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Activity Guide

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The Snow Walker

ABOUT THE STORY

This is the true story of twelve year old Milton Daub, who, with the help of snowshoes, braved the Blizzard of 1888 to deliver much-needed milk, groceries, and medicine to the people in his town.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Margaret K. Wetterer is a former elementary school teacher who spent part of her childhood in Ireland. Her first book, *The Moons of Jupiter* was published in 1971. Other titles by Wetterer include *Kate Shelley* and *the Midnight Express*, another Live Oak Media Readalong. Charles Wetterer is an attorney who teaches law at two universities. The Wetterers enjoy kayaking in the waters around their Long Island, New York home.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Mary O'Keefe Young has illustrated several books, including several holiday themed books, as well as some titles for the popular *Chicken Soup for the Soul* series. She lives with her husband in White Plains, New York.

INTRODUCING THE STORY

Ask the children if they have ever experienced a blizzard or big snowstorm. Discuss what happens in a blizzard and talk about why it is dangerous. Explain that in 1888, a massive blizzard hit the northeastern United States. Not only did it do a lot of damage, but it also claimed 400 lives. Explain that this is the true story of a young boy who not only lived through this blizzard, but also brought relief to many stranded families in his Bronx, NY neighborhood.

READING ACTIVITIES

Comprehension/Thinking Skills

1. In what year does this story take place? (1888)
2. What do Milton and his father make that enable Milton to go out in the storm? (snowshoes)
3. Why does Milton stay out so long on his first trip to the store? (he's delivering milk to other stranded people)
4. Why doesn't Milton go home when his snowshoes begin to fall apart? (more people need his help/ deliveries)
5. How does Milton help the sick man and his wife? (goes to get the man's prescription filled for them)
6. What do you think might have happened if Milton had not gone out in the blizzard? (answers will vary)

7. How was Milton able to get the needed supplies with snow blocking off the store doors? (snow was so high he was able to conduct his business directly through the business owner's apartment window on the 2nd floor)
8. How much did a can of milk cost in 1888? (ten cents)

Vocabulary

Be sure students have an understanding of the following terms. Depending on age, simply discuss the terms, or have children look them up in a dictionary.

jolted, kerosene, dangerous, snowshoes, shrieked, parka, telegraph, carriages, condensed milk, prescription, landmarks, admired, dogsled, frantic, honestly

CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Language Arts: Creating Compounds

Remind students that a compound word consists of two smaller words joined together to make a new word. Write the following two lists of words on the board. Have children take turns drawing lines to correctly create a compound word. Then challenge children to make their own list of compound words.

snow	coat
over	bitten
frost	mark
ice	sled
dog	shoes

Social Studies: Historical Happenings

The Blizzard of 1888 struck on March 12th. Bring the students to the library and have them research that date, as well as the days immediately following. What were the major headlines that week? Research the type of damage that was recorded and collect statistical information. Generate a class report called "On This Day in History". Were there any major events that took place on March 12 in other years? (You may wish to combine this with an Internet searching activity.)

Science/Mapping: Make Me a Meteorologist

Point out that in 1888, scientists could not predict the weather with any accuracy, but now, meteorologists are able to pinpoint exact weather patterns days in advance. Bring children to the library and have them track weather patterns reported in your local newspaper. Create weather wheels (pie charts) that show the ratio of sunny days to cloudy days to days with precipitation.

Home and Career Skills: Meteorologists Matter

Have children research the job description and duties of meteorologists. What kind of training or college degree do they need to become one? What is a typical day like for a meteorologist? Contact a local television station and arrange for a meteorologist to come speak to the children about his/her job. (You may want to incorporate Internet research into this activity.)

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.

Meteorologists:

See "Home and Career Skills: Meteorologists Matter" activity above.
"Blizzard of 1888": See "Social Studies: Historical Happenings" activity above.
Milton Daub: Locate additional biographical information about the young hero. What did he grow up to become? Did he continue doing heroic work for his community as an adult? Did he marry? Have children?