



THAT IS A HAT

Parent / Teacher Guide

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Level: Pre-K through 2nd Grade

Early Literacy Skills: Reading, Talking, Writing, Singing, and Playing

Young children learn best by interacting, talking, and playing with a caring adult.

1. Before reading the book, show children the cover. Ask them what they see. Ask what they think the book will be about. Have them make up a story based on the cover.
2. As you read the story together, let the children guess how each animal might use the hat. ("What happens next?" questions are a great way to encourage early literacy.)
3. Read the story. Questions for discussion. Use simple questions for preschoolers, more complex ones for first and second graders. Questions might include:

- Did you like the story? Why or why not?
- Where do you think the story takes place? How do you know?
- What animals were in the story?
- Which animals were wild animals and which ones lived on the ranch?
- Were you surprised at the ending? What did you think would happen?
- The animals in the book didn't know what the hat was. Have you ever found an object or seen something that you didn't know what it was? Did you try to imagine what it might be used for like the animals in the book did with the hat?

ACTIVITIES

1. Show the children some objects that are unfamiliar to them and let them guess what they are and try to imagine how they might be used.
2. Have children create an object out of found materials or straws, bottles, paper plates, etc. Have them give the object a name. Have them tell a story about the object and how it is used. This is a great opportunity to use recycled materials and talk about recycling too.
3. If you found a hat and you didn't know what it was, how would you use it? What would you do with it? Write a story about what you did with your object. Have them write a poem or haiku about finding the object or the object itself.
4. Pick an object. It could be a crayon or a book or a flower or a pillow and pretend that you don't know what it is. Imagine how you might use it. Draw a picture of you using the object.
5. This story is set in the desert. Talk about the desert climate and the desert plants that live there. Have the children plant small succulent plants for the classroom or for their room and discuss how to care for them. Why would a plant that grows in a desert climate not need much rain? What are other special features of a desert plant that help it survive?

6. Explain what a tumbleweed is and do the following fingerplay:

Counting Tumbleweeds

10 little tumbleweeds by the corral gate:

(hold up 10 fingers)

The wind whooshed two away, and then there were eight.

("whoosh" hands away and hold up 8 fingers)

Eight little tumbleweeds said, "Oh! Fiddlesticks! We may as well dance with the wind." Then there were six.

("dance" hands behind back and hold up 6 fingers)

Six little tumbleweeds went out to explore; along came a whirlwind, and then there were four.

("whirl" hands behind back and come back with 4 fingers)

Four little tumbleweeds admiring the view; then came a gentle breeze so there were two.

(move hands gently behind back and hold up 2 fingers)

Two little tumbleweeds, round and round they spun until they were out of sight; then there were none!

("spin" two index fingers around as you place hands behind your back)

Happy reading!