

PLAYTIME

for Restless Rascals

words by Nikki Grimes pictures by Elizabeth Zunon

Educator Guide



Created by Keisha Rembert

In this whimsical and lyrical story, a child's playtime from the moment they awake until bedtime brings joy to both the child and their parents. "Your job is to play," the mom tells her child and the child lives up to the title of a play "expert" as they spend the day engaging in all types of play. This beautifully written and illustrated picture book will have children wanting to be experts, like the main character, at play.

GRADE LEVEL STANDARDS

Kindergarten: [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.1](#)

With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

Grade 1: [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.2](#)

Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.3](#)

Describe characters, settings, and major events in a story, using key details.

Grade 2: [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.2](#)

Recount stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message, lesson, or moral.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.4](#)

Describe how words and phrases (e.g., regular beats, alliteration, rhymes, repeated lines) supply rhythm and meaning in a story, poem, or song.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

([CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.1](#), [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.3](#), [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.2](#))

The following questions can be used during and/or after the reading of the book.

1. What do you think it means to be a restless rascal?
2. What does it mean to be an expert?
3. Why do you think the mother tells the main character they are an expert at play?

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4. What is your expertise? How are you like and different than the main character?
5. What words would you use to describe the characters (child, mother, father)?
6. How does the mom show she cares for her child? How does the father show he cares for the child?

ACTIVITIES

What is play? (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.1, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.2)

Ask students what they believe is the difference between work and play. As a class, make a list of all the “work/play” the main character does in the book. Provide time for students to talk to one another about their favorite work/play. Give students stickers to put next to the play at which they are an expert from the list.

Play at Work (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.1, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.2, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.2)

With students, brainstorm “play centers” for the classroom, and discuss with students how they would show their expertise at the centers. Select one center from the brainstorming for students to design and keep in the classroom for the next week.

Sequence the Story (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.2)

The teacher or students (based on student readiness) will write out events from the story on sentence strips. After reading and discussing the story, students will move the sentence strips around to determine the story’s sequence.

What do you do? (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.1)

Create a play chart with students connecting play to weather and seasons. Students can complete the sentence starters below.

- On rainy days, I play _____ because _____ .
- On sunny days, I play _____ because _____ .
- On fall days, I play _____ because _____ .
- On winter days, I play _____ because _____ .



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Word Play (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.4)

Use the following quotes from the book to analyze the word choice and phrase meanings. Then have the students use the phrases as models to write about themselves.

quotes	What words do you know? What do you notice about the words? Let's write like Nikki.
Nod your head so hard, your curls bounce	
Dive into a mound of orange, gold, and fire-red leaves	
And hush you with a kiss	
Sometimes you careen around the world on the wooden carousel	
Then mold the best snowwoman I've ever seen	
You scramble off my knee and run into your father's arms	
You pretend patience for two seconds, then pull out a board game and plead	
I hear you squeal, "I win! I win!"	

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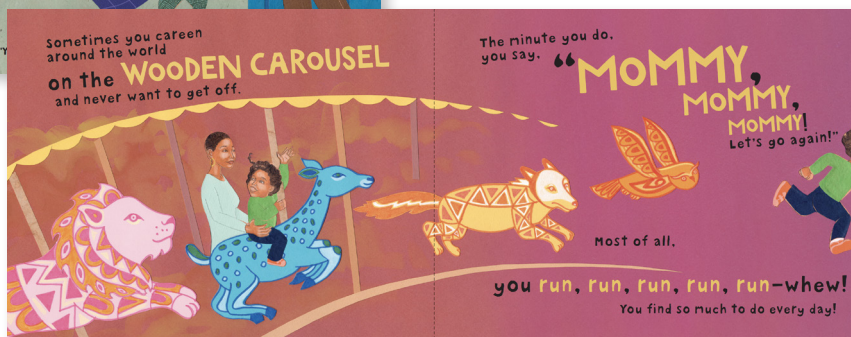
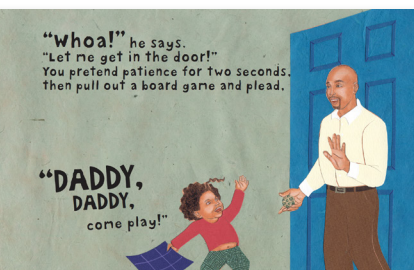
Values, Identity, Action (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.2)

Complete the chart with students based on the picture book. Students can also create their own images to connect with each.

Values <small>Values are the ideas/beliefs you find important in life.</small>	Identity	Action
What values do the book make you think about?	Is anyone left out of this story? Does this story apply to you?	What does this story encourage you to do? What might it encourage parents to do?

See, Think, Me, We (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.2, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.2)

Use the illustrations and prompts below to help students build their visual literacy skills.



See

Look closely at the illustration. What do you notice? Make lots of observations.

Think

What thoughts do you have about what you see?

Me

What connections can you make between you and the illustration?

We

How does the illustration connect to bigger stories—do all kids get to play? Why or why not? What does play look like around the world?