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Activity Guide

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Doctor de Soto

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ABOUT THE STORY

Doctor de Soto is a charming story about a mouse dentist who, against his better judgment, decides to help a fox with a terrible toothache. Soon, Doctor de Soto realizes that the fox intends to eat him. He comes up with a clever plan to save himself and help the fox at the same time.

INTRODUCING THE BOOK

Doctor de Soto is an excellent dentist, so he has many patients come to him for help. But Doctor de Soto is a mouse and he will not treat dangerous animals such as cats and foxes. One day, a fox with a terrible toothache calls on him. Should Doctor de Soto let him in?

READING ACTIVITIES

Comprehension/Thinking Skills

- “What kind of doctor was el Doctor de Soto?”
- “How was Doctor de Soto able to work on patients much larger than he?”
- “Why didn’t Doctor de Soto want to work on the fox?”
- “Do you think the fox went to Doctor de Soto with the intention of eating him?” (*Make judgments*)
- “How did Doctor de Soto and his wife know the fox was thinking of eating them?” (*Make inferences*)
- “How did the de Soto’s save themselves from the fox?”

CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Health: A Visit to the Dentist

Most children have had their teeth checked by a dentist. Have children talk about what happened on their visits. Compare their visits with a dentist with a visit to Doctor de Soto. What do they do that is the same and what is different? What in this story might really happen in a dentist’s office? What is imaginary? If you can, arrange a class trip to a local dentist.

Talking About Teeth

Tell children about the three main types of teeth: the incisors, the canines, and the molars. Incisors are used to cut food, canines to tear it, and molars to chew. How do human teeth compare to mouse teeth? To fox teeth? Use a chart to help children learn about the different parts of a tooth.

Social Studies: Resisting Temptation

The fox knows that it is wrong to eat Doctor de Soto and his wife, but he says “¿Cómo voy a poder resistir la tentación?” (How can I resist temptation?) Discuss with the children the times they have wanted to do something but were able to ‘resist temptation’.

Language Arts: Formal and Informal

When Doctor de Soto addresses someone he is acquainted with, such as the fox, he uses the formal third person – No puedo recibirle, señor. (I cannot admit you, sir.) When he speaks to his wife, he uses the informal second person -- ¿ Qué te parece que hagamos? (What do you think we should do?) Find other examples in the story.

Change the following from the informal to the formal:

¿No ha leído usted el cartel?

Siéntese usted en el suelo.

Voy a darle un poco de anestesia.

No tendrá usted que volver a visitarnos nunca.

Change the following from the informal to the formal:

¿Crees que deberíamos dejarle entrar mañana?

No sentirás nada.

Nadie va a volver a visitarnos nunca más.

Estás sangrando – aquí está un poco de gasa.

From the Past to the Future

The future tense is used when an action will take place in the future – Mañana tendremos su nueva muela preparada. (Tomorrow we will have your new tooth ready.) Change these past tense verbs from the story to the future tense. Be careful of irregular verbs.

trabajaba vieron abría subió empezaron

era dijo estabo preparó sentía

El Zorro Astuto (Sly Fox)

The fox is often portrayed as a sly creature. Think of other stories where this is so – *The Gingerbread Man*, *The Fox and the Crow*, *Chicken Little*, etc. Are real foxes sly by nature? How did the fox get this reputation? Research as a class to learn about foxes. How do the facts relate to fiction?