

In a Blue Room

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Story Summary

It's past bedtime but Alice is wide-awake. She says that she can only sleep in a blue room. Mama tries to settle her down with flowers, tea, a quilt, and a lullaby, but none of these things are blue. When Mama turns off the lamp, blue moonlight washes over Alice's room, giving Alice her blue room and sends her off to sleep.

Jim Averbeck is a writer and illustrator who lives in San Francisco, California. *In a Blue Room* is his first picture book. Learn more about him at www.jimaverbeck.com.

Tricia Tusa writes and illustrates books from her home in New Mexico. She has written ten books for children and has illustrated more than fifty others.

Pre-Reading

Assign each student a partner. Ask students to close their eyes and think about what happens at their bedtime. *What does the place you sleep in look like at bedtime? What does it smell like? What do you hear at bedtime? What does your bed feel like?* Ask students to open their eyes and tell their partners what their rooms are like at bedtime.

Words and Concepts for Pre-Reading Sheltered Instruction: bedtime, scent, tea, quilt, lullaby, moon.

Discussion Questions

1. What is Alice's reason for not going to sleep? (*literal*)
2. Why does Mama bring flowers into Alice's room at bedtime? (*inferential*)
3. The author wrote, "lilacs and lilywhites give off a gentle scent." What do you think "scent" means? (*inferential, evaluative*)
4. Can you remember a time when you had trouble falling asleep? What helps you fall asleep? (*relate prior knowledge to text*)
5. Who has tasted tea? What did it taste like? (*relate prior knowledge to text*)
6. How does the quilt make Alice feel? (*literal*)
7. What happens when Mama turns off the lamp? (*literal*)
8. Why does Alice finally go to sleep? (*inferential, evaluative*)
9. If you had this book at home, when might be a good time to read it? (*analytical*)

Response to the Story: Writing Activity

Grades K-1

Materials

- White paper
- Crayons
- Pencils

Preparation: Write or photocopy the following cloze sentence at the bottom of each sheet of paper - *At bedtime, I like* _____.

Directions

1. Ask students, "What did Alice want at bedtime?"
2. Ask, "What sorts of things do you like at bedtime?" List ideas on board or overhead.
3. Pass out paper, pencils and crayons. Help students fill in the cloze sentence.
4. Have students illustrate their bedtime scene.
5. Closure: Have students share their bedtime scenes or compile and publish as a classroom bedtime book.

Modification: Some teachers may prefer to do the activity without asking students to reflect their own bedtimes. In that case, substitute "would" for "do" in #2 and encourage students to imagine what they would like to happen at their bedtime.

Grades 2-3

Materials

- Five pieces of chart paper
- Marker
- Paper
- Pencils

Preparation: Write and circle the name of one sense on each of the five sheets of paper – Sight, Smell, Taste, Touch, Sound. Either photocopy the following poem onto paper, or write on overhead or board:

At bedtime, I like

To smell _____

To taste _____

To touch _____

To hear _____

To see _____

And then I can go to sleep.

Directions

1. Review the five senses and list on the board. Ask students to name what Mama brought Alice to smell, taste, touch, and see. What did she see at the end of the book?
2. Ask students to brainstorm what sorts of things they might smell at bedtime. List ideas on the chart paper around the word smell. Repeat with the other senses.
3. Tell students that they are going to write a five senses poem about bedtime. Give students the poem or show the poem on the overhead. Ask students to fill out the poem using words from brainstorm.
4. Optional: Have students illustrate their poems.
5. Closure: Have students read poems to partners. Ask for volunteers to share poems with class.

Our Five Senses (science, language arts)

Grades K-3

Students will...

- Observe and investigate objects using five senses
- Describe the properties of common objects
- Provide descriptive words with sensory detail
- Create a paragraph about a single topic (grades 2-3)

Materials

- Five signs, each one labeled with a sense-*See, Hear, Touch, Smell, Taste*
- Chart paper with five columns, each column labeled with a sense
- Marker
- Common objects for each of the five senses. Objects might include:
 - See – toys, crayons and paper, photographs, leaf
 - Hear – bells, maracas, ball point pen (that clicks), wind-up toy
 - Touch – feathers, sandpaper, cotton balls, porcelain dish
 - Smell – cinnamon sticks, garlic, flowers, shampoo
 - Taste – salt, sugar, herbal tea, lemon slices

Note: Some objects may be used in multiple categories

- Paper (grades 2-3)
- Pencils (grades 2-3)

Preparation: Hang chart. Group common items according to sense and place in bags or a box.

Directions

Grades K-1

1. Have students stand up. Say, “Can you show me what you see with? What is that called?” Repeat with hear, touch, smell, and taste. Have students sit down.
2. Ask, “Who can tell me what those things are called?” Discuss the five senses.
3. Ask, “What did Alice smell in the story?” repeat with remaining senses.
4. Tell students that they are going to explore their own five senses.
5. Have students sit in a circle. Bring out groups of objects for “See.” Have students describe what things look like. Ask about colors, shapes and sizes.
6. Use chart paper to record observations onto the “See” column.
7. Repeat with other senses. *Note: This may be done in one session or spread out over five days, with a focus on one sense per day.*

Grades 2-3

1. Do steps 1-7 from K-1 lesson.
2. On an overhead or board, model how to write a topic sentence about one of the five senses. As a whole group, use the observations from the chart to write detail sentences.
3. Have students worked independently to write a paragraph about one of the other senses that they investigated.

Learn About the Moon (science)

Grades 2-3

Students will...

- Know that the moon's appearance changes
- Know that the moon orbits the earth

Materials

- Lamp without a lampshade
- Globe
- Baseball or other white ball
- Two desks or chairs
- Paper
- Pencils

Preparation: Draw a picture of a full moon on one piece of paper, and a picture of a crescent moon on another piece of paper. Put the two desks close together but with enough distance for a person to walk between the desks. Make sure the lamp's chord can reach an electrical outlet.

Directions

1. Pass out a sheet of blank paper to each student and have students put their names on their paper. Tell them they are going to have five minutes to do a silent activity. Ask them to draw a picture of the moon and write what they know about the moon.
2. After five minutes, tell them to put their pencils down. Collect the papers and share some of the student responses.
3. Point out any variety in drawings of the moon, (use the drawings you made earlier if there are no student variations.) Ask, "Why does the moon show different shapes on different nights?" Discuss student ideas.
4. Put the globe on one desk, and the lamp on the other desk. Turn on the lamp and turn off the other lights in the classroom.
5. Ask students to guess what they think the lamp represents. Have a volunteer hold the "moon" (ball,) and walk slowly around the earth.
6. Tell the students that the moon is *orbiting* the earth. Discuss the changes in light and shadow on the ball as it moves around the earth. Tell students that the shadows on the ball are like the shadows we see on the moon and change the appearance of the moon. These differences in how the moon looks are called *phases*.
7. Ask students what does the moon look like in *In a Blue Room*.
8. Tell students that a full moon happens when the earth is between the moon and the sun. Let students take turns trying to make the light shine on the ball like the full moon.

Extension: Have students keep a "Moon Phase Log" and record the moon over the course of one month. Help older students use the log to identify the pattern of the moon phases.

What's Your Bedtime Routine? (math)

Grades K-1, 2-3

Students will...

- Record and compare numerical data in a systematic way
- Represent the same data set in more than one way
- Ask and answer simple questions related to data representation

Materials

- Butcher paper
- Marker
- Stickers
- Paper (grades 2-3)
- Pencils (grades 2-3)

Preparation: Use a long piece of butcher paper to make a chart with seven rows. Write *bath, brush teeth, pajamas, books, and songs* on the rows. Leave the last row empty to record other ideas that the students discuss. Hang chart at a level that students can reach.

Directions

Grades K-1

1. Take a picture walk through *In a Blue Room*. Ask students to identify the sequence of event for Alice's bedtime.
2. Do a "Think, Pair, Share." Ask students to think about their own bedtime routines. After two minutes, ask them to tell their partner about what they do at bedtime. Have students share ideas with the class.
3. Read the words already recorded on the chart and add others that students may have suggested. Tell students that you are going to give them stickers to put on the chart next to the things that they do at bedtime.
4. Have students come up in small groups and place their stickers. While students are placing their stickers, encourage students to make predictions about which rows will have the most and least stickers.
5. Discuss bar graph with students. Count stickers and use tally marks to represent totals for each row. If needed, record the numeral next to the tally marks.
6. Ask student which row has the most, the least, and which, if any are tied.

Grades 2-3

1. Do steps 1-4 from K-1 lesson.
2. Ask students write the answers these questions:
 - Which things do most students do at bedtime?
 - Which things do the least amount of students do at bedtime?
 - How many students brush their teeth at bedtime?
 - How many students read a book at bedtime?
3. Have students share their answers and discuss the graph.
4. Ask students if there is another way to record the data? Show students how to convert the data into tally marks.

“But It’s Bedtime!” (performing arts, language arts)

Grades K-3

Students will...

- Identify characters and important events in the story
- Identify beginning, middle and end of a story
- Retell story through dramatic interpretation
- Participate cooperatively to dramatize a story

Materials

- Realia or pictures of bedtime, (e.g. teddy bear, pillow, blanket, cup of water, music box, hug, story, pet, etc.), at least one per child
- One or more solid colored playsilk or piece of fabric
- Masking tape

Preparation: Put playsilk(s) in basket. Set realia and pictures on table. Use masking tape to mark of a “bedroom” area on the carpet. Write the script on an overhead, chart paper or board. Write each line in a different color.

Brother or Sister: Here is a _____.

Bedtime Child: I can only sleep in a _____ room.

Everyone: But it’s bedtime!

Directions

1. Ask students to retell *In a Blue Room*. Say, “What happened at the beginning of the story? What was the middle? How did it end?”
2. Tell students that they are going to make a play about their own bedtime story.
3. Select a volunteer to be the bedtime child. Tell the rest of the class that they will be the older brothers and sisters.
4. Show children the playsilk, or have child select a silk. Tell students color of the silk will be the color the child wants in the story. Insert the color on the second line of the script.
5. Practice reading the script with the children. Note that “everyone” does not include the bedtime child.
6. Help the children select an item from the table and stand in a line at the side of the classroom.
7. Have the bedtime child jump around in the bedroom.
8. Have the first brother or sister take their item and give it to the bedtime child and say line one. Have the bedtime child say the second line. Help the brothers and sisters say the third line in unison. Direct the brother or sister to sit down.
9. Repeat with the rest of the children. Direct bedtime child to get sleepier and sleepier as she or he is given the bedtime items.
10. Turn off or down the lights. Wave the scarf over the child and say, “Now you have a ___ room. Close your eyes and go to sleep.”
11. Have all students stand up and take a bow.

In a Blue Room Diorama (visual arts)

Grades K-3

Students will...

- Respond to literature through creative expression
- Create form and texture in a work of art
- Write a story inspired by own work of art (Extension 2)

Materials

- One shoebox per student
- Construction paper
- Paints and brushes
- Scissors
- Modeling clay
- Glue
- Markers and/or crayons
- Blue transparent cellophane
- Tape
- Optional: Pieces of fabric, wrapping paper, paper doilies

Preparation: Make a model of a basic diorama. Paint the inside of the diorama. Create a bed out of paper. Make a person out of modeling clay. Cut out a piece of cellophane that just covers the opening to the shoebox and put aside until the activity.

Directions

1. Tell students that they are going to make a diorama of a bedroom. Show them the model and suggest they use paint, paper, and other craft materials to make a bed and decorate the room.
2. As students finish with their rooms, pass out modeling clay and help them make a person for the bedroom.
3. When students are finished with their dioramas, use model to demonstrate how to tape the blue cellophane over the shoebox opening.
4. Help students cut and tape cellophane to the top of their shoebox, so the cellophane falls over the opening, making blue rooms. *Note: Cellophane should be pre-cut for younger students.*
5. Let students display their dioramas on their desks or on counter space. Have the students take a walk around the class to tour the blue rooms.

Extension 1: Tell students to take a sheet of paper with them as they tour the class dioramas. Have students write, “In a blue room I see....” at the top of their papers. Ask them to record the things that they see in the blue rooms. Students may share out their lists at the end of the session.

Extension 2: Have students write their own blue room stories based on their diorama.

Modification: The cellophane can be attached to the top of a bedroom painting or drawing, instead of a diorama, to create a blue room.