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Activity Guide

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Henry and Mudge and the Forever Sea

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ABOUT THE STORY

Henry and his family and his dog Mudge are going to the beach. Mudge has never seen the ocean before, but he loves it at first sight. All day, Henry and his dog explore the wonders of the sea, from the joys of jumping into the waves to the strange habits of the crab Mudge discovers.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Cynthia Rylant has written many other books about Henry and Mudge, including *Henry and Mudge in Puddle Trouble* and *Henry and Mudge Get the Cold Shivers*, both Live Oak Readalongs. Her books have won dozens of awards; in 1993, she received the Newbery Award for her novel *Missing May*. She has always loved big, drooly dogs, just like Mudge, and lives with two of them in her house in Eugene, Oregon.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Sucie Stevenson knows all about Mudge-like dogs, too – she has two of her own. She has illustrated all the other Henry and Mudge tales.

INTRODUCING THE STORY

Ask children if they have ever been to the seaside. Have volunteers describe their experiences. Then tell them that this book is about a boy and his dog visiting the ocean for the first time.

READING ACTIVITIES

Comprehension/Thinking Skills

- “What did Henry warn Mudge not to do?”
- “What was Mudge’s first reaction to the ocean?”
- “What did Mudge eat for lunch?”
- “What did Mudge rescue?”
- “How do you think Mudge felt about the seashore? Explain your answer.”
(Draw conclusions)
- “What does the author mean when she describes the ocean as ‘blue and white and forever’?” (Analyze)

Vocabulary

Have children place these words in alphabetical order and write definitions for each one. Then ask them to use each in a sentence.

vacation
moats

goggles
celebrate

lobster
sideways

CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Science: Crustaceans

Have children look in encyclopedias or books to find information about lobsters or crabs. Ask them to write a brief report on the habits of the crustacean they choose. Children can report to the class on the information they find.

Health: Water Safety

Ask children to work in groups to make a poster about water safety at the beach. Have them brainstorm a list of rules for keeping safe in and near the water. Then they can write their list on the piece of poster paper. Encourage them to illustrate their posters.

Social Studies: The World’s Oceans

Have children work in groups and choose one of the world’s oceans to research. Each group can find information on the ocean they choose and report on what they learned in class. Encourage them to find out where their ocean is located, what continents it touches, and what makes it different from other oceans.

Language Arts: An Ocean Poem

Have children use the line “blue and white and forever” from the story as the basis for a poem about the ocean. Encourage them to think about how the ocean looks, smells, sounds, and feels and to use the descriptive words they come up with in the poem. Volunteers can read 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.

Sea Life

Using the keywords *ocean animals*, children can use the Internet to find information about animals that live in the sea. Ask them to find three facts about an ocean animal and report on what they have learned to the class.