



Classroom Guide

Title: **A Three Hat Day**

Author: **Laura Geringer**

Illustrator: **Arnold Lobel**

Theme: Hats can signify many different types of work and play, and sometimes it's fun to try some on for size!

Program Summary: R.R. Pottle the Third shows students that dreams can come true...at the change of a hat. LeVar learns that hats can signify many different types of work and play. When he puts on a jockey's cap, he visits a racetrack, rides in a horse race, and experiences the thrill of the winner's circle. A goalie's helmet takes him to an ice rink where he joins a professional hockey team. With an engineer's hat, he is whisked away to a house-sized model train display.

Topics for Discussion:

Before viewing the program, brainstorm a list of all the different types of hats that people wear. After watching, add other hats to the list.

Discuss reasons why people wear hats, such as protection, warmth, a clothing accessory, a type of identification (with a job), etc.

Ask students what hat they would pick at "Hats to Where?" and why they would choose that hat.

Curriculum Extension Activities:

Have a variety of old hats available for students to use for creative drama. They might use the hats when acting out familiar stories or make up stories that the hats themselves inspire.

Explore hat vocabulary with students. Start with hats such as the following: beret, bonnet, bowler, derby, beanie, panama, fez, sombrero, pith helmet, tam-o-shanter, and others. Have students research what each hat looks like and the circumstances in which it is worn. Provide magazines and catalogs so that they might search for pictures of these unique hats.

Have a "Hat Day," for which students may bring hats to school and wear them during the day. Using their hats and the drama center hats, categorize them according to different features, such as color, fabric, style, bill or brim/no bill or brim, primary function (worn during play, keeps head warm, etc.), and others. Students might also graph the colors of hats in the "Hat Day" collection.



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Have students write a sequel to the story featuring R. R. Pottle IV. Before writing, discuss ways that she might be both similar to and different from her parents.

Provide all sorts of materials and have students design a hat. Materials might include cloth scraps, felt, fabric trims, buttons, sequins, ribbon, yarn, pom poms, or different kinds of papers. Hats might be flat or three-dimensional.

Have students draw self-portraits of their faces and cut them out. Attach the faces to a bulletin board under the title, “Whose Hat?” Also have each student draw a hat that represents an interest, talent, hobby, or personality trait—a hat that would remind others of that person. (Encourage them not to let classmates see their hat drawings.) Put the hats in a box and draw them out one at a time, allowing students to match the hat with the person and place it on the correct head. On other days, students might enjoy “trying on” another person’s hat (by switching them on the bulletin board) to see what it looks like on their head.

Make available some library resources and have students investigate facts about hats. Have them write each fact on a hat shape and display them on a long strip of paper (a “hat rack”). Areas of research might include John Stetson’s invention of the cowboy hat, the actions of Minna Hall and Harriet Hemenway to outlaw the use of birds’ feathers on hats, or other information about the origins and wearing of hats.

Book Reviews:

Caps for Sale by Esphyr Slobodkina

Maebelle’s Suitcase by Tricia Tusa

Shoes by Elizabeth Winthrop, illustrated by William Joyce

Supplementary Booklist:

The Hat by Jan Brett

Lucy’s Summer by Donald Hall, illustrated by Michael McCurdy

Jennie’s Hat by Ezra Jack Keats



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Who Took the Farmer's Hat? by Joan L. Nodset, illustrated by Fritz Siegel

Uncle Nacho's Hat adapted by Harriet Rohmer, illustrated by Veg Reisberg

A Hat for Minerva Louise by Janet Morgan Stoeke

Related Themes:

- shoes
- occupations
- clothing

Related Reading Rainbow Programs:

- Program #33 — Imogene's Antlers
- Program #69 — Florence And Eric Take the Cake

About the Author: Laura Geringer grew up in New York City, where she presently makes her home. In addition to writing, she is a children's book editor and has her own imprint with a major publishing house. She credits her two sons with being the source for many of the ideas she uses in her books.

About the Illustrator: Arnold Lobel was born in Los Angeles but grew up in New York. He studied fine arts in college and discovered that he had the talent and desire for illustrating books. He is the author/illustrator of the beloved *Frog and Toad* series as well as many other books, including the Caldecott Medal winning *Fables*. He was married to author/illustrator Anita Lobel until his death in 1987.