

My Grandfather's Coat

AUTHOR: Jim Aylesworth

ILLUSTRATOR: Barbara McClintock

PUBLISHER: Scholastic Press

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ART MEDIUM: watercolor and ink

GENRE: Folk Literature

LIFE SKILLS: resourcefulness, perseverance, effort, initiative

SYNOPSIS:

A tailor who immigrates to America recycles his blue overcoat throughout the years as his family moves through the fabric of America.

BOOKTALK:

How do you unravel the history of a family? The important moments in the life of a man are sewn together in this story of a coat that is reused and recycled as time goes on. What will it become? And as the coat changes, what will the man become?

AUTHOR: Jim Aylesworth

Jim Aylesworth's experience as a primary teacher is what led him into writing. He has lived in Illinois as an adult, but still has ties to his childhood home in northern Indiana.

Other books written by the author:

The Burger and the Hot Dog

The Completed Hickory Dickory Dock

The Gingerbread Man

Naughty Little Monkeys

Old Black Fly

ILLUSTRATOR: Barbara McClintock

Barbara McClintock is a children's book illustrator living in rural Connecticut. She began drawing at an early age and always knew she wanted to be an artist.

Other books illustrated by the illustrator:

Adèle & Simon

Adèle & Simon in America

Dahlia

The Mitten

The Tale of Tricky Fox

CHALLENGING WORDS:

luckiest
tailor
stitched
sewed
frayed
snazzy
stylish
moldered

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Why do you think the grandfather kept recycling the coat through the years?
2. Do you have any family heirlooms, something that has been passed from generation to generation? Is this an object, a story, or a song?
3. What is the job of a tailor?
4. What does it mean for something to be stylish?
5. Why do you think people immigrate to America?
6. Can you think of anything that we reuse or recycle? Why do you think it is important to recycle?

ACTIVITIES WITH STANDARDS:**Art:**

- Create a family tree. Decorate it with symbols of your family history.
- Create an innovative way to reuse something that would otherwise be thrown away. Present it to the class and describe why you chose it and how you changed it to be useful again.

1.6.1 Demonstrate skills of perception in production of artwork.

1.6.2 Create artwork about self, family, and personal experiences.

1.6.3 Identify and use symbols to express ideas.

1.6.4 Demonstrate thoughtfulness and care in creating artwork.

1.6.5 Reflect on and share work with others.

1.6.6 Respect personal work and the work of others.

2.6.2 Create artwork about self, family, and personal experiences.

2.6.3 Create and use symbols in personal artwork to communicate meaning.

2.6.4 Demonstrate evidence of reflection and care in creating artwork.

Language Arts:

- Each time the story comes to the question, “So what did my grandfather do?” ask the students for ideas on what might happen next. After the first time, when they see how the man creates a new item from the old, they may have more ideas.
- Ask students to identify the characters in the book, showing how the daughter grew up and married, and then the granddaughter (who is the author) and last of all the great grandson. Ask them to identify their grandparents and tell what they call them. Also ask if they have living great grandparents.

K.RL.2.4 Make predictions about what will happen in a story.

K.RN.2.3 With support, describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text.

1.RL.2.4 Make and confirm predictions about what will happen next in a story.

1.RL.3.2 Identify who is telling the story at various points in a text.

Social Studies:

- Show students the front cover and discuss how the young man is dressed, and what he is using for suitcases. Is that how we dress today? Is that what our suitcases look like? Explain how clothing styles and even suitcases change over the years. This cover is letting us know this is a story from a long time ago. Show the title page and first page and discuss how many immigrants came to this country on ships and then became United States citizens. Talk about the Statue of Liberty and what it stands for.
- Define immigration and explain how immigration enriches community.

K.1.1 Compare children and families of today with those from the past.

K.3.6 Identify and compare similarities and differences in families, classmates, neighbors and neighborhoods, and ethnic and cultural groups.

3.1.9 Define immigration and explain how immigration enriches community. We are a nation of immigrants. We have been heavily influenced by immigration since before the Revolutionary War; E pluribus unum (out of many, one) is our motto:
<http://greatseal.com/mottoes/unum.html>;
Ellis Island was opened (January 1, 1892) during the administration of President Benjamin Harrison (Indiana's only President)
<http://www.history.com/topics/ellis-island>. Students will learn about Ellis Island and mark on a world map all the countries that had people who immigrated to the United States.

RELATED INTERNET SITES:

Jim Aylesworth's website for the book, including suggestions for classroom use (Classroom Connections): <http://www.ayles.com/mygrandfathers.html>

Sandar Bornstein's Blog: Multicultural Picture Book: Yiddish Folksong (13 February 2015) <http://www.sandrabornstein.com/multicultural-picture-book-yiddish-folksong/>