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Activity Guide

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Ira Says Goodbye

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ABOUT THE STORY

Ira's sister first breaks the bad news – Reggie, Ira's best friend, is moving away. At first, Reggie seems to look forward to moving, but on moving day, his enthusiasm fails him. Both boys finally come to grips with the change in their lives, realizing their friendship can still flourish despite the distance between them.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR/ ILLUSTRATOR

A Philadelphia native, Bernard Waber started out studying for a career in finance. He gave that up for a degree in art and has been writing and illustrating books for children ever since. He is the author of the Lyle Crocodile books and of *Ira Sleeps Over*, another Live Oak Readalong.

INTRODUCING THE STORY

Ask children if any of them have had close friends move away, or if they have moved away from friends themselves. After volunteers describe their experiences, tell them that this is about a boy whose very best friend is moving away.

READING ACTIVITIES

Comprehension/Thinking Skills

- “Why was Reggie moving to Greendale?”
- “How did Ira Learn that Reggie was going to move?”
- “How did Reggie react to his upcoming move?”
- “How did Ira react?”
- “Why do you think Ira listed all the things he didn't like about Reggie?”
(Draw conclusions)
- “Why do you think Reggie was so upset on moving day?” (Make inferences)

Vocabulary

Write these words from the story on the chalkboard. Help children define each word. Point out to children that the words can be used to describe feelings. Make a chart; with one column for the words and a second column where children can list things that make them feel the way the word describes.

lonely delighted surprised terrible terrific friendly

CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Language Art: Letter to a Friend

When people move away, their friends can keep in touch through phone calls, letters, and e-mail. Ask children to imagine how they would feel if their closest friend moved away. Have them write a letter to the friends, telling what is happening in their lives and describing their feelings about the move.

Science: Turtle Pets

Ira and Reggie both keep turtles as pets. Have children look in books about pets or about turtles to find out what kinds of turtles make good pets. Encourage them to write a description of a turtle they would like to have as a pet and to describe how to take care of he turtle.

Drama: Saying Goodbye

The goodbye scene between Ira and Reggie is very dramatic. Have volunteers take the parts of Ira, Reggie, their parents, and Ira's sister to act out the scene. Help them rehearse and perform the scene. If other children would like to try acting, have a new group perform the scene.

Language Arts: Moving Day

Many children have moved to a new home at some point in their lives. Others can imagine what such a move might be like. Have children write a description of a real or imagined moving day. Encourage them to tell how they felt about the move. Encourage them to tell how they felt about the move. Were they sad? Excited? Both?

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.

Meet Bernard Waber

Children can learn more about author Bernard Waber and read reviews of his books by using the author's name as a keyword to search the Internet. Encourage them to write down at least one title by Mr. Waber that they might enjoy reading. Have children describe the book they find to the rest of the class, explaining why they might like to read it.