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Activity Guide

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The Story of Ferdinand

ABOUT THE STORY

The Story of Ferdinand is a classic story about the bull that preferred to sit and smell flowers rather than fight.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Though best known as the author of *The Story of Ferdinand*, which he wrote in just forty minutes, Munro Leaf turned out almost twenty books for children during his lifetime. In addition to writing, Mr. Leaf was also an accomplished lecturer who traveled throughout the world speaking to children and educators on behalf of the United States government. Mr. Leaf passed away in 1976.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Born in New York City, Robert Lawson started illustrating books in 1930. *Ben and Me*, published in 1938, was the first book he wrote and illustrated. Other books written and illustrated by Mr. Lawson include *The Great Wheel*, *The Tough Winter*, *They Were Strong and Good*, and *Rabbit Hill* (which won the Newberry Award).

INTRODUCING THE STORY

When some of your friends suggest that you and they do something together, do you ever say 'No'? Are there times when you like to do quiet things by yourself? *The Story about Ferdinand* is about a bull who, unlike his companions, prefers being quiet to being fierce.

READING ACTIVITIES

Comprehension/Thinking Skills

- “What did Ferdinand’s mother think about his just sitting quietly and smelling the flowers? What did the other little bulls do?”
- “What did the other little bull want most of all when they grew up? What did Ferdinand want?”
- “When the five men in funny hats came to the pasture, what were they looking for?”
- “Why did the five men pick Ferdinand?”
- “How was Ferdinand taken to and from the bull ring?”

Categories (nouns)

Write these verbs on the chalkboard:

| | | | |
|--------|---------|------|---------|
| tree | bull | men | pasture |
| ladies | flowers | home | grass |
| horses | Spain | cow | bee |

Explain to the children that all the words are nouns and they can be grouped into several categories. Have the children make four lists of nouns from the chalkboard: people, place, plants, and animals.

Compound Words

Review with the children the definition of a compound word. Have them make a list of the compound words in the story (upon, sometimes, lonesome, himself, understanding, into, everyone). Ask the individuals to use the compound words in original sentences.

Scrambled Sentences

“Sometimes it is fun to unscramble a group of words to make a sentence. Can you put these sentences back in order?”

Duplicate and distribute the following scrambled sentences. Have the children re-write them in the correct order using proper punctuation and capitalization.

- with up ferdinand snort jumped a
- parade ring the they into a had bull
- take they so home ferdinand to had
- happy is he very

Long Vowel and Silent E

Explain to the children that there are nine words in the story that have long vowel sounds and that end with the letter *e* (*time, name, shade, same, five, came, rode, cape, and home*). Have individuals write each word on the chalkboard and underline the vowel.

Listing to Final Consonant Sounds

Ask the children to listen as you pronounce the following pairs of words from the story. Have them tell you whether or not the two words end with the same consonant sound.

- | | | | |
|----------|------|----------|-------|
| 1. run | jump | 5. spot | out |
| 2. jump | big | 6. cork | fight |
| 3. not | sit | 7. would | head |
| 4. smell | bull | 8. just | snort |