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Activity Guide

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Anna Banana and Me

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ABOUT THE STORY

Anna Banana swings as high as the swing will allow, shouts at dark places, and is otherwise bold and fearless. Her occasional companion, a young boy of the same age, is not so unafraid, though, and becomes genuinely scared at one of Anna's stories about a goblin. Only when he recalls something else Anna once told him does he find the strength to overcome his fear.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Lenore Blegvad is a graduate of Vassar College and a native of New York City. While studying painting in Paris, she met Erik Blegvad, now her husband. The author of several books for children, she divides her time between writing and painting.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Erik Blegvad is a freelance artist who has worked in Paris, New York, London, and his native Copenhagen, Denmark. His illustrations have appeared in numerous magazines and newspapers and in over ninety books, many of them for children.

INTRODUCING THE STORY

Ask if any of the group knows someone who doesn't seem to be afraid of anything. What does the person say or do to give the impression of fearlessness? Explain that *Anna Banana and Me* is about a young girl who is perceived as unafraid by her friend, a cautious boy.

READING ACTIVITIES

Comprehension/Thinking Skills

- “What did Anna Banana say about the feather she found under the park bench?”
- “What did Anna Banana do when she saw the stairs leading up into the dark?”
- “How did Anna Banana ride the swing?”
- “Who was the tomato face?”
- “What put an end to the boy's fear of the tomato face?”

Vocabulary

Write the following lists of words on the board. Explain that the words, when combined, will make compound words from the story. Have children match the words and use each in a sentence.

some	tops
play	box
sand	thing
tree	ground

CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Art: The Scariest Goblin

Ask children to draw a picture of a goblin that they think is really scary. Encourage them to be as imaginative as they can be. Hang the pictures around the room in a goblin gallery.

Language Arts: Describing Fears

Ask each child to write a description of something that frightens them or that used to scare them when they were younger. When they are finished, collect the unsigned descriptions. Read them aloud and talk about some ways to get over fears. Collect the descriptions together in a class book of fears.

Social Studies: City Life

Recall the activities that Anna Banana and her friend share (hiding under a park bench, playing in apartment house hallways, playing in a park playground, and so on). Ask children to compare them to play activities in your community, noting the similarities and differences.

Language Arts: Rhyming Names

Note that the names Anna and Banana rhyme. Duplicate and distribute the following list of names ask the group to rearrange them so that each rhymes. Then ask children to think of other funny rhyming names.

June	Berry
Helen	Bean
Jean	Prune
Jerry	Melon

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.

Goblins Online

For a description of goblins and their powers, children can use the keywords goblins AND encycloedia to find definitions of these magical beings in an online encyclopedia. Encourage them to write them to write down any interesting information they find.