have children perform a dramatization of the story of *The Three Robbers*. Supply paper hats and capes cut from both red and black construction paper, ropes and blankets which can be used to create tentlike structures to represent the robbers' cave and the cattle, and a large box filled with coins and jewelry cut from construction paper. Provide art materials such as pieces of flat and cylinder-shaped cardboard, boxes of various sizes, and other appropriate materials that

children can use to make a pepper-blower, blunderbuss, and axe. Also have children work together to paint a village scene, with three tall towers, on a large sheet of kraft paper. Invite other classes to watch your colorful, scary rendition of *The Three Robbers*!

Talk with children about the activities of the robbers. Ask: Was it right for the robbers to take the abandoned children? Why? Why not? How do you think the robbers felt about the children? How do you think the children felt about the robbers? If you were one of the abandoned children that the robbers took, how would you have felt about the robbers? What do you think you might have chosen to do when you grew up?

Discuss the different ways the robbers showed caring toward the children and the ways the children showed the robbers that they cared for them when they grew up. Ask: How do you know when someone cares for you? What do you do to let other people know that you care for them? Allow children to use some class time to write a note to someone they care for.

Other book based films and videos that are scary stories are available from Weston Woods. These include: *A DARK, DARK TALE* by Ruth Brown
GEORGIE by Robert Bright
KING OF THE CATS by Paul Galdone
TEENY-TINY AND THE WITCH-WOMAN written by Barbara Walker and illustrated by Michael Foreman
THE TRIP by Ezra Jack Keats
WHAT'S UNDER MY BED? by James Stevenson
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