

Sock Walk



Introduction

In the book "The Dandelion Seed's Big Dream" by Joseph Anthony and Cris Arbo, young readers follow the flight of a dandelion seed from the countryside to the city. In this life science lesson, children put socks over their shoes and take a walk outside. The socks collect seeds and other bits of natural debris, which the children examine once they're back in the classroom. Early fall is a perfect time to do a "Sock Walk" because so many plants have gone to seed. The best place to do this activity is in an area that is overgrown with grass and weeds. However, you can also do this in a more urban environment—you might find a dandelion seed!

Materials Needed

- ◆ One sock large enough to fit over a child's shoe, 1 per student. (Adult size tube socks work well. Have students bring a sock from home and have some extras on hand for those who don't.)
- ◆ Magnifying glasses, 1 per group
- ◆ Tweezers, 1 per group
- ◆ Optional: soil for "planting" the sock

Common Core Standards (ELA K-3)

- ◆ Reading and Literature: Key Ideas and Details (K.3, 1.3, 2.1, 3.1)
- ◆ Integration and Knowledge of Ideas (K.7, 1.7, 2.7, 3.7)

Procedure

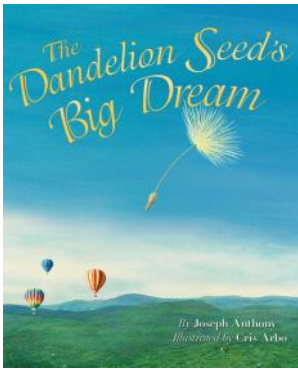
1. Read *The Dandelion Seed's Big Dream* lead a discussion using some of the following questions: What was the dandelion seed's dream? (to grow into a flower and make more seeds). Why was this an important dream? (seeds grow new plants which makes more seeds and continues a plant's life cycle). Review the parts of a plant (root, leaves, stem, flower, seed) and ask students which of these plant parts are illustrated in the book. What obstacles kept the seed from growing? (spider web, broom, plastic container). How did humans keep the seed from its dream? (man-made environment, trash) How did humans help the seed? (blew the seed, cleaned up the environment, created a garden). Refer to specific illustrations. How is the first illustration in the book the same as the last illustration? (dandelion seed is floating in the air). How is it different? (more seeds; from different plant).
2. Explain to students that they will do a "sock walk" to discover seeds. Have students put a sock over one of their shoes.
3. Walk around outside, especially in an overgrown area. (Allow 15-30 minutes)
4. Back inside, demonstrate for students how to carefully remove their sock so as not to drop all of the seeds and debris.
5. Have students work in small groups, using tweezers and magnifying glasses, to remove everything from their socks. They can sort everything into piles based on their own classification system. (Allow 15-30 minutes).
6. Lead a discussion about seed dispersal.
7. Optional: Fill each sock with soil, water it, and observe what grows.

Science Framework Connection

- ◆ LS1-A: Structure and Function
- ◆ LS1-B: Growth and Development of Organisms
- ◆ LS2-A: Interdependent Relationships in Ecosystem
- ◆ LS3-A: Inheritance and Variation of Traits
- ◆ LS4-C: Adaptation

Additional Resources

- ◆ Plant Your Socks—a fun extension idea from the National Wildlife Federation
- ◆ Simple Science Strategies—Because every one can think like a scientist.



The Dandelion Seed's Big Dream

Author: Joseph Anthony

Publisher: Dawn Publications

Pages: 32

Ages: Pre-K-3rd grade

Illustrator: Cris Arbo

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Reviewer: Chu Chu Wu

The Story

The little seed had a dream: to find a home that would allow it to grow and become a pretty, golden yellow flower. As the little seed travelled on the wind, many things happened to it, but it never gave up on its dream. During the journey, it got caught in the spider web, had its parachute broken by a broom, drafted to different areas of the city, landed inside a sandwich box in a trashy yard, and just waited patiently. Finally, the dandelion seed landed on a community garden that it claims as home. It grew and bloomed into a pretty yellow flower, and so its patience, courage, and determination ultimately allow its dream to be fulfilled.

About the Reviewer

Chu Chu Wu is an Associate Professor of Early Childhood Education in the School of Education at Georgia Southwestern State University, Americus, GA.

Why Our Reviewer Recommends This Book

Dandelion Seed's Big Dream is beautifully illustrated. Through the journey of the little seed, the children are able to see the appearance of the landscape in the suburban and urban areas. There are several talking points that could be used to help young children relate to the story. For example, environmental protection is one of the themes, and

children can be taught that plants cannot survive without a clean and proper environment. In the story, we see people cooperating and working together as they pick up litter and remove dead plants in order to plant a community garden, the garden that the little seed finally claims as its home. The other theme is how it teaches young children that it takes patience, perseverance, and courage to make one's dream come true. In addition, young readers can learn about the parts of the dandelion, about how seeds travel on the wind and reproduce to form new plants, and about the differences between a weed and a flower.

Classroom Strategies and Ideas

Science connection: Teachers can use this book when they talk about an assortment of popular preschool and primary themes, such as the following:

- A plant's life cycle
- Spring and flowers
- Seeds and how they spread (by wind, insect pollinators, etc.)

Preschool and primary age children can read or listen to books about the types of seeds found from different plant forms. The teacher can take the children for a nature walk and have the children collect different types of seeds in the spring. Children can match seeds to leaves and label types of plants and the usual plant parts (root, stem, leaf, flower, seed). Children can observe how seeds' shapes and physical structures help them to travel on the wind in order to fulfill their goal of reproduction. The teacher also can talk about the parts of the plants, weeds, and flowers. Furthermore, the teacher can use the little seed's journey to relate to the children's personal life experiences, talking about emotional characteristics that can help each child to reach his/her hope, goal, or dream. By focusing the students' attention on the different landscapes pictured in the story, the teacher can talk about not littering and help the children appreciate the beautiful illustrations.

Concepts in the Book

- A plant's life cycle
- Flowers and weeds
- Insects, pollination, and wind
- Community garden
- Environmental protection
- Beneficial emotional characteristics: hope, patience, perseverance, and courage

This book can be most effectively used...

- For teaching art, geometry/ shapes, and a few science units, and it also can be used as a springboard for a writing/drawing assignment focusing on the imaginary journey of a plant seed.
- Community gardens are another useful talking point from *The Dandelion Seed's Big Dream*, and lessons for young children could be planned around a gardening unit.

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More Classroom Strategies and Ideas for *Dandelion Seed's Big Dream*

Reading and writing: After reading the story, children can write a new journey for the little seed, or a journey for a different kind of seed. This practice encourages students to use their observational skills and their imagination in order to create a new story. Younger children could use pictures and dictate sentences to the teacher.

Art and science: Primary age children can collect different types of seeds, observe the seeds, and illustrate the structure and the characteristics of each seed and the related plant type. Seeds also can be useful for arts and crafts. Children can predict which kind of seed will travel the furthest and find out the answer by dropping each seed sample from the air. Children can note the ecstatic aspect of how a seed moves in the air.



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Two Seeds, Two Journeys

Introduction

In the book "The Dandelion Seed's Big Dream" by Joseph Anthony and Cris Arbo, young readers follow the flight of a dandelion seed from the countryside to the city. Although it's a stand-alone book, it is related to their first book *The Dandelion Seed*. In this lesson, young students review details from the book and compare the journeys of the two seeds, noting similarities and differences. The lesson concludes with students storyboarding the continuing story of a dandelion seed.



Materials Needed

- ◆ Books: "The Dandelion Seed's Big Dream" and "The Dandelion Seed"
- ◆ 8 1/2 x11 plain white paper, 1 sheet per student

Common Core Standards (ELA K-3)

- ◆ Reading and Literature: Key Ideas and Details (K.1, 1.1, 2.1, 3.1); Integration and Knowledge of Ideas (K.7, K.9; 1.7, 1.9; 2.7, 2.9; 3.7, 3.9)
- ◆ Writing: Text Types and Purposes (K.3, 1.3, 2.3, 3.3)

Procedure

1. Read aloud "The Dandelion Seed" and "The Dandelion's Seed Big Dream".
2. Have students find the similarities and difference between the journeys of the two seeds by asking students to recall details from the stories. The following questions will help you guide the discussion. For easy comparison, write students' responses in two columns, side-by-side, on the board.
 - What places did the seeds stop at during their journey?
 - What obstacles or challenges did they face?
 - What man-made objects did the seeds encounter?
 - What contact with humans did the seeds have?
 - What seasons did they experience?
 - How did the seeds change over time?
 - How long did it take the seeds to grow into new plants and flower? (They will make an inference based on the illustrations.)
3. Refer to the first and last illustrations in both books, and ask students: How are these pages the same? Different?
4. Explain a plant's life cycle, using a visual diagram, to show the continual process of sprouting from a seed, growing to become a seedling, and then becoming a mature plant that flowers and produces seeds.
5. Writing Extension: The final illustration in *The Dandelion Seed's Big Dream* shows many dandelion seeds floating in the air. Have students choose one of the seeds and create a storyboard showing its journey. Create an 8-pane storyboard by having students fold a piece of plain white paper in half lengthwise. Then have them fold it in half again and again. When they open their papers, they will have 8 separate squares. Ask students to make a sketch and write a sentence in each square. The story should include a beginning, the locations where the seed went, obstacles or challenges along the way, and an end with the seed growing into a plant and flowering. When finished with their storyboards, have children share their story with a partner. Have them notice any similarities and differences between their stories.

Science Framework Connection

- ◆ LS1.A: Structure and Function
- ◆ LS1.B: Growth and Development of Organisms
- ◆ LS2.A: Interdependent Relationships in Ecosystem
- ◆ LS3.A: Inheritance of Traits
- ◆ LS3.B: Variation of Traits

Additional Resources

- ◆ Information and illustration about the Life Cycle of Plants: <http://brobichaud.pbworks.com/w/page/27565767/Life%20Cycle%20of%20a%20Plant>
- ◆ More information about Storyboarding with Kids <http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/article/what-are-storyboards>