

## TEACHERS ACTIVITIES



### Theme:

Good music and great dancing make us feel happy, and foot-stomping bluegrass music is an American original.

### Topics For Discussion:

Before viewing the program, listen to some bluegrass music. Discuss ways in which it sounds different from other types of music with which students are familiar. How does the music make them feel and what do they want to do (i.e., tap their feet, clap their hands, etc.)? What instruments do they hear?

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Some students may be unfamiliar with a “hoedown” or “barn dance.” Before watching, find out what they know about this type of event. After they have watched, discuss new ideas they acquired from the program that helped to clarify the concept.

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Since this story takes place at night, ask the students if the barn dance was a dream or an example of the boy’s imagination and why they think as they do.

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Discuss the style in which the book, *Barn Dance!*, is written, so students recognize that the story is told in rhyme, instead of the narrative style of most stories that they read. Ask them to speculate as to why the authors chose to write the story in rhyme.

### Curriculum Extension Activities:

Invite a resource person into the classroom who square dances or clogs to do a demonstration and have them teach students a few steps.

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Work with the music teacher to teach the students some American folk songs. Explain that folk songs typically originated from people’s occupations or from regions of the country.

If possible, take the class on a field trip to a farm that has an old-fashioned barn. Ask the owner to guide the tour of the barn, explaining the functions of the different areas. Have the farmer explain the uses of various pieces of machinery and the general operation of the farm.



Invite someone who plays the violin into the classroom to demonstrate the difference between violin music and "fiddle" music.



Obtain a recording of farm animal sounds. Have students identify the animal that makes each sound. What other sounds might one hear on a farm? What different farm sounds might be heard at night instead of in the daytime?



All through the program, LeVar uses comparisons, such as, "higher than a snail on a cornstalk." Many of his comparisons are similes. Explain to students how similes use the words "like" or "as" to imply a comparison. Brainstorm a list of similes with expressions the students might have heard before, such as "quiet as a mouse," "hungry as a bear," "sly as a fox," etc. Display the list in the classroom so that students can add to it as they encounter examples from books and other situations. Encourage them to think of creative comparisons in their own writing, such as "quiet as the moon on a snowy night."



As a class, make a rhyming dictionary. Take some examples from the book, and put a "word family" on each page (e.g., "\_ight," "\_air," and "\_in"). Have students brainstorm words for the page that rhyme with the phonogram. Keep the rhyming dictionary in the writing center for student use. Add to it as they find other rhyming words.



Provide all sorts of materials, such as cloth scraps, wallpaper scraps, fabric trims, yarn, twine, different types of paper, etc., and have students design a scarecrow. Display their creation on a wall or bulletin board.

**SUPPLEMENTARY BOOKLIST:**

BIG RED BARN

by Margaret Wise Brown, illus. by Felicia Bond (HarperCollins)

THE HEART OF THE WOOD

by Marguerite W. Davol, illus. by Sheila Hamanaka (Simon & Schuster)

THE MASTER VIOLINMAKER

by Paul Fleisher, photos by David Saunders (Houghton Mifflin)

ON THE FARM

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

BENJAMIN'S BARN

by Reeve Lindbergh, illus. by Susan Jeffers (Dial)

THE DAY THE GOOSE GOT LOOSE

by Reeve Lindbergh, illus. by Steven Kellogg (Dial)

MIDNIGHT FARM

by Reeve Lindbergh, illus. by Susan Jeffers (Dial)

GRANNY WILL YOUR DOG BITE AND OTHER MOUNTAIN RHYMES

by Gerald Milnes, illus. by Kimberly Bulcken Root (Alfred A. Knopf)

HEAR THE WIND BLOW: AMERICAN FOLK SONGS RETOLD

by Scott R. Sanders, illus. by Ponder Goembel (Bradbury)

AMERICAN FOLK SONGS FOR CHILDREN

by Ruth Crawford Seeger, illus. by Barbara Cooney (Doubleday)

FIDDLE-I-FEE: A FARMYARD SONG FOR THE VERY YOUNG  
adapted and illus. by Melissa Sweet (Little, Brown)

NOAH'S SQUARE DANCE  
by Rick Walton, illus. by Thor Wickstrom (Lothrop, Lee & Shepard)

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