

# Learning Experience

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<b>LE Title: First Dog Play by First Graders</b>	<b>Author: Hilda C. Moses, Library Media Spec.</b>
<b>Grade Level: 1st grade</b>	<b>School : N A Walbran Elementary</b>
<b>Topic/Subject Area: Language Arts/ Art</b>	<b>School Address: Rt. 69, Box 539, Oriskany, NY 13424</b>
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## LEARNING CONTEXT

### *Purpose or Focus of Experience*

**The purpose of this Learning Experience is provide an opportunity for first graders to take part in a dramatic presentation of a familiar story.**

**This Learning Experience is the conclusion of many other lessons about the author Jan Brett and her work.**

**The focus of this Learning Experience is on understanding how a wild animal might have become a tame pet and companion to man.**

**Another focus of this Learning Experience is to introduce a time period (the Ice Age) to primary students.**

### *Connection to Standards*

**ELA Standard 2:** Language for Literary Response and Expression

**ELA Standard 4:** Language for Social Interaction

**ARTS Standard 1:** Creating, Performing and Participating in the Arts

**ARTS Standard 2:** Knowing and Using Arts Materials and Resources

### *Information Literacy Standards*

**Independent Learning Standard 5:** the student who is an independent learner is information literate and appreciates literature and other creative expressions of information

#### *Information Skills Learner Outcomes*

- #13 Differentiate between fiction and non-fiction books
- #5 Display effective listening and viewing skills
- #7 Develop retelling skills
- #9 Recognize style elements of various authors and illustrators

#### *Essential Questions*

**How did a wild animal start being a companion to people?**

**How did people live in the Ice age?**

**How can real students play the roles of Ice Age animals?**

**What are the special senses that dogs use to help people.**

### **Content Knowledge: Declarative, Procedural**

#### *Declarative Knowledge*

**Students will know that it is helpful to use masks and scenery to tell a story dramatically.**

**Students will understand that practice is necessary to present a play to others.**

**Students will know that author Jan Brett has written many different books.**

**Students will understand that a story can be told in many different ways. ( Eg. Adults changed the words in the original story into a script for the play.)**

**Students know that the story is fictional, but the information is based on true facts..**

**Students know that adults and children work together to make a production successful.**

**Students understand that each part in the play is important to the whole.**

### *Procedural Knowledge*

**Students will listen to the story that they will be presenting in play form.**

**Students will listen to other students to recognize their cue for speaking or moving.**

**Students will read and practice their parts in the play many times**

**Students will follow a sequence of events as they tell the story dramatically**

**Students discuss the way each Ice Age character might have acted**

**Students will wait quietly to take their turn during the play presentation**

**Students will help create some of the scenery for the play**

**Students will use masks and props to help portray their characters**

**Students will speak loudly and clearly, and with expression, so that others can understand the story**

**Students will follow many different directions while practicing the play**

### **PROCEDURE**

*(Chronologically ordered description of all teacher & student activities and interactions.)*

**This Learning Experience is the culmination of a unit on Jan Brett as author and illustrator. First grade students will have heard many other stories written and illustrated by this author. They will be familiar with her web site, and will have seen a short video about her.**

**The story about First Dog will have been read aloud to the whole class by the Library Media Specialist, and the classroom teacher several times. Discussion is focused on the setting (the Ice Age), the characters, and the sequence of events that led the wolf to become the boy's companion. The true facts about a dog's senses are emphasized in discussion also.**

**Collaboration between the classroom teacher and the Library Media Specialist is ongoing throughout the project. From the beginning, tasks are delegated to all those involved. The Library Media Center is used for all practices and the presentation of the play. Each child in the class that is presenting the play has a definite part to perform. Some students are narrators, others have varying amounts of memorized dialogue, and others hand out programs. The classroom teacher selects students best suited for the task and also includes any special needs children in her class.**

**On the morning of the play, students prepare for the play in their classroom by putting on costumes, gathering props and doing any last minute rehearsing. The classroom teacher is assisted by parents, and other helpers.**

**The Library Media Center classes are held in classrooms on “Play Day”, and covered by a substitute in order to allow the play to be presented in the library. Scenery is set-up, seating is arranged for parents, one section of first grade and special needs students. Two students give out programs at the library doors.**

**Students present their play two times during the morning to allow for both sections of first grade to attend, and allow parents to come at a convenient time.**

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### **INSTRUCTIONAL/ENVIRONMENTAL MODIFICATIONS**

**The Library Media Center is used for practice and presentation of the play. Tables and chairs are moved to accommodate the scenery and props needed. The day of the play all furniture is cleared to make adequate room for presentation. Storage of props is necessary during the time the play is being prepared. Details for power point presentation need to be worked out ahead of time and re-scheduling of regular library classes is planned in advance.**

**Special needs children are provided with modifications according to their unique needs. (Eg. A student with a speech impediment was a successful narrator, as a result of the Speech Therapist making some key changes to the script to avoid sounds which were difficult for him to pronounce. Students pass out programs or do similar tasks, if taking part in the actual play would be very difficult for them.)**

### **TIME REQUIRED**

**This Learning Experience was done at the conclusion of a 6-8 week unit done for all first graders. The class presenting the play spent about 4 days a week, for 3 weeks, practicing about 30 minutes at the end of the day. The play itself took about 20 minutes for final presentation. It was presented twice with a short break in between.**

### **RESOURCES**

**Jan Brett's selected titles read aloud by the Library Media Specialist**

**Two copies of The First Dog story**

**Various props and costumes for students**

**Scenery for the play prepared with volunteer help**

**Masks for students**

**Computer and TV or LCD and screen for introductory Power point presentation**

**Several copies of complete script**

**ASSESSMENT PLAN**  
(Include samples of rubrics, checklists, etc.)

The assessment of this play is done informally and would be evident in the response of the audience. Success for individuals would be indicated by the way in which they performed their part on the day of the play and how well they understood the main theme of the story, as evidenced in discussion or response to specific questions. No grades are given for this Learning Experience.

**RUBRIC FOR EVALUATING STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND UNDERSTANDING OF  
THE FIRST DOG STORY**

...

- (1) Student performs his/her part with confidence, follows all directions, waits quietly and listens for his/her part. In discussion, or in answer to questions after the play, shows understanding of the main theme.
- (2) Student performs his/her part with some hesitation, needs some prompting to follow directions, waits quietly most of the time and listens for his/her part most of the time. In discussion or in answer to questions after the play, shows understanding of the most, but not all, aspects of the main theme..
- (3) Student does not perform his/her part with confidence, needs many reminders from adults to follow directions, rarely waits quietly for his/her part and does not listen for cues. In discussion, or in answer to questions after the play, shows little understanding of the main theme.

<p><b>THE ABOVE POINTS COULD BE FORMATTED INTO A CHECKLIST FOR INDIVIDUAL STUDENT ASSESSMENT, IF NECESSARY</b></p>
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**STUDENT WORK**

Display of materials and digital photos taken during the play are placed on display in the first grade classroom hallway and in the Library Media Center. An article and photo of the successful performance is placed in the District Newsletter, that goes to each home in the school district. Jan Brett can be notified that first graders have done a play form of her story by sending a letter and photos, or by e-mail. All good feedback would be shared with the students.

## **REFLECTION**

**This play represents a great amount of collaboration between the First Grade Teacher, the Library Media Specialist and the Art teacher. The play provides a comfortable opportunity to involve parents in some tasks. It requires a considerable investment of time and energy from all involved. It is a most valuable way to involve students in dramatics at an early age, and demonstrate one of the many ways to tell a story. Students respond well to a major project like this and seem to gain confidence and communication skills at a crucial age. A measurable result is that the Jan Brett books enjoy a wide circulation to first graders for many weeks after the unit is over, and they remember details long after.**