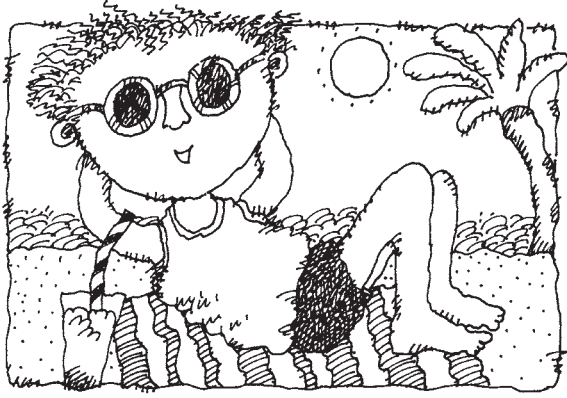


Summer Dreams

Teaching Notes



Background

Summer can be a glorious time for students to look forward to, but it also is a time that can signal uncertainty and change. After all, the freedom of summer brings an end to some comfortable home-away-from-home routines that were created during an entire school year. It means saying good-bye to a familiar past and hello to an uncertain future. For many students, the beginning of summer is a bittersweet time of letting go and moving on. For teachers, the awareness that students may be struggling inside can go a long way toward helping them make a smooth and happy transition out of the classroom and into the sunshine.

Extension Activities

See How We've Grown!

Students of any age benefit from seeing how far they've come and noting all they've accomplished during the school year. To this end, you can easily use your plan book as the basis for helping to create a class field trip down memory

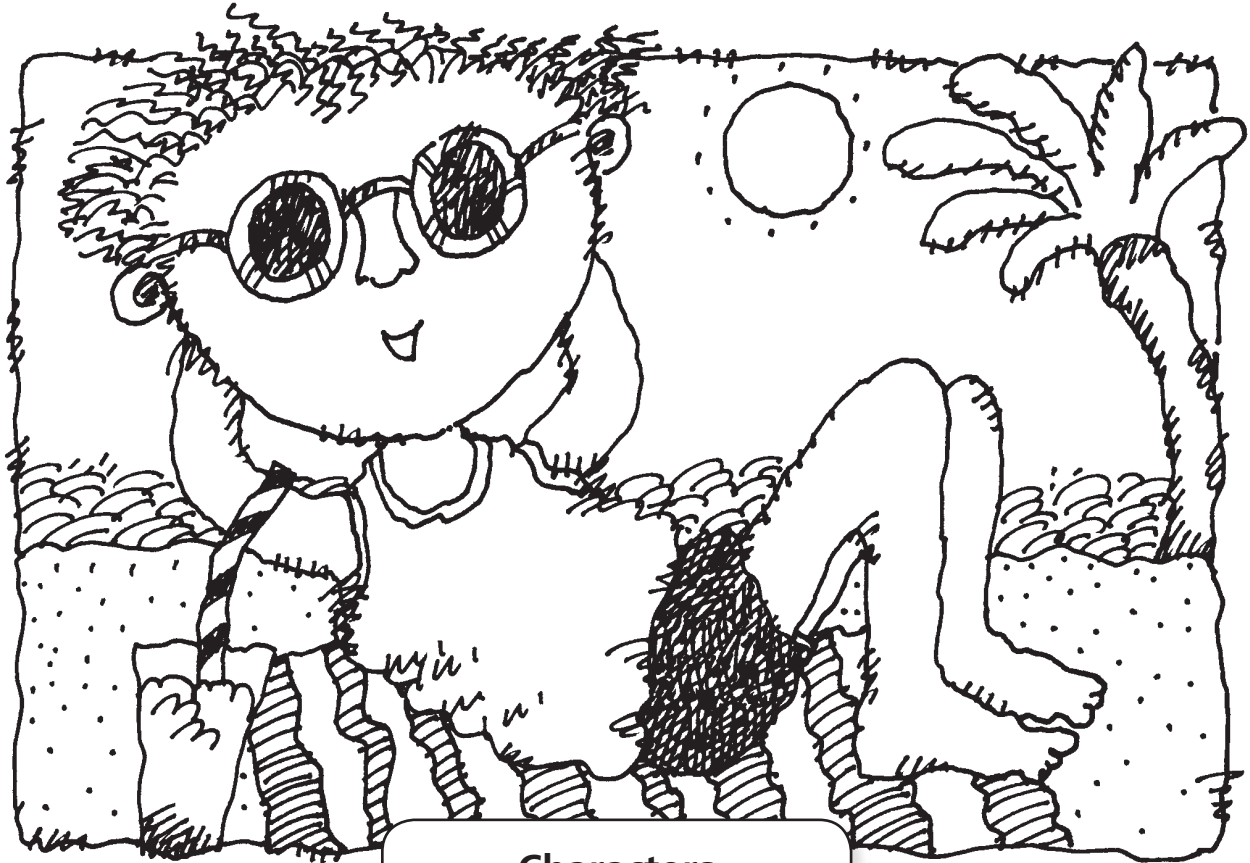
lane. Before school comes to a close, set aside time to go back through the pages of your lesson plans and make a list of all the learning experiences you shared together. For example, you might include some of the theme units you covered, all the songs you sang, poems you enjoyed, and the skills students mastered together. In addition, pull out some of your class photos, including pictures of displays and projects students worked on throughout the year. Then set aside time for a "remember when . . ." session. Present your memories and memorabilia and then invite students to add some of their own best memories to the mix. Finish by having each student write and illustrate one page for a class book titled "Our Class Memories." Make photocopies of each page—plus a blank page simply titled "Autographs" so that each student can own a copy of the book for classmates to sign.

Booking the Summer

Remind students of all the reading you've done together by compiling a list of the books and stories you've shared as a class. Then offer students a suggested summer reading list that builds on this foundation. For example, if in class students enjoyed a particular author, cite other books by that same author. If students read one of a series of books, recommend that they continue reading the rest of the titles. Finally, if students enjoyed a book that is available on film, suggest that they reread the book and enjoy viewing the movie.

Summer Dreams

by Jim Halverson



Characters

- Narrator
- Maria
- Christopher
- Lou
- Ghost of the School Year
- TV Set

Act 1

Maria, Christopher, and Lou walking home from school.

Narrator: Dreams of summer,
Dreams of play,
Dreams that school will go away.
Maria, Christopher, and Lou
Dream of what they're going to do
Once the long school year is through.

Maria: I can't *wait* for the end of school!

Christopher: I know! No more reading, no more spelling!

Lou: No more subtraction!

Maria: It's going to be wonderful. I'm not going to do anything
except watch TV!

Christopher: I'm just going to play with my friends. I won't read
a thing.

Lou: What I dream about is staying up as late as I want.

Maria: Nothing but TV! TV shows—More! Give me more!

Lou: It will be great. No school in the morning. I'll *never*
ever go to bed!

Christopher: And no one will make me read a book!

[During this last speech the Ghost of the School Year sneaks up and sprinkles each of them with magical dust. The moment the dust covers them, the children fall into a dream of the future.]

Ghost: Let them hope.
Let them dream.
Things may not be as they seem.
I'm a wicked little haunt!
I'm going to give them what they want!
When they wake, they're going to see
The summer that they wished to be.

Act 2

Narrator: What was it that Maria wished for?
“TV shows—More! Give me more!”

[The TV enters. Following the TV is Maria, who seems to be dragged along as if she were a prisoner.]

TV: Happy to have you with us today, Maria.
This is your treat:
Lots of stuff,
Lots of stuff—
Time for a commercial—
Same old stuff!

Maria: Help! I've seen this all before. I'll change the channel.

[She points a remote control at the TV.]

TV: Happy to have you with us today, Maria.
This is your treat:
Lots of stuff.
Lots of stuff.
Time for a commercial—
Same old stuff!

Maria: You said that before. You're boring. I didn't really mean that I *only* wanted to watch TV. I mean, I did like lots of the things at school—

TV: School? School?
That's the word that rhymes with *fool*!

[Maria and TV exit.]

Narrator: Lou, you remember, clearly said,
"I'll *never ever* go to bed!"

[Lou enters, yawning and exhausted, and tries to get into bed. Every time he tries to lie down, the bed dumps him to the floor.]

Lou: I'm so sleepy . . . I just want to go to bed . . . Ouch, why can't I get into this thing? Oh, why did I ever wish such a silly wish?

[Lou exits.]

Narrator: Now let's see how Christopher looks.
He's the one who swore off books.

[Christopher enters.]

Christopher: *[angrily]* That's the last time I play with my brother! We always argue about what game to play. Then when we finally do get around to playing, he always tries to boss me around. I need some time to myself.

[He notices a pile of books.]

Christopher: I know I said I wouldn't want to read. But if I do, no one at school will ever know.

[He reaches for a book, but it moves out of reach. This happens a few times.]

Christopher: What's going on? Why can't I read? These books are acting just like my brother! I thought at least books would still be my friends. I wish I were back in school!

[Christopher exits.]

Act 3

The three classmates are in just the same positions as when the Ghost first sprinkled them with the magical dust.

Narrator: Maria, Christopher, and Lou
Have seen their summer dreams come true.

[The Ghost of the School Year enters, sprinkles them with dust again, and they awaken.]

Maria: Oh, I'm still here in school. I had the worst . . . I don't know what to call it. I hope it was just a dream!


Christopher: I dreamed that I really couldn't read all summer.

Lou: And I couldn't ever go to bed. I was so tired! It wasn't fun at all.

Maria: Watching TV all the time was like being in prison.

Christopher: Maybe vacation isn't going to be just what we thought after all.

Maria: And maybe school is OK.



Lou: I'm still going to have fun on vacation. But, you know, I'll probably look forward to coming back to school next fall, too.

[Enter Ghost of the School Year unseen behind them.]

Ghost: I'm going to teach them a little poem:
We like summer. We like school.
We think both are pretty cool.
In summer, we can laze and play,
And spend our days in different ways.
Fall means back to school, it's true.
But that's OK—we like learning, too!

Maria: We like summer. We like school.

Christopher: We think both are pretty cool.

Lou: In summer, we can laze and play,

Maria: And spend our days in different ways.

All: Fall means back to school, it's true.
But that's OK—we like learning, too!

The End