

The Patchwork Quilt

by Valerie Flourney

Teacher's Guide

Written By Linda Crosswhite

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Synopsis

Tanya's grandmother is making a patchwork quilt. This is a special quilt, as it contains scraps of fabric from each family member's clothing. When Grandma becomes ill, the family pitches in to help complete the masterpiece. As the family works to finish the quilt, they share time and love as they continue the tradition. After the quilt is completed, it has special meaning to the family members as they recall the happenings of the past year represented by the patches in the quilt.

Author Sketch

Valerie (Rose) Flourney was born on April 17, 1952, in Camden, New Jersey. She received her teacher's certificate and B.A. degree from William Smith College in 1974. Ms. Flourney has had various experiences in the publishing field, including positions as editor and editing consultant for several companies. She is the author of *The Patchwork Quilt*, *The Best Time of Day*, *The Twins Strike Back*, and *Until Summer's End*.

Critic's Corner

The Patchwork Quilt was named an American Library Association Notable Book and received the Christopher Award in 1985. This book also received the Coretta Scott King Award and was selected as a Reading Rainbow Book.

Timeline

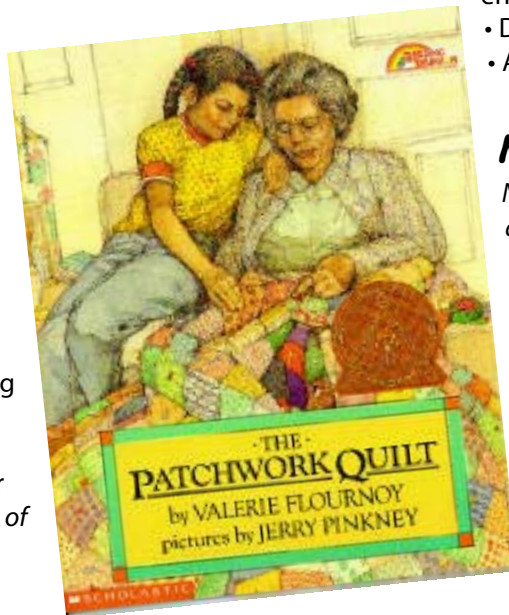
- Beginning** Tanya's Grandma is making a special patchwork quilt—her masterpiece—with fabric from each family member's clothing.
- Middle** Grandma gets sick.
- End** The family pitches in to finish the quilt, then family members recall the happy event elicited by the quilt.

Themes and Motifs

- families
- grandmothers
- African Americans
- traditions
- quilting

Skills and Strategies

- Identifying inflections (-ed and -ing verb endings)
- Determining the sequence of events
- Analyzing character development



Meaning Study

Note: 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.

Building the background

1. Display a quilt or pictures of quilts for students to view. Discuss how quilts are made. Ask the students how they think patchwork quilts got their name. If possible, compare a handmade quilt to a machine stitched quilt. Record the likenesses and differences.
2. Give the students an opportunity to discuss any quilts, blankets or bedcovers that have special meaning to them.
3. Share with the students the poem "Growing Old" by Rose Henderson (from *The Random House Book of Poetry*, selected by Jack Prelutsky, Random House, New York, 1983).
4. Let the students talk about their grandmothers and special experiences they've shared with them.

Introducing the book

1. Present the front cover of the book to the students. Have them locate the title, author and illustrator. Explain that this book received the Coretta Scott King Award and that it was also selected to be a Reading Rainbow book.

2. Generate responses concerning the characters, setting and story content based on the illustrated front cover. Record responses so that the students can confirm these predictions after hearing the story.
3. Display the back cover of the book. This illustrates a patchwork design. You may wish to have the students compare this to the other patterns they viewed while building the background for this book.

Comprehension Study

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.

1. Encourage the children to share their feelings about the story.
 2. Allow the students to confirm any predictions they might have made prior to reading the story.
- Initiate small group or whole class discussion of the story. Some of the following questions may help to start and/or guide this process:
1. Why did Grandma choose to make quilts?
 2. What are some of the things Tanya learned from her grandma about quilt making?
 3. Why do you think Tanya's mother decided to help Grandma with the quilt?
 4. How does the author inform us of the time span of this story?
 5. How did things change at Tanya's house when her grandmother became ill?
 6. What did the family learn from the shared quilt making experience?
 7. Why was the quilt so special to Grandma? Tanya? The other family members?
 8. Why do you think the quilt was given to Tanya?
 9. What family memories do you have?
 10. How do you continue to remember special family ties?

Teaching Skills and Strategies in Context

Identifying inflections (verb endings: -ed, -ing): Explain to the students that inflections are suffixes or word parts that can be added to verbs (action words) for agreement with the person, mood or time (tense). Model this for the students. Example:
I work today.
She worked yesterday.
We are working on a project.

Demonstrate locating and underlining the root word, "work," in each of the sentences. Have the students fold a sheet of paper in half. On one half have them list ten words from this text that end in -ed and on the other half, ten words that end in -ing. Have them work individually or in small groups to determine and underline the root word for each of the verbs. These can be reviewed as a class.

Determining the sequence of events:

Discuss the sequence of events in the story. If needed, return to the book to verify the proper sequence. Have the students divide the events into three sections: those that happened in the beginning, middle and end of the story. Have the students divide a paper into three parts. In each section, have the students list or illustrate the events in sequential order. Example:

<p>Beginning: Grandma talks to Tanya about quilt-making</p> <p>Jim gives Grandma his old pants, etc.</p>	<p>Middle: Mama takes care of Grandma</p> <p>Tanya works on quilt, etc.</p>	<p>End: Grandma gets better</p> <p>Grandma works on quilt, etc.</p>
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Analyzing character development:

Initiate a discussion about the main characters in the story. Review how they changed from the beginning to the end of the story. Have each student select a character. Using the blackline master entitled "Character Development," have the students draw a picture or write about a character's reaction to the events during the beginning, middle and end of the story. This lesson can be extended by relating the story events to the character's development. This helps to explain character actions based on the events.

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. Initiate a discussion of patchwork quilts and how the patches can create memories. Supply each student with an 8 inch-by-8 inch piece of tag

board or white construction paper. On one side, have the students write about a memory they have about a special holiday or event in their lives. On the reverse side, they can draw a design to represent that memory. These can be shared with the class or in small groups. Example memory:

I had a birthday
party this year
and we invited all
my friends. We had
cake and ice cream.

2. Assist the class in developing an interview form to be used by the students to interview a grandparent or older family member about special memories they have had. Have the students complete the interview and return the form. Give the students an opportunity to share these.
3. Have each student bring in three photographs or draw pictures of three special family times. Supply the students with paper on which they can attach and write about each of the pictures. Provide the students with construction paper and other materials necessary to create a "Family Memories Album" containing these writings and pictures.

Math

1. Display patchwork quilts and/or pictures of various quilt patterns. Discuss the various types of geometric shapes and designs used in quilt making. Give the students an opportunity to create their own patterns on 6 inch squares using geometric shapes.
2. Ask the students to bring in fabric with various patterns. Have them cut these into 4-, 6-, and 8-inch squares. Give them an opportunity to sort them by size, color and/or patterns. These can also be placed in various configurations to fit a particular space. Example: Cover an area that is 3 feet by 3 feet or 6 feet by 3 feet. Students can record the number of squares of various sizes needed to complete these tasks.
3. Encourage the students to create original story problems dealing with the number of squares needed for a patchwork quilt.
Example: There are 24 children in Ms. Smith's class. Each child brought in a fabric square that measured 4 inches by 4 inches.
 - What size quilt could they make using these patches?
Students can solve these problems independently

or in small groups. (You may wish to encourage the use of fabric squares to develop and/or solve various problems.)

Social Studies/Geography

1. Initiate a discussion about the importance of quilt making during pioneer times. Share other books about quilt making and the use of quilts during this period in history. (Refer to the Related Readings section of this guide.)
2. Discuss the different sizes of families and types of family situations. You may wish to include: single parent, nuclear, extended, blended, adoptive, intergenerational, foster and any other types of families that would be of interest to the students in the class.
3. Ask the students to each share a family tradition or holiday celebration with the class. Discuss those that are similar and those that are unique. Have each student think of a new tradition they could create with their family. Record these on a chart or the board.
4. Contact a local sewing or quilting organization to request a member to demonstrate quilt making and/or to display and discuss this craft.
5. Arrange for a field trip to a history museum, historical center or fair to view patchwork quilts on display.
6. Discuss aging and the impact it has on society. Form an "Adopt a Grandparent" Club. Take the students to visit a local nursing home. With the assistance of the nursing home director, assist the students in "adopting a grandparent." Each child will "adopt" one grandparent. In doing so, they will commit to whatever level of involvement is appropriate. (Possibilities: writing letters to or for them, making gifts and cards, visiting, calling, sending pictures, or any other activity that is agreeable to all.)
7. Display a large map on the bulletin board. Give each child several small strips of paper, one for each grandparent. Instruct them to write their own name on each strip. Have each child tell where his/her grandparent(s) live, locate the place(s) on the map and pin a name strip on each location. When all of the strips have been pinned to the map, it can be used for various activities.
 - Examples: measuring distances from child's home to grandparent's, discussing differences in locations, topography, etc.

Science/Health

1. Revisit the book to have the students recall the time

period covered in this text. Have the students note the various seasons. List these. Record the particular clues and events that led them to determine each seasonal time frame. Encourage the students to add other events and/or happenings that occur during each of the seasons. You may wish to have them write about or illustrate the four seasons.

2. Reread the portion of the book that describes Grandma's illness and the care she was given. Ask the students to share times when they were sick and someone took care of them. Discuss proper care for those who are ill. You may wish to have the school nurse, a doctor or health care worker discuss common illnesses and/or home care for the sick.

Art

1. Have each student bring in a piece of 411 x 411 fabric that reminds them of something special. Use a large sheet of butcher paper or cloth to form the backing for a class quilt. Have each student tell about his/her square while attaching it to the backing with fabric glue. Display the class quilt on a bulletin board or wall for all to view.
2. Discuss various bed coverings. Provide each student with a large sheet of drawing paper, crayons, markers and/or colored pencils. Have each student design a quilt, bedspread or blanket he/she would like to have.
3. Give the students an opportunity to paint a seasonal scene of their choice. Provide the students with paper, watercolors, brushes, water containers and rags or paper towels. Have the students dampen the paper before painting. Blot up any excess water. The students can paint directly on the damp paper. Have them paint light colors first. With this technique, the colors will tend to blend. When dry, details may be added.
4. Have each student select a favorite member of his/her family. Give the students an opportunity to use modeling clay to form a figure of the chosen family member. Provide each student with an index card on which to write about the favorite person. Display these.
5. Refer back to the text to locate the places where Grandma refers to the quilt as a "masterpiece." Discuss the meaning of "masterpiece." Show the class pictures of various works of art that have been designated as masterpieces. Allow for discussion of each.

Music/Drama

1. Discuss favorite songs the children like to sing. List these on a chart. Have the students ask their parents and grandparents to each list three songs they liked to sing as a child. Compare these lists to see if any of the parents/grandparents liked to sing the same songs the students like to sing. Give the class an opportunity to sing favorite songs of their choice.
2. Introduce or sing any songs in the curriculum that relate to families, traditions and/or grandparents. You may also use Shake It to the One You Love the Best to teach children's songs from the African American culture.
3. Select readers to read parts of the story as other class members pantomime the events. Props may be used, if desired.

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 or reenact the story.
- Collect a piece of each child's writing to evaluate.
- Develop criteria for evaluating student work or refer to established forms of evaluation to assess the projects and activities completed.

Student Involvement Activities

Have the students host a "Grandparent Day." They can invite their grandparents or an adopted grandparent to school for a celebration. This is an excellent time for them to dramatize this story, share their writings, art work and other projects. This event could include an opportunity for the grandparents to share lunch or snack time with their grandchildren.

Related Readings

Adoff, Arnold, *In for Winter, Out for Spring*
Bunting, Eve, *Wednesday's Surprise*
Coerr, Eleanor, *Josefina Story Quilt*
Daly, Niki, *Not So Fast, Songololo*
Ernst, Lisa Campbell, *Sam Johnson and the Blue Ribbon Quilt*
Flournoy, Valerie, *Best Time of Day, Twins Strike Back*

Greenfield, Eloise, *Honey, I Love and Other Poems*
Grifalconi, Ann, *Osa's Pride*
Hudson, Wade, *I Love My Family*
Pass It On: African-American Poetry for Children
Johnson, Tony, *Quilt Story*
Jonas, Ann, *Quilt*
Peterson, Jeanne W., *My Mama Sings*
Polacco, Patricia, *Keeping Quilt*
Ringgold, Faith, *Tar Beach*
Roth, Susan L. & Phang, Ruth, *Patchwork Tales*
Warren Mattox, Cheryl, ed., *Shake It to the One You Love
the Best*

Student Name _____ Date _____

Story Events

Beginning

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Middle

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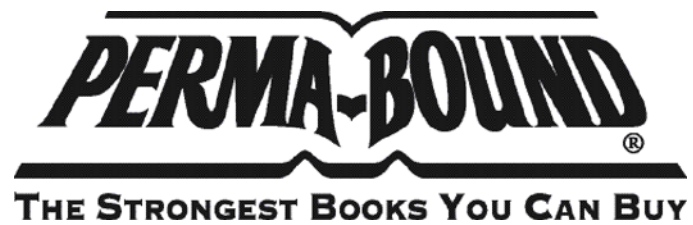
End

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Student Name _____ Date _____

The Four Seasons

Spring	Summer
Fall	Winter



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