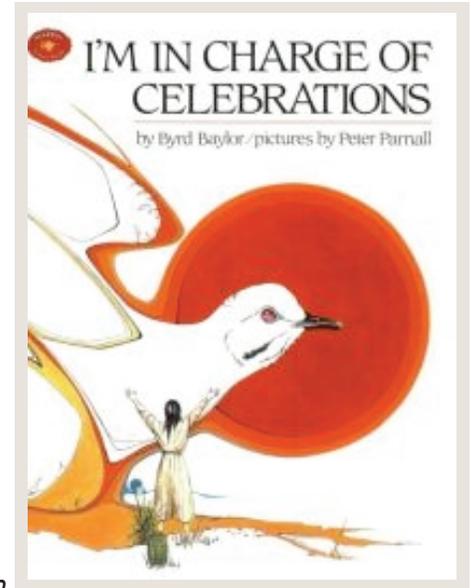




Title: I'm In Charge Of Celebrations
Author: Byrd Baylor
Genre: Picture Book (Prose-Poetry)
Cultural Connection: Seasons, Community Celebrations



PLOT SUMMARY

The girl in this story lives in the desert in the south-west of the United States. People sometimes ask her if she is lonely living out in the desert. The girl is surprised by the question and says *“How could I be lonely? I’m the one in charge of celebrations.”* When people don’t believe her she explains: *Last year I gave myself one hundred and eight celebrations- besides the ones that they close school for. I cannot get by with only a few. Friend, I’ll tell you how it works. I keep a notebook and I write the date and then I write about the celebration. I’m very choosy over what goes in the book. It has to be something I plan to remember the rest of my life. You can tell what’s worth a celebration because your heart will POUND and you’ll feel like you’re standing on top of a mountain and you’ll catch your breath like you were breathing some new kind of air.* The first celebration is on March 11. It is Dust Devil Day. Rainbow Celebration Day is on August 9. She describes it like this: *Once I saw a triple rainbow that ended in a canyon where I’d been the day before. I was halfway up a hill standing in a drizzle of rain. It was almost dark but I wouldn’t go in (because of the rainbows of course), and there at the top of the hill a jackrabbit was standing up on his hind legs, perfectly still, looking straight at that same triple rainbow. I may be the only person in the world who’s seen a rabbit standing in the mist quietly watching three rainbows. That’s worth a celebration any time. I wrote it down and drew the hill and the rabbit and the rainbow and me.* Some of the other celebrations include Green Cloud Day, Coyote Day, The Time of the Falling Stars and New Year’s Day (usually at the end of April).

LEARNING INTENTION

Focus Reading Connection: #2 Making Connections

Readers connect to a story when something in that story evokes a memory. When talking to students about making connections it is important to emphasize that:

1. A reader makes a connection to a story when a memory surfaces.
2. Readers can make connections to many aspects of a book: the pictures, the characters, the events, and even the emotions expressed in the story.
3. There are several types of connections that a reader can make:
 - connections between the book and the reader’s own life
 - connections between the book and other reading material the reader has encountered
 - connections between the book and events in the reader’s world

This lesson uses structured partner talk as a learning strategy. To learn more about partner talk please refer to the Educator’s page on our website.

MATERIALS REQUIRED

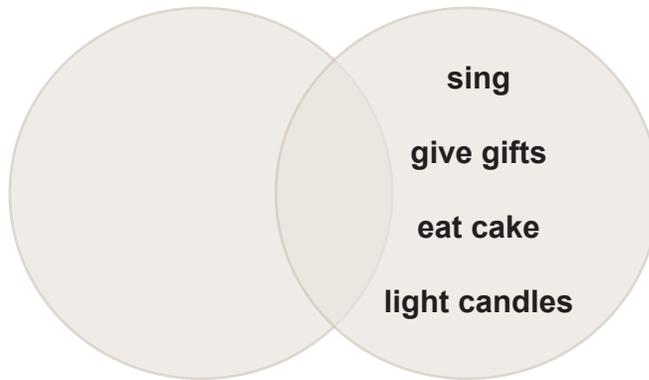
- 1 copy of I’m In Charge of Celebrations
- drawing paper, pencil and colouring things for each student



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BEFORE

- Explain to the class what making connections to a story means (it is something that happens when the story reminds the reader of something).
- Explain that a reader can make connections between the book and the reader's own life, between the book and other books, and the book and the world around him/her.
- Explain that a reader can connect to many parts of a book: the title, the pictures, the characters, the events and even the emotions in the story.
- Explain that today the class is going to practise making connections to celebrations.
- Discuss the meaning of the word "celebrate" with the class (to commemorate an event with some kind of festivity).
- Have each student talk with a partner. Have them share which events in their own families are celebrated (birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, Christmas, etc.)
- Have the students share their family celebrations with the larger group. List them on the chalkboard.
- On the chalkboard draw a large venn diagram. On one side of the diagram fill in things that the students do with their families to celebrate. A few examples are listed:



DURING

- Explain to the students that today you are going to read a book about some other kinds of celebrations. You will be adding these celebrations to the list.
- Read the story to the students. Stop at the end of each event to discuss the celebration and to add it to the list on the chalkboard.
- On the other side of the venn diagram fill in the things that the girl did to celebrate her special events. You may need to re-read the story as you do this.
- In the middle of the diagram list the things that are the same for the girl's celebrations and for the celebrations that the students enjoyed. Some examples are listed:

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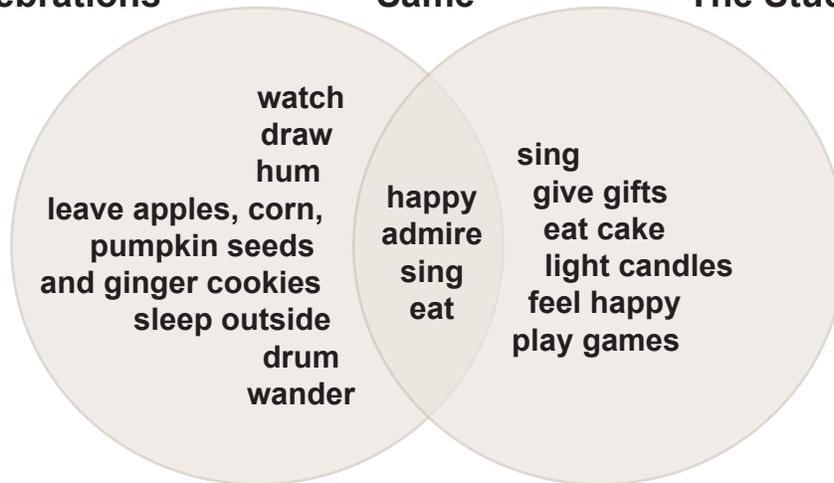
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...

The Girl's Celebrations

Same

The Student's Celebrations



AFTER



- Have each student talk to a partner and share which celebration is their favourite.
- Have each student draw and colour a picture of a celebration that s/he has really enjoyed during the last year. The picture must include labels of the important details and a caption (underneath the picture) that tells what the picture is about.
- After 15 or 20 minutes have the students stop working and go on a “gallery walk”. Have them circulate around the classroom for a few minutes to look at a minimum of 5 other pictures. Ask them to see if they can find a one that illustrates the same celebration as the one that they are drawing.
- Have the students return to their seats to add to and complete their pictures.

Suggested Supplemental Resources:

- Click on the Kids tab of our website to find similar stories such as:
- Canadian Celebrations : National Aboriginal Day published by Weighl
 - Coyote Christmas by J.D. Nelson
 - Coyote Speaks by Carolyn Dunn