MAURICE SENDAK
THE MEMORIAL EXHIBITION
50 YEARS. 50 WORKS. 50 REASONS

Curriculum Guide
K-2 Grades

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50 YEARS. 50 WORKS. 50 REASONS
Grade K-2 Curriculum

Lesson A: Where the Wild Things Are
Lesson B: Chicken Soup with Rice
Lesson C: In the Night Kitchen

I. About the Exhibit

II. Biography

As a child, Maurice Sendak (1928-2012) suffered from life-threatening illnesses that his parents thought he would not survive. Because he was usually at home alone and sick, Sendak spent his time drawing pictures of things he wished he could do like playing, laughing, and pretending.

Maurice Sendak began sketching scenes of children in his different Brooklyn neighborhoods at age six. In high school, he was paid to illustrate textbooks and worked part-time creating background illustrations for a comic strip. Sendak’s influences came from both the Old World and the New. He loved Mickey Mouse books, cartoons, and movies.

During his life, Mr. Sendak did many things. He made toys, directed and produced an animated TV special, designed sets and costumes for ballet and opera companies, taught children’s literature at Yale, and mentored young illustrators. He also loved his canine companions. He is, however, primarily remembered for the 80 books he illustrated in collaboration with other authors, and for the 23 books he both wrote and illustrated for children. His most famous book is the Caldecott Medal winning story Where the Wild Things Are (1963) (WTWTA).

Where the Wild Things Are was originally titled Where the Wild Horses Are. However, Sendak couldn’t draw horses. The Wild Things he finally drew were based on his Jewish relatives from Europe: they didn’t speak English, couldn’t make small talk with children, they pinched his cheeks, had yellow teeth, ate up all the food, and claimed they would “gobble him up.”

At first, many adults did not like or understand the book, but Where the Wild Things Are was immediately popular with children. WTWTA showed Sendak’s reality: how children cope with frustration, anger, and uncontrollable circumstances. Moms do send kids to their rooms without dinner, kids do get angry and threaten their parents, children live in fantasy and reality and move back and forth between the two, and moms do forgive.
Lesson A: Where the Wild Things Are

a. **Introduction**
   This lesson is designed to teach students how to integrate knowledge and ideas through reading and responding to artistic work. The students will also create their own artistic works.

b. **Story Synopsis**
   Max is a boy who acts wild and talks back to his mother, all while wearing a wild animal costume. When his mother has had enough, she sends him to bed – without any supper!  As punishment. He is frustrated with his mom, so he imagines leaving home and sailing away to a remote island. A place so remote it has no real name except Where the Wild Things Are. There, the Wild Things crown Max king and spoil him with fun. But Max realizes that being wild and getting his way all the time is not as great as he had hoped. He misses being loved. He misses his mom. He imagines leaving the island, even though it’s hard, and going back to his room. Once he has settled down and “come home”, he sees that his mom brought him dinner after all.

c. **Time allocation:** 1 hour

d. **Materials needed:** book, pencils, markers/crayons

e. **Objectives:**
   i. Teacher will read the story aloud to students.
   ii. The class will discuss how emotions and illustrations impact the story.
   iii. Students will complete worksheets to demonstrate what they have learned.

f. **Standards:**
   i. VAK.CR.2 / VA1.CR.2 / VA2.CR.2 Create works of art based on selected themes.
   ii. VAK.RE.1 / VA1.RE.1 / VA2.RE.2 Discuss personal works of art and the artwork of others to enhance visual literacy.
   iii. ELAGSEKRL7 / ELAGSE1RL7 / ELAGSE2RL7 Describe the relationship between the illustrations and the story and use the illustrations to talk about key ideas.

g. **Procedure:** (45-60 min)
   i. (5-15 min) Read Where the Wild Things Are out loud to the class, allowing them to see the illustrations.
   ii. (15-30 min) When the story is over, review pages and illustrations discussed in Appendix 1.
   iii. (10-15 min) Ask the children to make their own Wild Things using Appendix 2.
   iv. (15-20 min) Finally, have the children to describe what they do when they are feeling overwhelmed (frustrated, angry, scared) and illustrate what makes them feel loved (supper, a hug, etc.) using Appendix 3.

h. **Appendices:**
   i. Appendix 1 – Where the Wild Things Are Discussion Questions
   ii. Appendix 2- Wild Things and Emotions Work Sheet
Lesson 2: *Chicken Soup with Rice*

a. **Introduction**
   
i. This lesson is intended to teach students about the seasons and encourage exploration of various imagery (both text and illustrations) in *Chicken Soup with Rice* and how they indicate each season.

b. **Story Synopsis**
   
i. Sendak's *Chicken Soup with Rice* is a collection of poems for each month of the year. Each poem explores the various aspects of the season in which the month takes place. For example, January's poem discusses “slipping on the sliding ice,” and August’s poem states, “it will be so hot I will become a cooking pot.” Each poem ends with a statement about chicken soup with rice, and ultimately how it can be enjoyed throughout the year.

c. **Time allocation**
   
i. 1 hour

d. **Materials needed**
   
i. *Chicken Soup with Rice*
   
ii. Markers or crayons
   
iii. Seasons worksheet

e. **Objectives**
   
i. Students will listen to *Chicken Soup with Rice* and engage in a discussion about the book.
   
ii. Students will discuss what they associate with each season.
   
iii. Students will complete the seasons’ activity to show what they have learned about the seasons.

f. **Standards**
   
i. ELAGSEKRL1 / ELAGSE1RL1 / ELAGSE2RL1 Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
   
ii. ELAGSEKRL7 / ELAGSE1RL7 / ELAGSE2RL7 Describe the relationship between the illustrations and the text and use the information to understand the story.
   
iv. ELAGSEKRL10 Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.
   
vi. VA3.CR.2 / VA4.CR.2 / VA5.CR.2 Create works of art based on selected themes.

g. **Procedure**
   
i. (15 minutes) Read *Chicken Soup with Rice* to the class. Ask how Sendak indicates the season in the various poems (Appendix 3).
   
ii. (5 minutes) Discuss as a class what types of things the students associate with each season.
   
iii. (30 minutes) Divide students up into groups and provide them with the materials and instructions needed for the activity.
   
v. (10 minutes) Have each group share why they placed the different images under each season

h. **Appendices:**
   
i. Appendix 3: Seasons worksheet
   
ii. Appendix 4: *Chicken Soup with Rice* discussion questions
   
iii. Appendix 5: *Chicken South with Rice* extension activities
Lesson C: *In the Night Kitchen*

i. **Introduction**
   - This lesson is intended to teach students reading comprehension through the sequencing of events.

j. **Story Synopsis**
   - Sendak’s *In the Night Kitchen* recounts Mickey’s dream about what happens at night in the bakery below his bedroom. When his dream begins, he falls down, down, down and into a giant bowl of cake batter. The three bakers making the cake do not realize Mickey has fallen into the batter and they keep stirring and scraping. Fortunately, Mickey escapes right before the bakers put the cake in the oven. He then builds an airplane of dough and flies up to the milk bottle and helps the bakers put milk in the batter. After giving a good morning cock-a-doodle-do, Mickey wakes up in his own bed “cakefree and dried.”

k. **Time allocation**
   - 50 minutes – 1 hour

l. **Materials needed**
   - *In the Night Kitchen* by Maurice Sendak
   - Recipe Sequencing Worksheet
   - Scissors
   - Glue

m. **Objectives**
   - Students will listen and react to a story read by the teacher.
   - Students will be introduced to vocabulary about baking.
   - Students will discuss dreaming and imagination.
   - Students will demonstrate their understanding of baking vocabulary and recipe sequence through a class activity.

n. **Standards**
   - ELASEKSL2 / ELAGSE1SL2 / ELAGSE2RI1 Confirm understanding of written texts read aloud or information presented orally or through media.
   - ELAGSEKW3 / ELAGSE1W3 / ELAGSE2W3 Use writing and/or drawing to recount event sequence and order.

o. **Procedure**
   - (15 minutes) Read *In the Night Kitchen* aloud to the class. Ask relevant discussion questions throughout the reading.
   - (5 minutes) Discuss baking vocabulary used throughout the book. Look at the illustrations and ask questions such as “What are the bakers doing in this picture?”
   - (25 minutes) Pass out Recipe Sequencing Worksheets (Appendix 4), explain the instructions, and give the students time to work.
   - (10 minutes) Review the solution to the worksheet. Ask relevant discussion questions along the way.

p. **Appendices:**
   - Appendix 6: *In the Night Kitchen* Recipe Sequencing Worksheet
   - Appendix 7: *In the Night Kitchen* Discussion Questions
   - Appendix 8: *In the Night Kitchen* Extension Activities
Appendix 1

Where the Wild Things Are Discussion Questions

1. What can we see that Max did to get in trouble? Do you think he did other things too? What in the story makes you believe that?

2. Based on the pictures, how do you think Max felt when he was sent to his room?

3. Do you think the Wild Things in the story are scary? What pictures make them look scarier and which look less scary? Prompt the children to identify specific differences (mouth shape, eyebrows, etc.).

4. What words does the author use to describe the wild things (terrible, claws, yellow, gnashed)? How does he represent those words in the drawings?

5. Do you think Max actually went somewhere, or do you think he used his imagination? Why?

6. Why did the Wild Things make Max their king? (They were frightened of him and called him “the most wild thing of all”). What, in the pictures, makes us know they were frightened of Max?

7. What did he do while he was king? (Wild rumpus, sent them to bed) Why did he give up being the king?

8. When you’re away from home or somewhere else that you love, what makes you remember it? Max is reminded of his home by the smell of his dinner. What smells do you love?
Appendix 2

Wild Things Emotions Worksheet

Make this Wild Thing look nice

Make this Wild Thing look scary
## Appendix 3

**Seasons Activity**

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<th>Fall</th>
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Appendix 4.

*Chicken Soup with Rice Discussion Questions*

1. What words are used in each poem to indicate the season? What specifically in January? August? December?

2. What do you associate with each of the seasons? Do you see any of these things in *Chicken Soup with Rice*?

3. Do the pictures help indicate what the season is? What in the pictures help us to determine what the season is?

4. Which months do you associate with each season?

5. What is our current season? What types of things do you wear during this season? What do you see? What holidays?

6. What types of food can you eat all year round? What food do you only eat at certain times of the year? Why?
Appendix 5

*Chicken Soup with Rice Extension Activities*

**Seasons Collage**
Divide the students up into 4 groups and provide each group with a piece of poster board, magazines, scissors, and glue. Each group will be assigned a season, and then look through the magazine for images that represent their specific season. Following the creation of the collage, each group will present their work and why they selected the specific images.
Appendix 6

*In the Night Kitchen* Recipe Sequencing Worksheet

Uh oh! The bakers have mixed up the order of their recipe! Can you help the bakers put their recipe back in order so they can make their cake by the morning? Cut out the four steps and glue them in the squares below in the correct order.

1. Pour* (image not from book, page 27 illustration preferred – not found online)
2. Stir (page 9)
3. Bake (page 11)
4. Add (page 8)
Appendix 7

In the Night Kitchen Discussion Questions

1. What kind of things do you dream about? Do you ever visit other places in your dreams?

2. Why do you think the bakers were making a cake at night instead of during the day?

3. What ingredients do you need to bake a cake? What utensils do you need?

4. Mickey escapes from the cake batter by making an airplane out of bread dough. Are there other ways he could have escaped?

5. When the bakers realize Mickey was in the cake and see him take off in his airplane (pages 17-18), they start howling “Milk! Milk! Milk for the morning cake!” What does it mean to “howl?” Why do you think the bakers were “howling?”
Appendix 8

In the Night Kitchen Extension Activities

Bread Dough Airplanes

In In the Night Kitchen, Mickey “kneaded and punched and pounded and pulled” bread dough to make an airplane so that he could escape from the bakers’ cake. Use the following simple recipe to make dough airplanes as a class!

Salt Dough Recipe

*Makes enough dough for approximately 10 students

4 cups of all-purpose flour

1 cup of salt

1 ½ cups of water

1. Combine all ingredients and knead for several minutes.

2. To make airplanes last, bake dough at 300 degrees for about 30 minutes.

Build a Night Kitchen

If you look closely at the illustrations in In the Night Kitchen, you will see that the bakers belong to a city made of jars, jams, bottles, and even pepper grinders. Have each student bring in a recycled kitchen container. Set aside some time to decorate the recyclables with paper, markers, and glue to make them look like miniature buildings. Set them up in a designated space. Now you have your very own classroom Night Kitchen!