

Creative Adventures with Literature

#2: *Matthew's Dream* by Leo Lionni

Introduction

The *Arkansas Child Development and Early Learning Standards: Birth through 60 months* focuses on three components of the **Domain: Creativity an Aesthetics**. The components are: **Music and Movement, Visual Arts, and Drama**. In the book, *Matthew's Dream* by Leo Lionni, the primary focus is on **Visual Arts**.

In this curriculum guide children are introduced to an art museum, to a mouse who becomes a painter, to different subjects for paintings, and to collage as a method for creating a picture.

Definition:

Visual Arts: a broad category of art activities that include drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture, graphic art, and other art forms.

Story Preparation

- Locate two or three paintings of different subjects: a person (portrait), animals and something that grows such as flowers or trees, for example.
- Collect scraps of paper of different sizes, shapes, colors and textures.
- Sort paper by color and place in small, clean containers such as butter tubs.
- Place the containers in a shallow box labeled **Collage Materials**.
- Prepare a chart sheet or marker board for the first reading. Title the sheet **Matthew's Dream**.

Matthew's Dream

Story Presentation

Learning Goals:

CD2.4 Holds and manipulates information in memory (*short-term and working memory*)

CD3.2 Engages in symbolic and abstract thinking (*abstract thinking*)

LD1.1 Understands and responds to language (in child's home language) (*vocabulary and language comprehension*)

EL1.1 Shows interest in literacy experiences (*engagement in language experiences, variety of interests*)

EL1.2 Engages in read-alouds and conversations about books and stories (*story comprehension*)

EL3.1 Responds to features of books and print (*book knowledge and print knowledge*)

Book: *Matthew's Dream* by Leo Lionni

First Reading of *Matthew's Dream*

- Be familiar with the book, *Matthew's Dream*.
- Take the book and the prepared chart sheet and a marker to story time.
- Show the cover, and give title.
- Explain that Leo Lionni is both the author and the illustrator of the book; that means he wrote the words and drew the pictures.
- Ask children if they ever have dreams and allow a brief discussion of their dreams.
- Invite children to look at the cover and predict what they think Matthew is dreaming about.
- Record on the chart sheet or marker board children's predictions about *Matthew's Dream*.
- Say, "Let's read the story and see if your predictions about Matthew's dream are correct."
- Begin to read the story with the children, allowing them sufficient time to look at the illustrations so that they can see what Matthew sees.
- Pause after reading the page about Matthew and his classmates going to the museum and ask if any of them have ever visited a museum. Allow time for responses.
- Explain that Matthew and his classmates are visiting an art museum where pictures are displayed on the wall for people to come in and look at.
- Turn the page and point to the two pictures on the two pages and say, "These are two of the pictures that Matthew and his classmates saw at the museum".
- Invite children to discuss what they see in each of the pictures.
- Read the text on the page, point to the portrait of King Mouse the Fourth and explain to children that a portrait is a picture of a person.
- Continue reading the story.
- Pause at the end of the reading and allow time for children's honest reaction to the story.
- Follow up the reading by reviewing from the chart children's predictions about Matthew's dream. Invite them to discuss what Matthew actually dreamed. Were their predictions correct?

Second Reading of *Matthew's Dream*

- Bring the three paintings to story time, keeping them out of children's sight until they have heard the story.
- Show the cover, give title and author/illustrator.
- Invite children to recall Matthew's dream.
- Read the story with the children, pause at appropriate times and involve them in recalling what a museum and a portrait are.
- Follow up the reading by showing the children the three pictures you have brought to story time.
- Allow children to examine the pictures and to describe what they see in each one.
- Ask them if they think the same artist painted each of the three pictures. Accept all comments. If pictures are signed by the artist, show the signature to the children.
- Be open to children's comments about their own drawings and paintings.

Third Reading of *Matthew's Dream*

- Take the container labeled **Collage Materials** to story reading area. Keep it out of sight of children.
- Show the cover and ask children to recall the title of the book.
- Name the author/illustrator and ask children if they remember what each does. Give them prompts if necessary.
- Read the story so all children can see the pictures in the book.
- Allow children to make comments that relate to the story.
- Follow up by showing the page that begins, "Matthew became a painter..."
- Point out to children the picture that is on the easel.
- Explain that Matthew is creating a collage. He drew the shapes (show outlines) and tore different colors of paper to add to the shapes.
- Show children collage materials that will be placed in the art center.
- Explain that these collage materials, plus other items such as glue, sheets of paper, scissors and pencils are also available in the center.

Creative Art Extensions

Learning Goals:

PH2.2 Adjusts grasp and coordinates movements to use tools (*writing and drawing tools, scissors*)

CA2.1 Explores, manipulates, creates, and responds to a variety of art media (*exploration of art, art appreciation and expression*)

Activity: Create a Collage

Materials: container labeled "**Collage Materials**", paper, glue, pencils, scissors

Directions:

- Add the listed items in the art center.
- Allow children to use the materials, plus other art materials, as they choose.

Activity: Create an Art Gallery

Materials: display area such as poster board, paper from roll, tri-fold display or bulletin board at child's eye level

Directions:

- Use one of the display areas listed or your own idea to create a gallery for display of children's art. Label it: **Art Gallery**.
- Recall with children that, in the book, *Matthew's Dream*, pictures by artists were displayed in an art gallery. Show the appropriate pages from the book.
- Involve children in deciding where to place the art gallery: in the art center, dramatic play area, or library, for example.
- Use the display area for the children's art creations.
- Invite children to choose which of their art creations they would like displayed and to discuss why they choose that particular creation.

Teacher's Note: *You may want to create more than one art gallery because of space. Be creative in your planning and adapt to the space you have available.*

Creative Drama and Dramatic Play Extensions

Learning Goal:

CA3.1 Explores feelings, relationships, and concepts through imitation, pretend play, and sociodramatic play (exploration of drama)

Activity: Matthew's Corner Prop Box

Contents: label box and include various items such as books, magazines, newspapers, and an old doll

Directions:

- Place the box and its contents in the dramatic play center.

Creative Music Experiences

Learning Goal:

CA1.1 Explores through listening, singing, creating, and moving to music (*exploration of music and movement, music and movement concepts*)

Activity: Dancing with Scarves

Materials: scarves of different colors, CD or tape with instrumental music, *Matthew's Dream*

Directions:

- Locate a CD with a song that invites swaying and moving gently – a waltz, for example.
- Invite children to join you in the music area and to select a scarf.
- Show the book, *Matthew's Dream*. Recall with children that Matthew heard music in his dream as he and Nicoletta were walking in the painting.
- Show the picture and read the words on the page that begins, "As they walked, playful patches of color shifted under their feet..."
- Suggest to children that they pretend to be suns and moons of different colors as they move gently to the music.
- Explain to children that you will play the song softly as you and the children move about the room waving your scarves of different colors.

Additional Books

Color Dance by Ann Jonas

Dreaming with Rousseau (Mini Masters - one in a collection see References and Resources) - Board book by Julie Merberg and Suzanne Bober

Additional "Matthew's Dream"

- Involve children in selecting art work to hang in the dramatic play area. Make sure that the art piece does not have glass that will shatter.
- Consider designating a specific type of art to display in the art gallery at one time. For example, if children create collages, display only collages in the gallery. Add a label to the gallery: **Our Collages.**