MAKING GRIZZLE GROW: Teachers' Guide

SUMMARY:

Later! It's always later! Dad is too busy to play, so Emily stomps outside and makes a snow dinosaur called Grizzle. When Dad doesn't notice, Emily rustles up a mountain of snow food to help Grizzle grow. Grizzle grows all right, but the more Emily feeds her, the hungrier and bossier Grizzle gets. Emily will have to think fast to get her creature under control.

This is a humorous and quirky story about what happens when your temper gets the better of you, but also about the enduring love between a girl and her dad – the kind the doesn't disappear just because you get mad.

GENERAL THEMES AND CONNECTIONS:

1) Family Relationships

* father daughter relationships

2) Anger/Temper and how to control it

* how anger/temper grows if you feed it
* how anger/temper gets out of control as it grows
* how perspective fades with anger/temper

3) Symbolism

4) Dinosaurs

5) Winter Activities

* playing in the snow

6) Food and Nutrition

7) The Power of the Imagination

* how imagination can help you cope with disappointment
* how imagination can run away with you

8) Promises

* the importance of keeping promises

9) Play time

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES:

1) Topics of Discussion:

- How do you think Emily feels when her Dad won't come out to play with her?
- What words in the first page show what Emily is feeling? (Stomp; Slam.)
- What does Emily name her dinosaur? What does that name sound like? Is it a soft and happy name, or a tough and angry name?
- How do you think Emily feels when her father calls her dinosaur cute and little?
- What does Emily feed her dinosaur?
- What kind of dinosaur is Grizzle at the start? What does she change into? Why does she keep changing into different dinosaurs? Do you think maybe she keeps changing into a bigger type of dinosaur?
- What kind of food does Emily feed Grizzle to help her grow? Why does Emily later decide to feed Grizzle Brussels sprouts, zucchini, tossed salad and low-fat cottage cheese?
- What kind of dinosaur does Grizzle end up as?
- Why does Emily grab Grizzle and wrestle her down after her Dad comes out?
- What kind of cookies has Dad put out for Emily? What shape are they?
- What kind of dinosaur does Emily want to make with her Dad at the end of the story, and why?
- Discuss symbols. What does Grizzle symbolize? (Emily's anger/temper.)
- Discuss anger. What happens when you get mad? Does your anger grow if you feed it? What ways do we feed anger? Does it get hard to control as Grizzle gets hard to control? Can you remember clearly when you are angry, or do things go out of perspective? Discuss skillful ways to deal with anger. What are some negative ways to express it and control it, and what are some positive ways?
- What was Dad working at while Emily was making Grizzle?
- The dinosaur that Emily makes seems very real to her. How do you think her Dad sees it? What picture shows how her dad sees it?
- Discuss imagination and the concept of imagination running away with you.
- Look at the book and describe the expressions on Emily's face on each page. Use more than one word for each expression – remember that you can feel more than one emotion at a time.
- Discuss winter activities. What are some of the things you like to do outdoors in the winter time?

2) Writing exercises:

* Make a list of the feelings Emily goes through as she makes her dinosaur.
* Make up two other fierce names that Emily might call her dinosaur.
* Come up with three names that Emily and her Dad might call the dinosaur they make together.
* Describe a time when you lost your temper and got very angry. Write another account of what would have happened if you hadn't lost your temper.
* Make a list of things you do when you are angry.
* Make a list of things you do when you make up with someone with whom you've had a fight.
* Write about the kinds of things you love to do with your mom or dad.
* Make a list of other foods not mentioned in the story that Emily might have fed Grizzle to make her grow.
* Make a list of five angry words, any words that come to mind, and make up a story using them.
* Have each child in the class draw a picture of a face showing a particular expression. Switch pictures randomly and have children write a story based on face in the picture.

3) Art Projects:

* Draw a series of faces with different expressions: angry, sad, happy, excited, afraid, loving.
* Draw a picture of an imaginary dinosaur. Give it whatever features you like.
* Look up dinosaurs in a book and draw a picture of one of the dinosaurs in the story.
* Draw a picture of you and your mom or dad doing something fun together.
* Draw pictures of the kind of food Emily might have fed Grizzle to help Grizzle grow.
* If you could see anger, what would it look like? Draw a picture.
* If you could see love, what would it look like? Draw a picture.
* If you could see laughter, what would it look like? Draw a picture.
* Cut out snowflakes from white paper and hang them in the windows.

4) Drama:

* Make yourself tall and big and stomp around like a dinosaur.
* Make up a dinosaur dance and roar.
* Act out a scene where someone gets mad at a friend or a member of the family. Act another scene to show how else the situation could have been dealt with in a more positive way.

5) Extra Study and Research activities:

* Research dinosaurs and write a report on any of the ones mentioned in the story, along with drawings.
* Study the food chart and describe what makes a healthy meal.
* Do a research project on a dinosaur not mentioned in the book. Make a poster showing the dinosaur and do a class presentation.

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