

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Where Do Balloons Go? An Uplifting Mystery Tr 0-06-027980-X

When a little boy accidentally lets go of his balloon, his imagination takes him on its journey. This is a magical story that explores themes of imagination and loss. A lost helium balloon, an experience that stays with a child for some time and with regards to this book, provides an endless font of learning activities for the classroom teacher.

Balloon Pal

Read the story aloud to the class. Tell students that they are going to create a balloon pal—their own special balloon friend, possessing whatever human characteristics that the child can dream up. Distribute latex helium balloons or paper cutouts of a balloon to the children. Ask them to create a face on their balloon. They can write out identification cards naming their balloon and add special information about their balloon friend, such as favorite hobbies, age, favorite foods, favorite places to visit, etc. Have a meet and greet, where students introduce their new friends. Display the balloon pals in the classroom.

Lost and Found Posters

After the class has gone home, collect all the balloon pals and hide them. The next day tell the students that you've hidden all the balloons. Students will then need to make wanted posters for their lost balloon friend, revealing its name and age, and describing what they look like and where they were last seen. These can be posted around the school or within the classroom.

Up, Up and Away Balloon Hunt

The next night, hide the balloon pals around the school and write out clues for a scavenger hunt. The class then follows the clues until all the lost balloons are recovered. This can be completed as a whole class or in small groups. If doing this activity as an entire class, then hide all the balloons in one place, like the cafeteria, and then have a party when they are found. If doing it in small groups, then create enough clues to find a few of the balloons throughout the building. The help of various school staff will need to be recruited, such as the custodian, the principal, the reading specialist, etc. Create a story about the reason for their disappearance or have the students think of one.

Postcards from Planet Helium

Tell the class that they are all balloons vacationing on Planet Helium. Cut a piece of 8 1/2 x 11 paper in half and distribute one sheet per student to be used as postcards. Students are to write postcards describing their trip and what the place is like. Have students illustrate the planet on one side and write the description on the back. The postcards are then shared with the class.

Where, Oh Where Has My Little Balloon Gone?

Show the class pictures of different environments (tundra, dessert, mountains, oceans, rain forests, etc.) and discuss the characteristics of each. Then read pre-written clues about where in

the world the balloon has gone. For example, “Boy it really is cold here. My string is frozen stiff.” The children then guess in which environment the balloon is hiding.

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