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Activity Guide

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The Chicken Sisters

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ABOUT THE STORY

The chicken sisters are very odd. One bakes badly, one knits badly and one sings badly. Their neighbors are tired of the smoke, the noise, and the itchy wool. It isn't until an old wolf moves in that the neighbors discover the chicken sisters' true worth.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Laura Numeroff grew up in Brooklyn, New York. She went to design school and took a course in writing and illustrating children's books. She knew right away that was what she wanted to do. Ms. Numeroff loves travel, ice skating, reading, and her pets—a dog, two cats, and a horse. She is the author of the best-selling books *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie* and *If You Give a Moose a Muffin*.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Sharleen Collicott divides her time between Santa Monica, California, and the Grand Canyon area, where she runs a home for retired cowboys. She is the illustrator of *The Teardrop Baby* and wrote and illustrated *Seeing Stars*.

INTRODUCING THE STORY

Ask children if they know someone who is a very bad baker, knitter, or singer. Have them describe how others react to the person's deficiencies. Point out that often people who are bad at one thing are good at other things. Explain that the book they will read is about three sisters who are very bad at some things, but are still very good neighbors.

READING ACTIVITIES

Comprehension/Thinking Skills

- "What happens when Violet bakes?"
- "What do Poppy and Violet do when Babs sings?"
- "How do the neighbors feel at first about the chicken sisters?"
- "How do the Fontinis react to the wolf?"
- "What happens when the wolf goes to the chicken sisters' house?"
- "Why does the wolf decide to move away?" (Draw conclusions)
- "Why do the neighbors decide not to complain about the sisters?" (Draw conclusions)

Vocabulary

Write each of these verbs from the story on the chalkboard. Then ask volunteers to act out each verb. Children can try to guess which verb is being acted out and then can provide a definition for the verb.

applauded
barged

measured
tangled

rummaged
froze

CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Science: Wolf Diets

All the neighbors are afraid the wolf will eat them—but what do wolves really eat? Divide children into groups and ask them to look in reference works and nonfiction books to find out what wolves eat in the wild. Groups can report on what they learn to the rest of the class.

Health: Cookie Recipes

Violet makes coconut crisp cookies as well as many other kinds. Ask children to find recipes for their favorite kinds of cookies. Have them copy the recipes and collect them in a class cookie book. You can make copies of the cookie book to send home with each child.

Music: Favorite Songs

Babs' favorite song is "Puppies, Piglets, and Pumpkins Too!" Ask children to name their favorite songs. If possible, find recordings of some of the songs or ask children to bring in recordings. Play the songs for the class and discuss why they are favorites.

Art: Design a Hat

Poppy knits hats with pom-poms on them. Have children design other hats that Poppy might knit. Their hats can have patterns or designs on them and can be in any color. Display hat designs around the classroom.

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.

Write to the Author

Using the keywords Laura Numeroff, children can visit the author's website, learn about her background, and find out how to communicate with her. Encourage them to write to Ms. Numeroff describing their reactions to her book.