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Activity Guide

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Henry and Mudge and the Snowman Plan

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ABOUT THE STORY

When Henry sees a notice for a snowman-building contest, he decides to enter. He, his father, and his dog Mudge join the other contestants, all determined to win the contest. How will Henry and his father make their snowman different from all the others?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Cynthia Rylant has written many other books about Henry and Mudge, including *Henry and Mudge and the Starry Night* and *Henry and Mudge and the Sneaky Crackers*, 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 big 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 built a snowman. Have volunteers describe the most imaginative snowman they have made. Then tell them that the book they will read is about a boy who enters a snowman-building contest.

READING ACTIVITIES

Comprehension/Thinking Skills

- "What is Henry's father doing in the basement?"
- "What are some of the things people bring to the contest?"
- "Which snowman wins first prize?"
- "What does Henry's snowman look like?"
- "Does Henry's snowman win a prize? Explain."
- "How is Henry's snowman different from the others?"
- "Do you think Henry is pleased with the result of the contest? Explain."

Vocabulary

mustache elbow broccoli husky poodle dachshund Chihuahua

Write these words from the story on the chalkboard. Have the children pick out the words that are the names of dog breeds, and ask them to describe the dogs. Then have volunteers give definitions for the other words. Children can use each word in a sentence.

CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Science: Dog Breeds

Have children work in small groups to find information on one of the dog breeds mentioned in the story. They can locate pictures of the dogs and find out the special characteristics of the breed. Ask groups to report back on what they learn to the class.

Art: Draw a Winning Snowman

The people in the contest build all sorts of snowmen. Ask children to draw a picture of the snowman they would build for the contest. Encourage them to make their snow people as imaginative as possible. Display their finished snowmen around the classroom.

Social Studies: Snow Presidents

One of the people in the contest chose to build a snowman that looked like Abraham Lincoln. Ask children which president they would choose to build as a snowman. Have them do some research on the president they choose, finding out when he was president and what he did in office. They can report on their choices to the rest of the class.

Language Arts: A New Point of View

While Henry and his father were busy building a snowman, Mudge was having a very different experience. To help children understand the concept of point of view in a story, ask them to think about how Mudge would have described the contest. Have them write a description of the contest as Mudge would have described it. Encourage volunteers to read their descriptions 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.

Snowpeople on the Net

Children may enjoy seeing how elaborate a snowman can be. Using the keywords "snowman building" have children find pictures of snowmen on the Internet. Children can print out a picture of their favorite snowman and display it in the classroom.