

Little Bear's Visit
by Else Holmelund Minarik

Classroom Favorites



Teacher's Guide by Linda Crosswhite

A Perma-Bound Production

STORY SUMMARY

Little Bear's Visit is an I CAN READ story about a young bear's visit to his grandparents' house. In the first chapter, the bears spend time together looking at things, eating great food and talking. In Chapters 2 and 3, each grandparent tells a story to Little Bear. In the final chapter, Little Bear pretends to be sleeping as he listens to his parents and grandparents discuss how sweet he is! The four stories in this book reveal the special, loving relationship between Little Bear and his grandparents.

AUTHOR SKETCH

Else Holmelund Minarik was born on September 13, 1920, in Denmark. She emigrated to the United States at the age of four. Ms. Minarik received a degree in psychology from Queens College and an education degree from Paltz College of the State University of New York.

Else Minarik was a newspaper reporter and later became a teacher in a rural school in Commack, Long Island. As a teacher, she discovered that she couldn't find enough books for her first grade readers, so she began to write a series of stories for them. The Little Bear books she wrote are enchanting, easy readers for young children.

Little Bear's Visit was a runner-up for the Caldecott Medal in 1962. *Father Bear Comes Home* and *A Kiss For Little Bear* were listed among the *New York Times* Choice of Best Illustrated Children's Books of the Year in 1959 and 1968, respectively.

SUGGESTED THEMES

- family
- grandparents
- caring

SKILLS AND STRATEGIES

- Predicting the main idea
- Using conventions of print: quotation marks
- Identifying basic sight word vocabulary

The following suggested plans and activities can be used with this book. You may choose to select and modify these to best meet the needs and interests of your students.

INITIATING THE READING EXPERIENCE

Building the background

1. Chart the poem "Growing Old" by Rose Henderson (from *The Random House Book of Poetry*, selected by Jack Prelutsky, Random House, 1983). Share it with the class.
2. Initiate a discussion about grandparents. You may wish to include: what grandparents are, how they are related to us and why they are important in our lives. Ask the children to share a special time they've had with their grandmother and/or grandfather or someone who is like a grandparent to them. List their responses on the board or a chart.
3. Have the students brainstorm various names for grandparents. List these. (Some names might include: grandma, granny, granma, grandmother, nanny, grandmama, grandpa, grandad, grandfather, grandpapa, pappy or other endearing terms.) Discuss why grandparents might be called by different names.
4. Encourage the students to tell about a visit to their grandparents' or another older relative's or friend's home. Have them share the who, what, when, where and happenings of that visit.

Introducing the book

1. Explain to the class that *Little Bear's Visit* is a story about his visit to his grandparents' house. It is a book in a series of I CAN READ books by Else Holmelund Minarik. (You may wish to display other books in this series at this time, also.)
2. Show the students the cover of the book. Have the students locate the title, author and illustrator.
3. Have the students describe the characters, their attire, and the setting based on the cover. Refer to the title page to allow the students an opportunity to continue their discussion about Little Bear and his grandparents.
4. Turn to the table of contents. Explain to the students that this is a chapter book. It contains four separate stories that are all related to the same theme (Little Bear's visit to his grandparents' house). Have the students read the chapter titles.
5. Introduce the Skills and Strategies activity on predicting the main idea. You may wish to copy the blackline master *Little Bear's Visit*, for the students to complete as they read this book.

ENJOYING THE READING

Prereading: Setting the purpose for reading.

Have the children read to confirm their predictions and gain the meaning of the story.

Post Reading: Confirming, analyzing, synthesizing or evaluating the reading.

Encourage the children to share their feelings about the story. Assist the children in confirming their predictions.

Chapter 1: Grandmother and Grandfather

Prereading

Have the students fill in the first box on the handout entitled Little Bear's Visit, to illustrate and predict what they think Chapter 1 will be about.

Give the students an opportunity to share their predictions. Read to confirm these.

Post Reading

Have the students confirm their predictions.

Initiate a discussion about Grandmother and Grandfather Bear. You may wish to ask some of the following questions to guide this discussion:

1. What did Little Bear do with his grandparents?
2. How can you tell that Little Bear loves his grandparents? That his grandparents love him?
3. What kinds of things did he see at his grandparents' house?

Give the students an opportunity to share experiences they have had with their grandparents.

This is an appropriate time to introduce the Skills and Strategies Activity on conventions of print: quotation marks.

After reading this chapter, give the students an opportunity to select from Writing Activities 1 and 2, Math Activity 1, Science/Health Activities 1 and 2, and/or Art Activity 1.

Chapter 2: Mother Bear's Robin

Prereading

Have the students fill in the second box on the handout entitled, "Little Bear's Visit," to illustrate and predict what they think Chapter 2 will be about.

Give the students an opportunity to share their predictions. Read to confirm these.

Post Reading

Have the students confirm their predictions.

Initiate a discussion about the story Grandmother told to Little Bear. The following questions may be used to guide this discussion:

1. Who was Grandmother's story about?
2. When did the story take place?
3. Why did Mother Bear let the robin fly away?
4. When did the robin come back?

Give the students an opportunity to share any experiences they have had with pets that had to be set free or given to someone else. Talk about why this is sometimes the best thing to do.

After reading this chapter, give the students an opportunity to select from Writing Activity 3, Science/Health Activities 3 and 4, Art Activity 2 and/or Music Activities 1 and 2.

Chapter 3: Goblin Story

Prereading

Have the students fill in the third box on the handout entitled, "Little Bear's Visit," to illustrate and predict what they think Chapter 3 will be about.

Give the students an opportunity to share their predictions. Read to confirm these.

Post Reading

Have the students confirm their predictions.

Lead a discussion about the "Goblin Story" Grandfather told to Little Bear. You may wish to ask the students the following questions:

1. Why was the goblin scared?
2. What made him run faster and faster?
3. How did the goblin find out what was running after him?

Give the students an opportunity to share times when they were scared or afraid and tell what they did about it. You may wish to list these on the board or a chart. Example:

Times We Were Scared	What We Did

Ask the students to tell about stories their grandparents have shared with them.

This is an appropriate time to introduce the Skills and Strategies Activity on identifying basic sight word vocabulary.

After reading this chapter, give the students an opportunity to select from Social Studies Activity 2, Art Activities 3 and 4, and/or Drama/Creative Movement Activity 1.

Chapter 4: Not Tired

Prereading

Have the students fill in the last box on the handout entitled Little Bear's Visit, to illustrate and predict what they think Chapter 4 will be about.

Give the students an opportunity to share their predictions. Read to confirm these.

Post Reading

Have the students confirm their predictions.

Initiate a discussion about the title of this chapter. You may wish to use some of the following questions to guide this discussion:

1. What did Little Bear do when he was waiting for Mother and Father Bear to come?
2. Why did he pretend to be sleeping?
3. What did he hear his parents and grandparents discussing?

Give the students an opportunity to share a time when they pretended to be sleeping.

After reading this chapter, give the students an opportunity to select from Writing Activities 4 and 5, Social Studies Activity 3, Art Activity 5, and/or Drama/Creative Movement Activity 2.

TEACHING SKILLS AND STRATEGIES IN CONTEXT

Predicting the main idea:

Explain to the students that the chapter headings can be used as a guide for predicting the main idea of a chapter. Provide each student with a copy of the blackline master Little Bear's Visit. Before each chapter is read, have the students draw a picture of what they think the chapter will be about and write a prediction underneath the picture. This sheet can also be used for reviewing and/or retelling the story.

Locating conventions of print – quotation marks:

Turn to page 13 in the book to present the use of quotation marks to the students. Explain that quotation marks come before and after words that are said by characters in the book when they are talking. The words between " " are the exact words that the character said. To illustrate this, choose several sentences that contain quotation marks. Write these on the board *without* the quotation

marks. Have the students read each sentence orally. Demonstrate where quotation marks are placed. Have the students reread the sentences. Revisit the book to locate and read other sections in which quotation marks are used.

Identifying basic sight word vocabulary:

Focus on sight words to encourage memory of the basic sight word vocabulary after the students have become familiar with the story.

Choose sight words that you wish to reinforce. Write these on word cards similar to the following:



Students can take turns matching these word cards to the words in the text. As they do so, discuss some of the following characteristics of specific words:

1. the number of letters in the word;
2. where the word is used in the sentence;
3. what letters are at the beginning and/or end of the word.

CONNECTING THE READING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

The following activities may be introduced after the story, integrated into the appropriate content areas or used as learning center activities.

Writing



1. Provide the students with pencils, crayons and/or markers and the worksheet entitled My Visit. Tell them to write and illustrate an experience they have had when visiting their grandparents or other family members. These may be compiled into a class book entitled, "Our Visits" or placed on a bulletin board to be shared with others.
2. Explain to the students that they are going to interview their grandparents or a person who knows/knew their grandparents. As a class, have them develop appropriate questions they wish to ask. List these on the board. Have the students choose the 5-6 questions they most want to ask. Create a form, listing the questions and leaving room for responses.

Have the students take these home. They may interview their grandparent or another person about their grandparents and write the answers following each question. Upon completion, these can be returned to school and shared with the class.

3. Give the students an opportunity to discuss pets they have had. Provide them with materials to write about a pet they have, have had, or would like to have and why.
4. Share examples of well-written personal letters. Explain the proper format and type of content usually found in this form. Supply various types of writing materials: paper, stationary, post cards, pencils, pens, etc. Have each student write a letter to tell about an experience he/she has had at home or at school. Example of a friendly letter format:

	Date

Salutation	

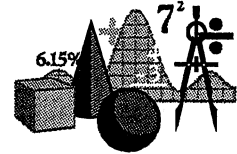
_____	message

	Closing

	Signature

5. Have the students write another chapter for this book. The chapter should be about another experience Little Bear has with his grandparents. This can be an individual or group activity.
6. Show the students examples of invitations. Discuss the message that it needs to give (Who? What? When? Where?). Assist the students in designing an invitation for a grandparent, parent, or other significant person to invite them to an "I CARE DAY."

Math



1. Divide the students into pairs. Discuss story problems and how they are written. Model one for the students.

Example: Little Bear liked to visit his grandparents. When he was there, he ate two apples, three cookies and one piece of cake. How many things did he eat altogether?

Have each pair of students write one story problem. Collect these and have the class solve several of these problems together.

2. Have the students sit in a large circle. Use either the shoe print pictures from Art Activity 3 or the children's shoes to have students do several math activities. Some suggestions are:
 - Classify types of shoes: boys, girls, tennis, dress, etc.
 - Sort shoes by colors.
 - Have each student measure the length of one shoe. Record these on a chart. Make a graph to illustrate the lengths of the children's shoes.
3. Have the students bring in teddy bears or replicas of bears. Use these to make size comparisons: big, bigger, biggest; small, smaller, smallest, etc. Next, have several students demonstrate "bigger than" and "smaller than" by using two bears to illustrate their statements.

Social Studies



1. Create the following on the board or a chart:

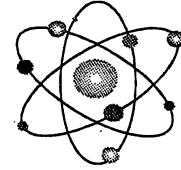
How grandparents show they care	How we show our grandparents we care

Discuss the happenings in pages 16-17 of the text. Continue this discussion by recording the students' responses to the two categories listed on the above chart.

2. Use the "Goblin Story" to initiate a discussion about feelings. Divide the students into small groups of 3-4. Give each group a copy of the "Feelings" chart to complete. Upon completion, give the groups an opportunity to share their charts.

3. Revisit page 13 to note Little Bear's manners. Initiate a discussion about manners. Have the students list polite words and phrases we should use. You may wish to share the book *What Do You Say, Dear?* with the students.

Science/Health



1. Turn to page 12 of the text to review the foods Little Bear ate at his grandparents' house. Initiate a discussion of special foods the students like to eat, especially at their grandparents' house. List these on a chart or the board.
2. Have each student bring a favorite recipe of their grandmother's or grandfather's to school. Each student can copy his/her grandparent's favorite recipe on a separate sheet of paper. Below the recipe, each student can write his/her name, the grandparent's name and why this is a favorite recipe. These can be compiled into a cookbook entitled, "Our Grandparents Favorite Recipes."
3. Read *Have You Seen Birds?* by Joanne Oppenheim, to initiate a discussion about birds. List all birds mentioned in the book and add any others the students may know. Assist the students in categorizing the birds into Birds That Are Pets and Birds That Are Not Pets.
4. Bring in a caged pet bird for a period of time. Discuss the bird and its required care. Allow the children to observe the bird. They can record their observations in a daily log or on a class chart.

OR

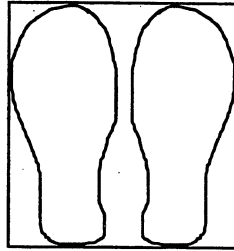
Take a field trip to a pet store to see birds. Ask the manager to explain different birds that could be chosen for pets and how to care for each of them.

Art



1. Have the students create paper bag masks of one of the characters in the text. Provide large paper bags, buttons, crayons, paints, colored markers, furry fabric, and any other appropriate art media for this project. Assist the children in cutting out holes for the eyes and mouth. These can be used to dramatize the events in the story.
2. Ask the students to bring in items that a bird might use to build a nest, such as: grass, paper, string, yarn, twigs, etc. Provide a plastic container to be used to help form a student-made bird's nest. The students can mix dirt, water and some of the acquired materials and form them around the plastic container. When the "nest" is dry, it can be removed from the container and displayed in the classroom.

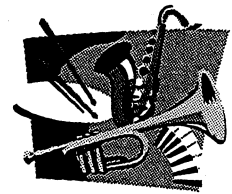
3. Discuss different kinds of shoes and why we wear them. Provide the students with large sheets of drawing paper, scissors, pencils, crayons, paints and brushes. Divide the students into pairs. Have each of the partners trace around each other's shoes to form the outline of a pair of shoes. Example:



Give each student an opportunity to cut out the shoes and decorate them to look like the tops of the shoes they are wearing or a pair of goblin shoes. These can be used for Math Activity 2 or glued on a large sheet of construction paper and displayed in the room.

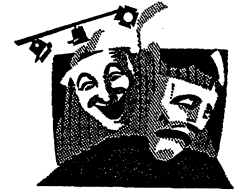
4. Display pictures of real bears and bear characters from books. Determine which are real or fictional characters. Discuss characteristics of bears and list these. Provide each student with clay or play dough and allow them to create their own bear.
5. Introduce sand painting. Have each student sketch a picture of one of the scenes from the book on a piece of construction paper or tagboard. Next, have the students color or paint everything in the picture *except* for the bear's fur. Cover these "fur" spots with a thin layer of glue. Have the children use a paper cone or spoon to sprinkle sand over the glued areas. Let this dry, then shake off excess sand.

Music



1. Introduce any songs related to birds. These can include: "Six Little Ducks," "The Little White Duck," "Sing A Song of Sixpence," "Hickety, Pickety, My Black Hen," and/or any other appropriate songs.
2. Play different types of background music and have the students imitate the actions of birds. You may wish to provide the students with long pieces of chiffon or other soft material. They can use these as they pretend to fly.
3. Sing "Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear," "The Bear Went Over The Mountain," and any other songs related to bears or other characters in this book.

Drama/Creative Movement



1. Write each of the following words on a strip of tagboard: running, skipping, dancing a jig, sleeping, eating, looking, clapping, jumping. Hold up one strip at a time and have the students pantomime Little Bear's actions for each of these words.
2. Have the students determine the characters and props needed to act out each chapter. List these. Students may volunteer to be the various characters in each chapter. Have the students act out the story. (The masks created in Art Activity 1 can be used for these dramatizations.)

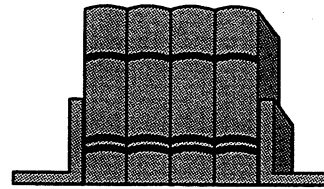
EVALUATING THE READING EXPERIENCE

- Keep a teacher's journal of those strategies that best helped the students understand the story.
- Record the children's behaviors and learning by jotting these on "Post-its." These comments can later be transferred to a journal containing daily comments on the students.
- Prepare a chart to record the completion of the projects for each of the students.
- Record the students' responses as they briefly retell the story or specific chapters.
- Collect a piece of each child's writing to evaluate.
- Develop a criteria for evaluating student work or refer to established forms of evaluation to assess the projects and activities completed.

Culminating Activity:

Plan an "I CARE DAY" celebration. This will be a time for the students to share learning activities with someone special to them. During the celebration, they can share some of the activities related to *Little Bear's Visit*. Determine who the students will invite, a time for the celebration, what they will do and what they will need. Have the students divide into committees to prepare for and host the celebration. Invitations can be created and sent. (Instructions for designing invitations are included in Writing Activity 6.)

RELATED READINGS



- Asch, Frank, *Bear's Bargain*
Barton, Byron and Pomerantz, Charlotte, *Where's the Bear?*
Bell, Karen Magnuson, *Grandma According to Me*
Burkley, Helen E., *Grandfather and I*
Carlstrom, Nancy White, *Jessy Bear, What Will You Wear?*
Curran, Eileen, *Birds' Nests*
Dabovich, Lydia, *Sleeping Bear*
Denton, Kady MacDonald, *Granny Is A Darling*
Dexter, Alison, *Grandma*
Freeman, Don, *Bearymore*
Gilks, Helen, *Bears*
Greenfield, Eloise, *Grandpa's Face*
Levinson, Riki, *I Go With My Family To Grandma's*
Mayer, Mercer, *Just Grandpa and Me*
McCully, Emily Arnold, *Grandma Mix-Up*
McKean, Barbara, *Hayes Book of Birds*
Minarik, Else Holmelund, *Father Bear Comes Home*
Kiss For Little Bear
Little Bear
Little Bear's Friend
No Fighting, No Biting!
Moore, Elaine, *Grandma's Promise*
Oppenheim, Joanne, *Have You Seen Birds?*
Osborne, Mary Pope, comp., *Bears, Bears, Bears*
Oxenbury, Helen, *Grandma and Grandpa*
Say, Allen, *Grandfather's Journey*
Waddell, Martin, *Let's Go Home, Little Bear*
Ward, Lynd, *Biggest Bear*
Wildsmith, Brian, *Lazy Bear*

Student Name _____ Date _____



LITTLE BEAR'S VISIT

*Grandmother and
Grandfather Bear*

Mother Bear's Robin

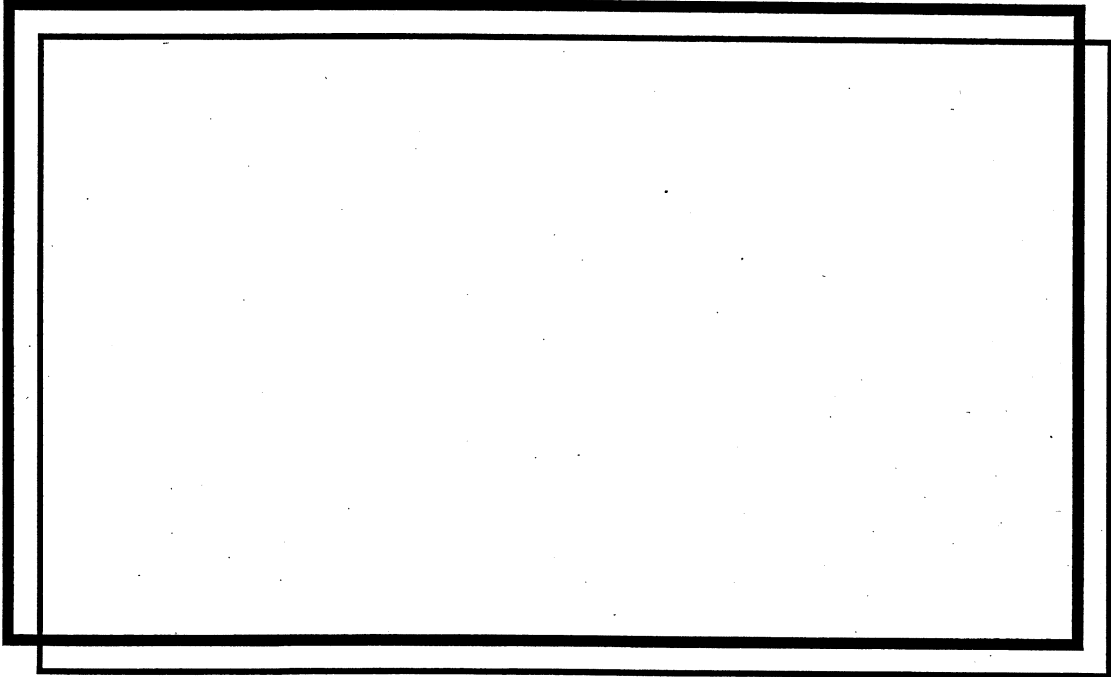
Goblin's Story

Not Tired



Student Name _____ Date _____

MY VISIT





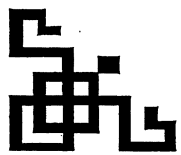
Name _____ Date _____



HOW WE FEEL

Feelings We Have

When We Have These Feelings





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