



IN THE ATTIC

Story Synopsis

In the Attic is a story about a brother and sister who, displaying children's natural curiosity about hidden places, go to their attic to investigate what treasures are stored there. On each page of the story, the children open another container to find out what is inside. This book uses patterned language (In the ___ there is a ___.) to mirror their journey of discovery. At the end of the book, the children are inspired to use what they've discovered to create a play. Reading this book together will help children explore how they can use costumes and props to stimulate their imaginations and create plays of their own.

LITERACY ELEMENTS

sentence-structure patterns that mirror the narrative pattern
capitalization at the start of sentences
periods at the end of sentences

CONNECTIONS

MUSIC
experimenting with the role music plays in performance

VISUAL ARTS
experimenting with techniques and materials in various media

WORDS TO DISCOVER

attic
trunk
drawers
boxes
pockets

ESL CONSIDERATIONS

Discuss how some English words, such as *play*, have more than one meaning. Also explore how some words sound the same but are spelled differently and have different meanings, such as *clothes* and *close*.

Overall Learning Opportunities



Students will:

- explore how role-playing can be used to express a character
- demonstrate an understanding of how tableau can be used to express characterization
- demonstrate an understanding of different points of view



Students will:

- use a variety of materials to communicate information
- express responses to written materials, relating the ideas in them to their own knowledge and experience
- ask questions, express feelings, and share ideas

ACTIVITY MENU

Exploration: Using Props, page 45

Guided Reading, pages 46–47

As a Group, pages 48–49



- *What Are They Saying?:* using role-play to explore dialogue
- *Meet Some Characters:* using role-play to explore characterization



- *My Home:* using a range of media to re-create a home
- *Take a Hike!:* creating an imaginary home after a class walk

Independent Work, pages 50–52



- *BLM 19:* creating costumes for the story's characters



- *BLM 20:* re-creating story sentences by matching and gluing
- *BLM 21:* demonstrating understanding by matching words with images



Using Props

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Students will:

- use familiar materials in new ways
- use their creativity in movement and mime activities

YOU WILL NEED

- a box of props (pencil, key, book, lid, toy car, card, tea cup, stuffed toy, camera, plastic flower, and so on)

OBSERVING FOR ASSESSMENT

Does the student:

- think of new ways to use familiar materials?
- use his or her body to communicate an idea?
- participate in the activity?



Be sensitive to all attempts to represent ideas

through role-playing. Sometimes the most complicated and interesting ideas cannot be easily transformed into a shape by the students. Students might benefit from role-playing with the object. Consider providing a prop for each student.

Reading the Story

Before you read *In the Attic*, explain that this is a story about two children who use their imaginations and pretend as they find different things in their attic. Read the story, pausing after each spread allowing children to observe what the characters have found and to think about what they might be pretending. Revisit the story by asking:

- What did the children find in the attic (trunk, drawers, and so on)?
- What do you think the little boy (girl) is pretending? Why?

Starting the Exploration

Ask the children to sit in a circle around the box of props. Show page 3. Ask:

- What did the boy find in the attic?
- What is he pretending he is doing?

Tell the children that they will be using their imaginations as they explore different ways to use objects. Chant:

- In the school there is a classroom.
In the classroom there is a box. In the box there is a...

Invite a volunteer to select something from the prop box and hold it up for the others to see. Say:

- ...pencil. Make a moving picture with your upper body to show what you usually do with a pencil.

Ask the children to “freeze” and hold their shapes. Comment on their shapes. Then have children imagine that the pencil is something else. Say:

- Imagine this pencil is a candle on a birthday cake. Make a moving picture with your face and upper body of someone blowing out the candle.

Continue by having the pencil represent different objects (baseball bat, umbrella). Encourage the children to suggest ideas.

Working with Props

On another day, invite a volunteer to pull another object from the prop box, for example, a lid. Brainstorm possible objects the lid could represent (Frisbee, mask, hat, button, plate, pizza). Ask the children to find their own Drama Space (a space in which they can move safely without touching others), and sit down and imagine who they are and what they are doing with the lid. Ask them to make a picture in their mind first, and then make a moving picture with their bodies. Have them freeze and hold their shape. Ask a few interested children to explain their shape. Continuing with the same object, ask children to imagine that the object is something else.

Sharing

Have the children examine the props they used. Ask:

- Which props gave you the most ideas?
- How did you feel when you (blew out the candles)?
- Which props would you like to keep in the prop box? Why?
- What else could we add to our box?

Extension

Place the prop box at the Dramatic Play Centre. Invite interested children to include any of the props into their spontaneous role-playing situations. You may want to have children listen to several classical music selections and choose one to use as a “soundtrack” for their role-plays (see *Kindergarten Audio CD Tracks 11–18*).

Consider using Stand-Alone Activity 1: “My Safe Bubble” on page 115 to introduce drama routines and techniques.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Students will:

- use language patterns to predict the next word
- demonstrate awareness of some conventions of written materials: text is written from left to right; words have spaces between them; words are spelled with upper-case and lower-case letters
- retell the story in their own words

YOU WILL NEED

- chart paper and markers

TEACHING tip

As the students talk about attics and where they're located, you could sketch, on chart paper, the frame of a house and locate the attic just under the roof, similar to the picture on page 2 of *In the Attic*.

Setting the Scene

Invite the children to talk about their homes. Ask them to describe various rooms in their houses, apartments, condominiums, townhouses, and so on. Ask:

- Does anyone live in a home that has an attic?

Invite those children with attics to talk about them — where they are, what they look like, what they're used for — and establish that attics can be found at the top of a house, under the roof. Some may describe their attics as crawl spaces, while others may describe attics large enough for a person to stand up and move around.

Hand out copies of the book to the children. As they look at the cover, tell them the title of the story. Have them point to the words as you say them: *In the Attic*. Ask:

- How many words are in the title? That's right, there are three words: *in*, *the*, and *attic*. 1, 2, 3.

Have the children look at the cover illustration, talk about what they see, and tell what the story might be about. Encourage a variety of responses and, to keep the children focused on getting meaning from pictures, follow each response by asking, "Why do you think that?"

As you say the title once again while pointing to the words, have children open their copies of the book to page 2.

Reading the Text

Picture Walk

Have children look at page 2. Say:

- In the house there is a bedroom. Point to it. Yes, that's right.
- In the house there is a living room. Point to it. Yes, that's right.
- In the house there is a stairway. Point to it. Yes, that's right.
- In the house there is an attic. Point to it. Yes, that's right.

Have the children talk about what they can see in the attic — the top of the stairway, two children, a small window, and so on. Say:

- Look at the picture on page 3. In the attic there is a trunk. What's a trunk?

Turn to page 4.

- Inside the trunk, where is everything kept? That's right, in the trunk there are some drawers.
- What do you think is in the drawers?

Look at page 5 to find out. Say:

- In the drawers there are some boxes.

Continue the pattern of picture study to page 7. Then ask:

- Where is there a play?

Turn to page 8 to find out. Say:

- In the attic there is a play.

Consider using Stand-Alone Activity 1, "My Safe Bubble," on page 12 to introduce drama topics and techniques.

OBSERVING FOR ASSESSMENT

During independent reading, you can assess specific reading behaviours and make anecdotal notes of your observations. For example, does the student:

- self-monitor by finger pointing and subvocalizing when reading silently?
- use self-correcting strategies?

Independent Reading

Have the children read the book on their own, with as little assistance as possible.

After Reading

Ask the children:

- What is a play?
- Have you ever put on a play? Did anyone watch you?
- What about the other way around? Have you ever watched a play?
- In this story, what do you think the children's play was about?
- Why do you think so?

Revisit the Story

Engage the children in talk about the story by asking open-ended questions such as:

- What did you enjoy most about the story?
- Which was your favourite picture? Why?

Have the children recall specific information from the story by asking:

- Where was the attic? How do you know the attic was at the top of the stairs?
- How many children were in the story? What were they doing in the attic?
- What did they find in the trunk?
- Where did they find the clothes?
- What did they find in the pockets of the clothes?

Focus the children on the repetitive and patterned language by inviting them to complete the oral cloze.

Say:

- In the house there is an _____.
- In the attic there is a _____.
- In the trunk there are some _____.
- In the drawers there are some _____.
- In the boxes there are some _____.
- In the clothes there are some _____.

Ask:

- What might they have found in a tiny pocket? in a medium-sized pocket? in a big pocket?

Use **BLM 20** to solidify their learning.



Page 51

Reinforce the Story

Have the children retell the story in their own words. As they use words drawn from the story, list them on chart paper: *attic, trunk, boxes, clothes*, and so on.

Together, use **BLM 21** to reinforce their understanding.



Page 52





As a Group

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Students will:

- use their creativity in drama activities

OBSERVING FOR ASSESSMENT

Does the student:

- provide creative verbal responses?

Activity: What Are They Saying?

Revisit the story *In the Attic*, asking children to imagine the dialogue that is taking place as the characters explore the treasures they find in the attic trunk.

Begin on page 2. Set the stage by having children pretend that they are the characters creeping up the attic stairs for the very first time. Have them imagine peering into the dark room. Ask:

- What do you think one of the characters might say? Why? If he (she) said that, what would the other character say? What else might they say?

Continue by asking children to find their own Drama Space. Then say:

- I will describe what is happening and you make the moving picture with your body.

Describe a situation. For example, say:

- I am opening the drawer in the trunk very carefully. I rest it on the floor. I reach inside and say...

Have the children freeze in their shape. Ask:

- What do you think the character would say? What would the other character say in response?

Continue the story, encouraging children to role-play and suggest dialogue.

Extension

- Look at photographs, or pictures cut from magazines, that show people in different situations. Ask children to suggest the dialogue. You can print the suggested dialogue as speech bubbles.
- Listen to the song “The Movin’ Away Day Blues” (see *Kindergarten Audio CD Track 25*) and discuss the situation. Have children role-play saying goodbye to a friend. Ask:
 - How would you feel? What would you say?
 - Imagine riding a bike with your friend. What would you say?

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Students will:

- use their creativity in mime activities

YOU WILL NEED

- a box of costumes, hats, and accessories

OBSERVING FOR ASSESSMENT

Does the student:

- use creativity in mime activities?

Activity: Meet Some Characters

Invite children to look at page 8 of *In the Attic*. Say:

- The children put on some of the clothes they found in the attic. Now they are pretending to be someone else. Who do you think they are? What do you think they might be pretending?

Present the box of costumes. Invite a child to pull one of the items (for example, a scarf) from the box. Tell the children that when they put on this scarf they can become anyone they want to be. They can do things that maybe they wouldn’t normally be able to do.

Brainstorm with children different characters they could become, and what they might be able to do as this character.

Ask the children to find their own Drama Space. On your signal, have the children make a moving picture by putting on the scarf and becoming someone else. Volunteers can make suggestions as to the characters and what they are doing. Repeat the activity for other costume items.

Extension

- Costumes and dress-up items can be placed at the Dramatic Play Centre where interested children can use them for spontaneous role-playing.
- Some children may enjoy drawing or creating a costume for the characters. Use **BLM 19**. Encourage children to describe what the characters are doing.



LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Students will:

- use a variety of materials to communicate information
- ask questions, express feelings, and share ideas

YOU WILL NEED

- a variety of art media

Activity: My Home

Invite the children to select from an array of arts and crafts materials (crayons, markers, construction paper, boxes, paints, and so on) that they will use to make a picture or a model of their home.

When the children are drawing their pictures, encourage them to add details that help to identify it and to separate it from other homes — the house or apartment number, the colour of the front door, and so on.

Extension

Invite the children, in turn, to share their pictures or models and to talk about their homes. Encourage the other children to listen carefully and to ask questions.

Because a variety of homes and depictions will be shared, you might wish to start the questions by asking:

- I see that you've put the number of your house on the front door. Why is the number important for helping us to know it's your house?

Create a corner in the classroom where the children's pictures can be mounted and their constructions can be displayed.

This Extension works well with Stand-Alone Activity 24: "Shape Pictures" on page 138.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Students will:

- explore an environment and their feelings within it
- consider various categories and ways of sorting

YOU WILL NEED

- materials for drawing and colouring

Activity: Take a Hike!

Take the children on a walk around the neighbourhood to look at the various homes and to try to find a house that might have an attic like the one in the story.

Along the way, encourage the children to engage in conversation about the various homes they see and what makes one similar to and, at the same time, different from another.

Focus the children's attention on colour, street number, number of storeys, height, width, shape, and so on.

As the teacher, you are the expert in where within the neighbourhood of your school it is safe and interesting to walk. This walk is an excellent opportunity to review basic safety tips with the children.

Extension

Back in the classroom, have the children create a picture of what the outside of their perfect home would look like. Encourage the children to think about details such as: what colour it would be, how tall and wide it would be, what shape the roof would be, and so on. They can use crayons or a variety of art media to create their design.

This Extension works well with Stand-Alone Activity 21: "Collage Creations" on page 135.

My name is _____ .

Draw and colour a costume on each child.

Tell what each child is.



I am a _____ .

I am a _____ .

My name is _____.

Cut and glue to make sentences.

In the house there is an _____.

In the boxes there are some _____.

In the drawers there are some _____.

In the attic there is a _____.

In the trunk there are some _____.

In the clothes there are some _____.



drawers	attic	clothes
trunk	pockets	boxes

My name is _____

Draw lines to match words and pictures.

attic



trunk



drawers



boxes



clothes



pockets

