

Mama Don't Allow

ABOUT THE STORY

Miles got a saxophone for his birthday. Although his neighbors don't think he plays very well, he forms a band with his friends. No one wants to listen to the Swamp Band except for a group of alligators who are having a party. The Swamp Band plays for the alligators, and the gators want more than just entertainment from them! Folksinger Tom Chapin reads and sings this funny, exciting tale.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR

Thacher Hurd has written and illustrated several books for children, including *Art Dog* and *Mystery on the Docks*, both Live Oak Readalongs. He lives in Berkley, California.

INTRODUCING THE STORY

Ask children what they know about alligators. Write their responses on the chalkboard. Then tell them that in the book they will read, an opossum named Miles has to outwit some very tricky alligators.

READING ACTIVITIES

Comprehension/Thinking Skills

- What do the neighbors think of Miles' saxophone playing?
- Who joins Miles' Swamp Band?
- How do the alligators feel about the Swamp Band music?
- What do the alligators plan to do to the Swamp Band members?
- How would you describe the alligators' actions? (Evaluate)
- What effect does the lullaby have on the alligators? (Cause and Effect)

Vocabulary

Have volunteers look up each of these words from the story in the dictionary and read the definitions to the class. Then children can write a paragraph describing a party, using all of the vocabulary words.

saxophone alligator riverboat piloted lullaby

CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Science: Alligator Information

Have children research the habits and habitats of alligators using encyclopedias and other reference books. Ask them to write brief reports on where alligators can be found, what they eat, and how they behave. Children can share their reports with the rest of the class.

Science: Swamp Life

Have children work in groups to find out about different aspects of the natural world of the swamp. Groups can research swamp reptiles, amphibians, mammals, birds, and plants. When groups have gathered enough material, have them share their findings with the rest of the class.

Music: The Saxophone

Play selections of saxophone music for children. Ask them to write descriptions of what the music makes them think of and how it makes them feel. Volunteers can read their descriptions aloud to the class.

INTERNET ACTIVITY

Before you send children to do research using any of the keywords listed below, you may wish to try them yourself to be sure the sites are suitable.

Opossum Facts

Miles the saxophone player is an opossum. Have children use the keyword opossum to find out more about opossums. Ask each child to gather three facts about opossums to share with the class.