

Curious George Lesson Plans

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This theme unit was inspired by a recent issue of NEWS-2-YOU, the symbol-based newspaper that brings current events to non-, low-, and emergent readers. The issue was devoted to the release of the new CURIOS GEORGE movie. My students enjoyed the newspaper story so much that I decided to do a full theme unit with Curious George. What a hit! The students are having so much fun doing activities that relate to IEP objectives and academic standards, and that reinforce attention during integrated speech/language class lessons. I hope your students enjoy this, too!

1. We read the NEWS-2-YOU news story about Curious George. We also did the related Joey's Locker activities.
2. A letter (CuriousParentLetter.pdf) was sent home to acquaint parents with the activities we would be doing in class.
3. I took a stuffed monkey into each of my life skills classes. Along with the monkey was a Curious Listeners Chart. We revisited all the expected behaviors in "whole body listening" and the students shown the chart. During every 45-min speech/language lesson, I would hold a clipboard. If I needed to correct a student who was not attending, that student did not get a square colored on the chart for that session. In each session, all students who attended without prompting got a square colored in and also received a Curious George coloring page (downloaded from the Houghton Mifflin site: <http://www.houghtonmifflinbooks.com/features/cgsite/gamesandfun.shtml>). Previously disruptive and distracted students suddenly became very attentive! The reason was the reward -- when a student earned four colored squares, he could take the stuffed monkey home for a few days to have an adventure with the student and his family! Wow, was this ever motivating.

If more than one student earned 4 squares on the Curious Listening chart, names were put into a bag and pulled. Each time the monkey was returned, another name was selected. The goal is, of course, for all students to get a turn to take Curious George home!

The stuffed monkey goes home in a tote bag that also contains a letter to parents (GeorgeHomeLetter.pdf) and a disposable camera. We first talk about how to take good care of the monkey, brainstorm some things the monkey can do with the family, and set out the rules of the camera -- only 3 photos, and only taken by an adult. (After all, I have to pay to have the film developed!)

4. We read the original storybook of Curious George. Then the students did the paper/pencil comprehension quiz (CuriousGeorgeQuiz.pdf). I read the questions, the students circled the answers.

5. The Curious Words poster was introduced and hung in the classrooms. We used this to encourage asking and answering questions, including the activity detailed on the CuriousWordCards.pdf document.

6. When the stuffed monkey has had an adventure with each of the students, the film will be developed and students will be involved in a writing/dictating activity, writing captions for the photos to make a class book.

We will read other Curious George books and have additional activities planned for the month, many from the Houghton-Mifflin site:
(<http://www.houghtonmifflinbooks.com/features/cgsite/gamesandfun.shtml>).

Other sources of ideas on this theme:

<http://www.dltk-teach.com/books/curiousgeorge.html>

<http://www.curiousgeorgemovie.com/>

Our thanks to the NEWS-2-YOU newspaper and related JOEY'S LOCKER activities for inspiring us to take this fun current event and make it a month-long theme for learning! Thanks, too, for making special newspaper symbols available for use with BOARDMAKER and other graphics programs!

For more information on NEWS-2-YOU, please visit: www.news-2-you.com. There you can download a free sample of the three levels of newspaper, see how the newspaper and Joey's Locker activities support a standards-based education, and obtain ordering information.