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Activity Guide

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The Gingerbread Man

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ABOUT THE STORY

A freshly baked gingerbread man leaps up from the pan and runs away from the old man and woman who have just baked him. In turn he runs away from a pig, a dog, a cow and a horse. Then a fox offers to help him cross the water—an offer the gingerbread man foolishly accepts.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Eric A. Kimmel has been a professor of education at Portland State University and a past president of the Oregon Reading Association. He is a storyteller, and the author of many picture books, including *I Took My Frog to the Library*, also a Live Oak Readalong.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Megan Lloyd's illustrations can be found in a number of books, including *The Christmas Tree Ride* by Mary Neville and *Baba Yaga: A Russian Tale* by Eric A. Kimmel. She lives in Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

INTRODUCING THE STORY

Ask children if they know of any old folk tales. Have volunteers tell the tales they know. Then tell them that the book they will read is the retelling of a folk tale about a gingerbread man.

READING ACTIVITIES

Comprehension/Thinking Skills

- "Why did the gingerbread man run away from the old man and woman who baked him?"
- "Why did the gingerbread man accept the fox's offer?"
- "How did the fox trick the gingerbread man into climbing up to the fox's snout?"
- "Why shouldn't we be sad about the gingerbread man's fate, according to the story?"
- "Which character was smarter, the gingerbread man or the fox? Explain." (*Compare and contrast*)
- "Did you think the story was sad? Why or why not?" (*Make judgements*)

Vocabulary

Write the words below on the chalkboard. Help children to define each word. Then draw three word webs on the board. In the centers, write "animal noises," "animal parts," and "animal places." Have children copy the webs and write the words that describe each phrase in the appropriate web circles. Children can add to the webs with their own words.

snout
neighed

oinked
pasture

pigsty
moored

CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Health: Gingerbread Recipes

Provide cookbooks for children to look through. They can find recipes for making gingerbread or gingerbread cookies. Children can copy the recipes they find and show them to classmates. Encourage them to compare and contrast the ingredients and recipe instructions. Then collect the recipes in a class gingerbread cookbook.

Science: A Fox's Life

Have children use books about animals or encyclopedias to find information about foxes. Ask each child to write down three facts about foxes. Children can share the information they find with the rest of the class.

Art: Draw Gingerbread People

Provide the class with brown construction paper, glue, and small items such as buttons, M&Ms, and pieces of licorice. Ask each child to draw and cut out versions of the gingerbread man. Children can use buttons or candies for the gingerbread person's features and clothing. Display the creations in the classroom.

Health: Gingerbread Labels

Bring in a package of gingerbread cookies. Show children the label on the package and explain the meaning of the information it gives. Point out and discuss which ingredients are healthy and which are not. Discuss with children whether the cookies are nutritious.

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.

Sly Foxes

Children can find other stories featuring sly foxes like the one in *The Gingerbread Man*. Have them search the Internet using the keywords fox folk tales. Children can copy or print out stories they find and share them with the rest of the class.