
THE DAY JIMMY'S BOA ATE THE WASH

Author: Trinka Hakes Noble

Illustrator: Steven Kellogg

Publisher: Dial Books for Young Readers

THEME:

A little girl's version of an unusual class outing becomes a lesson on appreciating and having fun with different kinds of animals.

PROGRAM SUMMARY:

A school trip to a peaceful farm turns wild when Jimmy's pet boa constrictor escapes. LeVar takes viewers to an exotic pet shop where he meets a tarantula and a boa constrictor. He then goes to a livestock show where he learns unique facts about farm animals and watches events including showing sheep and milking goats.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION:

Discuss with students why the girl in the story wasn't very excited about the class trip to the farm. How would *they* feel about going on such a field trip?

Ask students what they think the farmer and his wife will do with a pet boa constrictor.

Discuss what would make a better pet—a boa constrictor or a pig—and why.

Pose the question to the students that LeVar asked the children in the program, "If you could have any strange pet in the world, what would it be?" Have them state reasons for their choices.

There was a great deal of humor in the story. Ask students what made it a funny story.

CURRICULUM EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

Read the book *The Day Jimmy's Boa Ate the Wash* to the class and have them supply sound effects during the reading. For example, pigs eating, the farmer's wife screaming, the tractor running, the kids yelling, and others, would be appropriate. Allow students to decide which sounds they will use.

Have the class make a farm alphabet book. Before beginning, brainstorm words associated with farms. Write the words on a chart in categories, such as "People on the Farm," "Farm Machinery," "Things that Grow on a Farm," "Farm Animals," etc. Have students select from this list to make the pages in the book.

Plot the events from the field trip in the story on a timeline. Label them with ordinal numbers, e.g., "First, the cow started crying."

Have students research boa constrictors. Where do they live? What do they eat? How big are they? What do they look like? Provide adding machine tape for them to make boa constrictors in actual size and color. Once they have found the length of a full-grown boa (the longest is about 18 feet), have them predict how long that is across the classroom floor and then measure the actual length. Discuss their predictions compared to actual length.

Brainstorm a list of types of snakes with students. Have them research these snakes in addition to the boa constrictor and record the information they find on a chart. List the names of the snakes down the side of the chart and the four questions from above across the top. They might want to add "Interesting Fact" as a fifth column and record such information as whether the snake is poisonous or not. After the chart is completed, discuss the content. For example, compare the lengths of various snakes or how they capture their prey. Have students identify other snakes that "constrict" their prey.

Have students research the names for the adult male and female and the young of farm animals. For example, pigs (male, boar; female, sow; baby, piglet) and sheep (male, ram; female, ewe; baby, lamb) were both featured in this program. Have them report the findings from their research by making puzzles. Cut stiff paper or oaktag into 9 x 4-inch strips and instruct students to cut the strips into three approximately equal parts. The cuts should not be straight lines, but like a puzzle piece instead. They then draw one animal (either the male, female or young) on each piece, with the picture of the baby on the middle piece. Laminate all the puzzle pieces and make them available for students to reassemble.

Make a field trip scrapbook for the school year. Take pictures on each excursion. Collect appropriate artifacts from the trip. Have students write captions for all items in the scrapbook. Include a class-dictated summary of the field trip after each event. Review the scrapbook at the end of the school year and discuss what the students learned at each place, what the memorable moments were, and favorite parts of each trip.

Obtain copies of the two sequels to this story, *Jimmy's Boa Bounces Back* and *Jimmy's Boa and the Big Splash Birthday Bash*, and read them to the students. Discuss the further escapades of Jimmy's boa. As a class, compose another adventure for the boa. Take dictation of the story on a chart, edit it together, and type individual sentences on pages for students to illustrate. Bind the pages into a book and display it with the other books about Jimmy's boa.

RELATED THEMES:

unusual pets
farm life

RELATED READING RAINBOW PROGRAMS:

Program #25 — Perfect The Pig
Program #32 — The Milk Makers
Program #62 — Desert Giant
Program #101 — Nosey Mrs. Rat

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Trinka Hakes Noble is the author/illustrator of several books for children, including **Reading Rainbow** feature book *Meanwhile Back at the Ranch*. A native of Michigan, she studied illustration at Uri Shulevitz's Advanced Workshop in Greenwich Village, and presently makes her home in New Jersey.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR:

Steven Kellogg enjoyed writing and illustrating stories when he was a small child and often entertained his younger sisters with them. His humorous, highly detailed illustrations have become the trademark of his many books, which include *How Much Is a Million?* by David Schwartz and *Best Friends*, both **Reading Rainbow** feature books, and *The Island of Skog*, a review book. He and his wife Helen make their home in Connecticut.

BOOKS REVIEWED BY CHILDREN:**CRICTOR**

by Tomi Ungerer (HarperCollins)

"COULD BE WORSE!"

by James Stevenson (Greenwillow)

ALEXANDER AND THE TERRIBLE, HORRIBLE, NO GOOD, VERY BAD DAY
by Judith Viorst, illus. by Ray Cruz (Atheneum)

SUPPLEMENTARY BOOKLIST:**BABY ANIMALS**

by Margaret Wise Brown, illus. by Susan Jeffers (Random House)

SIX PERFECTLY DIFFERENT PIGS

by Adrienne Geoghegan, illus. by Elisabeth Moseng (Gareth Stevens)

BOA CONSTRICTORS

by James E. Gerholdt (Abdo & Daughters)

FARMING

by Gail Gibbons (Holiday House)

WELCOME TO THE STOCK SHOW

by M. Jean Greenlaw (Lodestar)

ON THE FARM

poetry selected by Lee Bennett Hopkins, illus. by Laurel Molk (Little, Brown)

OLD MACDONALD HAD A FARM

by Carol Jones (Houghton Mifflin)

HOORAY FOR SHEEP FARMING!

by Bobbie Kalman (Crabtree)

GOING TO SLEEP ON THE FARM

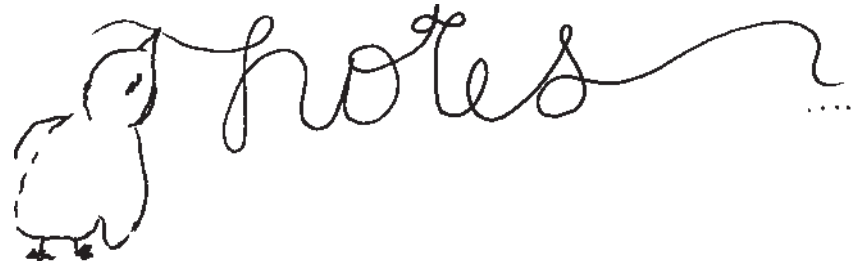
by Wendy Lewison, illus. by Juan Wijngaard (Dial)

BOAS

by Mary Ann McDonald (Child's World)

FARM NOISES

by Jane Miller (Simon & Schuster)

**READING RAINBOW TEACHER'S GUIDE**

Program #14 — The Day Jimmy's Boa Ate the Wash

