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Activity Guide

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Se Venden Gorras

ABOUT THE STORY

Awakening from a well-earned nap beside a stout tree, an itinerant cap peddler finds that his wares have been confiscated by a band of feisty monkeys cavorting in the branches overhead. In reply to his commands to return the caps, the monkeys simply imitate – and so further anger – the peddler. Finally, by throwing down his own cap in frustration, the salesman unwittingly outwits the monkeys as they follow his example.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Esphyr Slobodkina was born at the foot of the Ural Mountains and spent her childhood in Siberia. She studied art in Manchuria before immigrating to the United States. Profusely talented, Ms. Slobodkina has achieved success and acclaim as a painter, sculptor, architect, lecturer, and teacher. Many of her paintings are to be found in the permanent collections of several major museums throughout the country.

READING ACTIVITIES

Comprehension/Thinking Skills

- “What is a peddler?”
- “How was this peddler different from the other peddlers?”
- “Why did the peddler go for a walk in the country?”
- “Why did he walk so slowly?”
- “What happened to all the caps when the peddler woke up?”
- “Why wouldn’t the monkeys give back the caps?”
(Draw conclusions)
- “How did the peddler finally get his caps back?”

Vocabulary

The peddler carries caps of many colors on his head. Have the children match the Spanish word for each color to the English word (or vice versa).

gris	blue
marrón	yellow
azul	white
rojo	red
amarillo	black
verde	gray
naranja	brown
negro	orange

Plurals

In English, as in Spanish, adding –s or –es makes a word plural. Look through the book for examples of this. See if children can find the pattern: If a word ends in a vowel, add –s; if a word ends in a consonant, add –es. Then make the following words plural. Do the same with their English counterparts. Is the rule the same in English?

vendedor	peddler
gorra	cap
calle	street
centavo	cent
arbol	tree
rama	branch
mono	monkey

CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Language Arts: Something Different

This story might have been difficult if the peddler had sold something other than caps. What might have happened if the peddler had sold shoes or gloves or some other item? Let the children use their imagination to come up with another version of the story.

Math: 12 + 1 + 13

The peddler carries 13 caps on his head – his own checked cap and the 12 that are for sale. Give each child, or each group of children, 13 two-color counters. Let them come up with as many different ways of making 13 as they can. When everyone is done, list the results on the board to see how many combinations were found.

Science: Monkey Business

The monkeys in this story imitate the peddler’s actions. When he shakes his finger, they shake their fingers. When he stamps his feet, they stamp their feet. Do monkeys behave like this in real life? Use books from the library to research and learn about monkeys. Find out about their habitat and habits.

Art: Make a Monkey Mural

Using the information learned in the above activity, have children make a mural depicting monkeys in their natural habitat.