CATCHING TIME: Teachers' Guide

SUMMARY:

"It's Saturday, and it's scurry and worry, bustle and whirl."

When Sara's mom and dad can't find time to take her to the park, Sara takes matters into her own hands. With a preserve jar and a butterfly net, she sets out to catch time itself.

But where is it? The harder Sara chases time, the harder it is to grab – it slips away under Mom's computer, swooshes down the drain while Dad washes dishes, and disappears in a twinkling flash as he shines the car.

Finally, Sara realizes that she's been going about it all wrong – there is only one way to actually catch time...

Whimsical and imaginative, CATCHING TIME is a perfect remedy to today's fast-paced lifestyle, and a vivid reminder that time with family is precious and, in the end, the very best time of all.

GENERAL THEMES AND CONNECTIONS:

1) The importance of family times

* overly busy parents
* too little time for family fun

2) The power of the imagination

3) Making time for what matters

* being too busy with chores
* the need to make time for play

4) Slowing down to find time

5) The elusive nature of time

* how time is hard to find
* how time seems to speed up the faster you go
* how being too busy makes it impossible to find time
* the need to slow down to find time

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES:

1) Topics of Discussion:

* How do you think Sara feels when her parents can't take her to the park? Have you ever felt like that?
* Why can't they take her to the park?
* What does Sara set out to do with her jar and butterfly net?
* Do you think she really can catch time?
* Where does Sara try to catch time? Where does she think she sees it?
* Do you think Sara tries to help her parents? How?
* Why do you think she can't catch time?
* How do you think Sara feels as the day wears on and she still hasn't caught time?
* How does Sara finally manage to catch time? What do you think that means?
* What does Sara do with the time she's caught?
* Do you think her parents also enjoy the time that Sara has caught?
* Do you ever feel that you don't have enough time for family fun?
* What would you do with time if you caught it?
* What is your favourite time of all?
* What do you think the story is all about?
    - Discuss busy lives; chasing time; how time is hard to find; how the busier you are, the harder it is to find time to play; how the only way to find time is perhaps to slow down and stop; etc
* Look closely at the two pictures that show Time (one is on the page with the text: "For a moment it's quiet, still as still etc" and the other is on the last page with the text, "In perfect time.") What are some of the things that the artist drew, that have to do with time?
* Why do you think the last words in the book are: "In perfect time"? What do you think that means?
* Discuss how we tell time.
* Discuss how we mark the passage of time, from years, to months, to weeks, to days, to hours, to minutes, to seconds. Discuss how many seconds there are in a minute, how many minutes in an hour, how many hours in a day, how many days in a week, how many days and weeks in a month, how many days/weeks/months in a year.

2) Writing Exercises:

* Make a list of the things that Sara's parents are busy with during the day.
* Make a list of Sara's feelings when her parents can't find time. You can feel more than one thing at a time.
* Write about what you'd do if you could find all the time in the world.
* What family time is your favourite or perfect time? Describe it.
* What is the very best time of all for you? Describe it.
* There are many words in the story that use time: such as suppertime, bathtime, bedtime. Write down other words/phrases that include time. Make a list. (eg: Last time, first time, good time, bad time, fun times, lunch time, etc)
* Imagine how you might go about catching time and write down what you'd do. Make a drawing, if needed.
* Make a list of feelings you go through if your parents are too busy to play.
* Below is a list of some different kinds of time. Pick one, and describe an event from your life that shows you having that time.
    - Last time; First time; Good time; Bad time; Dinner time; lunch time; Crazy time; Best time; Worst time; Fun time; Scary time; Bath time; Bed time; Wasted time; Little time; Lots of time; Boring time; Perfect time, etc
* Make a list of the kinds of time you have in school

3) Art Projects:

* Draw a picture of what you think time might look like
* Draw a picture of your favourite time with your family
* Make a collage showing some of the best times you've had
* Draw a picture of Sara and her family playing in the park
* Make a class poster titled: WANTED: TIME FOR...
    - Have each student come up with a word or more describing what they'd want time for (such as play, or reading, or going to the movies; going to the beach) along with a drawing or magazine picture that shows it.
* Below is a list of different kinds of time. Make a drawing of you having one of those times.
    - Last time; First time; Good time; Bad time; Dinner time; lunch time; Crazy time; Best time; Worst time; Fun time; Scary time; Bath time; Bed time; Wasted time; Little time; Lots of time; Boring time; Perfect time, etc
* Class Project: Make a huge class map showing where different kinds of time can be found. Use your imagination.

4) Drama:

* Act out how you would catch time.
* Act out what Sara and her family do when they find time.
* Act out what Sara and her family do after they leave the park.

5) Extra Study and Research activities:

* learn how to tell time with clocks
* learn about Roman numerals on clocks
* research the different ways people tell time
* research and do a report on one or more of the following: sundials, hourglasses, watches, mechanical clocks; digital clocks
* Do a study on how our time works, with a breakdown of years, months, weeks, days, hours, minutes, seconds.
* Research some ancient cultures and how they marked time, and how their calendars may be different from the one we use.

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