ROSES FOR GITA: Teachers' Guide

GENERAL THEMES AND CONNECTIONS:

1) Settling into a new home and making friends

* adjusting to new neighbours
* adjusting to a new culture if you've come from another country

2) Parents being busy with their work

3) Establishing surrogate grandparents by making friends with elderly neighbours

4) Gardens and colour

5) Having the courage to make overtures of friendship to difficult people

6) Music as a universal link and language

7) Neighbours, and what makes good neighbours

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES:

8) Topics of discussion

* What are the feelings that Gita experiences in this story?
* What does she miss about being near her grandmother?
* Do you have grandparents and where do they live? If they live far away, do you miss them?
* Are there times when your parents are too busy to help you? How do you feel?
* Have you ever had a neighbour you didn't know and were afraid of?
* Did you ever get to know that neighbour better? What was that like? Did you like him/her better?
* Do you think that sometimes when people don't like each other it may just be because they don't know each other?
* What kinds of neighbours do you have? What makes a good neighbour? How can you be a good neighbour?
* Why do you think that Gita is so keen to have her own garden?
* What do you know about Naniji's garden, from this book?
* Do you like to garden? Does anyone in your family garden? Why do you like it?

* What are your favourite plants?
* When Gita hears Mr. Flinch playing the violin, what do you think she feels and thinks?
* Why do you think Mr. Flinch plays the violin in his garden?
* Why do you think Gita decided to give her wind chimes to Mr Flinch? Did it take courage?
* Why did Mr Flinch think that Gita was a boy? Why did he shout at her?
* Discuss how Gita and Mr. Flinch might be able to help each other as they get to know each other better.
* Which type of rose did Mr. Flinch suggest that Gita plant?
* Do you garden? Why do you think people like to garden?
* Are there elderly people in your life? What do they mean to you? What do you like about them? How do you help them? How do they help you?
* What is your favourite kind of music? Do you play an instrument? If not, which one would you like to play the most?
* Discuss the concept of music as a language that transcends words.
* If Gita were to play a musical instrument, what might it be?

9) Writing exercises

* Describe the backyard you would most like to have. What would it be like? Describe the kind of play equipment you'd want in it, too.
* Write a letter from Gita to her grandmother telling her about Mr. Flinch.
* List the feelings Gita goes through in this story: at the start when she is making the chimes; when her mother is busy; as she looks at Mr Flinch's garden; when Mr Flinch shouts at her; when she hears him playing the violin; when she gives him the chimes; when he appears over the fence, holding her wind chimes; when she goes over to Mr Flinch's garden, at his invitation; when he gives her the roses; at the end of the story.
* Write about an activity Gita and Mr Flinch might do together.
* Write an account about a neighbour you like, or ways in which a neighbour means a lot to you or your family.
* Describe an imaginary plant that you would like to have. Give it magical properties if you like and describe how it could be used.

* Word Puzzle. Find the words listed below in the puzzle.

G	N	I	L	O	I	V	J	W	X
N	A	N	I	J	I	H	O	L	E
I	D	S	Q	U	I	N	T	Y	P
M	R	E	R	O	L	P	X	E	G
M	F	S	L	G	R	P	C	N	C
U	L	E	M	F	A	O	I	I	G
H	I	M	G	E	F	R	S	Q	O
D	N	I	W	D	A	U	D	E	Y
W	C	H	L	H	M	N	H	E	S
Z	H	C	S	G	I	T	A	S	N

CHIMES
EXPLORER
FLINCH
GARDEN
GITA
HOLE
HUMMING
MEAN
MUSIC
NANIJI
ROSES
SHARING
SHUFFLED
SQUINTY
VIOLIN
WIND

10) Art Activities

* With straws and string and bells, create a mobile like Gita's, or use other supplies to make any mobile of your choice.
* Draw a picture of the kind of garden you would like to have.
* Draw a picture of Mr Flinch helping Gita plant her first rose.
* Draw a picture of Gita's garden when it is all finished.
* Draw a picture of Naniji's garden, with Gita in it.
* If you could see music, what would it look like? Draw a picture of the violin music played by Mr Flinch. If you could see heavy metal music, draw what it might look like. Rap, as well. And your favourite music.
* Make a huge poster made of collages of pictures and drawings of plants and gardens.
* Make a model of a garden or backyard you would most like to have.

11) Drama

* Do a performance of a gardening show that Gita and Mr. Flinch might watch. Include information that is useful about plants.
* Act out a scene with Mr Flinch and Gita going to buy a rose with Gita's mother.

12) Extra Study and Research activities

* Study the growth of plants and do a class experiment about plant growth and music. Expose some plants to classical music, some with rap or rock or other different kinds of music, and some to no music at all. Which kind of music helps plants grow best?
* Make a presentation to your class about an older person in your life who means a lot to you.
* Research any common plant and do a report on the parts of the plant.
* Research the things needed for plants to grow and do a report.
* Research a common flower and do a report on the parts of the flower. Include drawings.
* Research the structure of the eye and report on why sometimes people need to wear glasses.
* Find out how to plant a rose and make a poster showing the steps to planting a rose.
* Find out about Explorer Roses. What makes them particularly suitable to Canada. Do a report.

13) Field Trip

* Arrange a field trip to a local nursery and find out about roses and how to plant them.

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