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Activity Guide

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Blueberries For Sal

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ABOUT THE STORY

With their mothers, a little girl and a bear cub pick blueberries in the countryside. Wandering astray, however, each youngster mistakes the other's mother for its own.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR/ ILLUSTRATOR

A native Ohioan who explored the worlds of music and mechanics before settling on an art career, Robert McCloskey is one of America's most successful and popular creators of children's books. He is the first person to be twice awarded the Caldecott Medal, for *Time of Wonder* and *Make Way for Ducklings* (also available as a Live Oak Readalong). He has also written the endearing and enduring *Homer Price* as well as *One Morning in Maine* and *Burt Dow: Deep-Water Man*.

INTRODUCING THE STORY

Ask children if they have ever picked fruits or vegetables. Have them describe the experience. Then tell them that the story they will read describes what happens when a little girl and her mother go to pick blueberries on a hillside in Maine.

READING ACTIVITIES

Comprehension/Thinking Skills

"Why were Little Sal and her mother picking blueberries?"

"Why were Little Bear and his mother eating blueberries?"

"Besides Little Bear and his mother, what animals did Little Sal see on Blueberry Hill?"

"Do you think it is dangerous to meet a mother bear and her cub? Explain your answer." (Make judgments)

Vocabulary

On the board, write the following words from the story. Go over the definitions for each word. Then ask children to use each word in a sentence.

blueberry
pail

tremendous
shy

mistake
handful

CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Health: Animal Warnings

Some animals can be dangerous if they are approached in the wrong way or at the wrong time. Ask children to work in small groups to create flyers with rules for safety in approaching animals. Some animals to consider include dogs, snakes, skunks, and turtles.

Language Arts: Imagining a Story

Tell Children to think about what might have happened if Sal's mother and Little Bear's mother had not been shy of each other's children. Ask them to write about the adventure they all might have shared, using their imaginations.

Science: Bear Facts

Provide encyclopedias and other reference books so children can find information about bears. Ask each child to write down three facts about bears. Children can share their information with the rest of the class.

Social Studies: The Wonders of Maine

Point out to children that the story takes place in the state of Maine. Have children work in small groups to make maps of Maine, pinpointing major cities and bodies of water. If possible, have them find out what areas have large blueberry farms and mark those areas on their maps.

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.

Blueberry Fun

Using the word blueberry as a keyword, children can find fun recipes using blueberries on the Internet. Have them copy down the recipe they like most. Collect the recipes in a classroom Blueberry Cookbook.