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Activity Guide

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The Girl Who Loved Wild Horses

ABOUT THE STORY

A Native American girl loves the wild horses that graze near her village. One night there is a terrible storm, and the wild horses, frightened, take her far from her home. She stays with the horses until her people find her and bring her back. Lonely, she becomes ill, until her parents again allow her to join the wild horses and ride free.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR

Paul Goble was born in England and studied at the Central School of Art in London. He moved to the United States in 1977. Since childhood, he has been fascinated with Native American life and folklore, and his interest is reflected in his many books about Native Americans. *The Girl Who Loved Wild Horses* won the Caldecott Medal in 1978.

INTRODUCING THE STORY

Ask children to tell how they feel about horses. Encourage them to explain their feelings, and tell them that the story they will read is about a girl who loved horses so much that she went to live with them.

READING ACTIVITIES

Comprehension/Thinking Skills

- “How does the girl help the wild horses?”
- “What happens during the thunderstorm?”
- “How does the girl feel when she is living with the horses?” (*Draw conclusions*)
- “How does the girl’s village get her back?”
- “What happens to the girl when she returns home?”
- “Why do you think the girl’s parents let her go with the horses?” (*Analyze*)
- “Do you think the girl becomes a wild horse? Why or why not?” (*Draw conclusions*)

Vocabulary

List these words from the book on the chalkboard. Ask children to put the words in alphabetical order. Then help them define each word to make a glossary of terms to use when reading the story.

tipis	blizzards	lightning	galloping
grazing	horizon	neighing	stallion

CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Social Studies: The Plains Indians

The girl who loved wild horses might have been a Navajo or a Sioux Indian. Have children work in groups to find out about one of these Native American groups. Each group can report on one aspect of the Native Americans’ lives: where they lived, what they wore, what they ate, or their customs and traditions.

Science: Wild Horses

Wild horses are still found in some parts of the world. Have children use encyclopedias or other reference books to find out about these horses – where they are found, what they eat, and their natural predators.

Language Arts: Horse Poems

After children have read or heard the horse songs at the end of the book, have them write their own horse poems. Encourage them to use similes to describe horses, as in the first poem. Children can illustrate their poems if they choose.

Art: Make a Tipi

The tipis shown in the book are decorated with pictures of animals. Children can work in small groups to make tipis of their own from construction paper and sticks. Have them tie a bundle of sticks together at the top and spread out the bottoms. Then they can wrap and tape or glue a piece of paper decorated with animal illustrations around the stick base. Remind them to cut a flap for the door. Display the tipis in the classroom.

INTERNET ACTIVITY

Before you send children to do research using any of the keywords listed below, you may wish to try them to be sure the sites are suitable.

Paul Goble’s Artwork

Children can view more of Paul Goble’s artwork on the Internet. Have them use the keywords *Paul Goble Author* to find sites where the art is displayed. If possible, children can print out the painting they like best to show to the rest of the class.