On a Beam of Light: a Story of Albert Einstein

AUTHOR: Jennifer Berne
ILLUSTRATOR: Vladimir Radunsky
PUBLISHER: Chronicle Books
COPYRIGHT DATE: 2013
ART MEDIUM: gouache, pen, ink

GENRE: Biography

LIFE SKILLS: Resourcefulness, Curiosity, Problem Solving

SYNOPSIS:
From the time he was a young boy, Albert Einstein wondered how the world worked. As he became an adult, Albert made very important discoveries that changed the world.

BOOKTALK:
Have you ever heard of Albert Einstein? He was a genius! He didn’t seem that he would be a genius in his younger days. Albert didn’t even talk when he was 1 or 2 years old. His intelligence became more obvious as he grew up. We now know things about our universe because Einstein thought, studied and dreamed.

AUTHOR
Jennifer Berne website  http://www.jenniferberne.com/

Jennifer Berne studied art and design at Parsons School of Design. In the 1960’s she worked with the famous Andy Warhol at "The Factory". She regularly contributes to Nick, Jr. Magazine, and has written several children’s book.

Other books written by the author:
Calvin Can’t Fly
Manfish: The Story of Jacques Cousteau
Night-Night Sleep Tight

ILLUSTRATOR
Vladimir Radunsky  http://www.vladimirradunsky.com/

Vladimir Radunsky was born in Russia, and immigrated to the U.S. in 1982. He is known for using bright colors and collages. He currently lives in Italy and the United States.
Other books illustrated by the illustrator:

*Hip Hop Dog* by Chris Raschka
*Fire! Fire! Said Mrs. McGuire* by Bill Martin Jr.
*Table Manners* by Chris Raschka
*The Transmogrification of Roscoe Wizzle* by David Elliott
*The Maestro Plays* by Bill Martin Jr.
*What Does Peace Feel Like?* by Vladimir Radunsky
*Where the Giant Sleeps* by Mem Fox
*You?* by Vladimir Radunsky

CHALLENGING WORDS (...due to pronunciation, spelling and/or defining):

- mysteries
- questions
- magnetism
- gravity
- atoms
- realized
- imagining
- wondering
- figuring
- genius
- recognizable
- satellites
- scientists

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Why do you think Albert didn't talk until he was 3?
2. What would you think of Albert if he was your classmate?
3. What kinds of things do you wonder about?
4. Do you think it was right that Albert's teachers thought he was a disruption?
5. What would you like to ask Albert Einstein?
6. What is your impression of the book’s illustrations?

ACTIVITIES with CORE STANDARDS

Language Arts

- **Concrete Poems - I Wonder**
  Have students select an object they wonder about, ex. Sun, stars, water, etc. Demonstrate to students how to brainstorm ideas, words and phrases as they wonder about their object. Students should jot them down the small phrases, sentences and words as they come up. Next, they should start forming small stanzas and sentences out of them, rearrange them to rhyme.
Students can then draw the image they selected or trace it from a coloring book.
Begin to fit the words and verses within the shape. Make sure that the words themselves look like the outline of the object.

**W.1** Write effectively for a variety of tasks, purposes and audiences.
**W.2** Demonstrate the ability to write legibly
**W.3** Writing Genres - Develop writing skills by writing for different purposes and to specific audiences or people

**Science**

- **Be A Scientist**
  Have students test their observation skills for how water affects plants using the scientific process: Ask students what they learned from the experiment.

**How does water affect plants?**
Give students three small plants to water and observe growth over a 3 week period. Instruct the students to give plant A the same small amount of water each day, give plant B an equal amount of sugar water each day, and give plant C water only once a week.
Students will be predicting whether plants can ever have too much water and will plants with sugar water works better than water without sugar.
Students will use the attached worksheet to write their predictions and their observations. Following experiment they will write a one sentence summary of their findings.

**Standard 3:** Life Science  Core Standard: Observe, describe and ask questions about plant growth and development.
3.3.2 Investigate plant growth over time, take measurements in SI units, record the data and display the data in graphs. Examine factors that might influence plant growth.