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Activity Guide

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Mr. Rabbit and the Lovely Present

ABOUT THE STORY

A young girl, at loss as to the choice of a birthday present for her mother, seeks help from a willing and wise rabbit. Discovering that her mother likes primary colors, Mr. Rabbit suggests several gift ideas that combine to make a wonderful present.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Charlotte Zolotow's life is centered on children's books. As former editor for a major publishing company, she worked daily with both established and first-time authors and illustrators. As an author, she has written many outstanding books for children, including *Do You Know What I'll Do?*, *Big Brother*, *Over and Over*, and *My Grandson Lew*.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

One of the foremost illustrators in the field of children's literature, Maurice Sendak is best known for his *Where the Wild Things Are*, a true classic.

INTRODUCING THE STORY

Ask the group to describe the ways in which they select birthday gifts for members of their families. Discuss the importance of giving a gift that its recipient will enjoy. Introduce the story as that of a young girl who seeks the help of a rabbit in choosing a gift for her mother.

READING ACTIVITIES

Comprehension/Thinking Skills

- "Where did the little girl's mother like to see birds?"
- "Why couldn't the little girl give her mother an emerald?"
- "What were the four colors the girl's mother liked so much?"
- "What were the items Mr. Rabbit suggested as suitable gifts and what were their colors?"
- "Why did the little girl think butter would not make a good gift?"
- "Why would the little girl give her mother stars if she could?" (*Draw conclusions*)
- "Do you think the little girl's mother will like the gift? Why or why not?" (*Predict*)

Vocabulary

Go over these words and their meanings with the group. Then write these definitions on the chalkboard and ask volunteers to give the answers.

canary
parrot

cardinal
caterpillars

emeralds
sapphires

A blue gem
A green bird
A red bird
A green insect
A green jewel
A yellow bird

CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Art: *Still Life*

Ask children to paint a picture of the little girl's gift basket for her mother. Provide them with paints and paper. Remind them to use the correct color for each item in the basket.

Math: *Colorful Fruits*

Divide the children into four groups and assign each group a color: red, yellow, green, or blue. Have each group list as many fruits in their color as they can. Use their lists to make a bar graph on the chalkboard, with one bar for each color. The bars can show the numbers of fruits for each color.

Science: *Bright Birds*

Mr. Rabbit thinks of birds that are red, green, and yellow. Have the children look in nature magazines or books to find pictures of very colorful birds. They can write a brief description of the bird they find and report on it to the class.

Art: *Mixing Colors*

Children will enjoy mixing colors from the book to see what other colors they can make. Provide them with paints, and have them mix colors to try to get other colors such as purple, orange, and turquoise. They can use their mixed colors to create colorful paintings.