

GIVING THANKS

Book by Chief Jake Swamp ©1995

Theme: Native Americans/The

Environment/Thanksgiving

Grade Level: Pre K - 2

Running Time: 7:00

SUMMARY

This story is based on the "Thanksgiving Address," a Native American message of peace and thankfulness for all the blessings of the earth.

OBJECTIVES

- To help children recognize all the things there are on earth to be thankful for.
- To introduce children to Native American culture.
- To help children appreciate the diversity of our nation's people.

BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Talk with children about the many things the natural world provides us with each day, including the sun to warm us, trees to provide shade, rain to fill reservoirs and provide drinking water, etc. Encourage children to describe the different kinds of things the earth gives them that they are thankful for.

Share the book *Giving Thanks, A Native American Good Morning Message* with children. Then ask:

- Why do you think the Native Americans call the thunder "Grandfather," the sun "Brother" and the moon "Grandmother"?
- How do you think the author of this book

felt about the earth? How does this story make you feel about the earth?

AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Chapter 2: Thank You Mother Earth

Take a walk outdoors with children.

Encourage them to notice the green color of the grass, the different shapes of the clouds in the sky, the feeling of the rocks they might pick up from the ground, the sound of crunching leaves under their feet. Talk about the wonders of the natural earth, its colors, shapes, and textures. Mention the foods that grow from the soil, and the weather conditions that provide us with the water crops need and relief for ourselves from heat and humidity. When you return indoors, have children draw a picture, or write about one object of nature in detail.

Chapter 3: Thank You Good Food

Have children work together to make a meal and invite another class in to enjoy it. As children enjoy the meal, talk about the pleasures of inviting friends to share in the meal and the fun of working together to create it. Encourage children to talk about the differences among themselves, and how this diversity help to make the meal, and the partaking of it, more enjoyable. At the end of the meal, have children take turns describing what they feel thankful for about this event.

Extended Learning Activity

Have the group work together to paint a large mural showing the things we all can be thankful for. As children work, stress the idea that some of the most wonderful, and important things we have been given on earth are free for all to enjoy. When finished, display the mural on a classroom wall or bulletin board. Have children invent a title for their mural and display the label alongside the mural.

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