



Walker Books Classroom Ideas



A Perfect Wonderful Day with Friends

Author: Phillip Waechter
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*Notes may be downloaded and printed for regular classroom use only.

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Outline:

Raccoon decides to bake an apple cake. But he has no eggs, so visits his friend Fox, who needs a ladder to mend the roof. Badger will have one, but he needs help too, so they set off to find Bear. They stroll through meadows, meet up with Crow, nibble blackberries and find Bear fishing at the river. Soon the five friends are having the best day out—the sun shining on their fur, fishing, swimming, picnic and finally home to bake the cake—two cakes, because bears have big appetites.

A Perfect Wonderful Day with Friends is a picture book to instantly capture the heart. Laconic narration, funny dialogue and exquisite illustrations tell the story of a carefree childhood day.

Author/Illustrator Information:

Philip Waechter was born in 1968 in Germany. He now lives as a freelance graphic designer and illustrator in Frankfurt am Main. In 1999 Philip and Moni Port co-founded the community studio LABOR.

How to Use These Notes:

This story works on many levels. The suggested activities are therefore for a wide age and ability range. Please select accordingly.

These notes are for:

- Ages 4-7
- Years F-1

Key Learning Areas:

- English

Example of:

- Picture Book

Themes/Ideas:

- Friendship
- Animals
- Community
- Gratitude



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Before Reading

View the cover and title of the book. Identify the following:

- The title
- The author/illustrator
- The publisher
- The blurb

What do you think the story might be about from looking at the title only? Do your ideas change after seeing the cover? Write your own story using the title *A Perfect Wonderful Day with Friends*.

Exploring the Book

Who do you think the audience for this book is? Why?

Is *A Perfect Wonderful Day with Friends* an imaginative, informative or persuasive text? How can you tell?

Make a timeline of the activities the friends do on their 'perfect wonderful day,' including which friend remarked about how they were enjoying it!

Choose a spread, discuss how the animals might be feeling, using the narration and illustrations as clues. Discuss situations when students have felt the same way and why.

Write a book review on *A Perfect Wonderful Day with Friends*. Include what you liked about the book, who you think would enjoy it the most and mention any other books you think are similar.

On the whiteboard or on a large sheet of paper, place an image of the cover of *A Perfect Wonderful Day with Friends* and surround it with words that describe the book. Include words that describe what you liked and what you disliked about the book.

Find examples in the text of moments that the animals support each-other as friends. What do you think makes a 'good friend' and why?

Exploring the Illustrations

Examine several of the spreads and have a class discussion about the following:

- What is the composition (i.e. where are the key elements placed)? Are the animals large or small? In the foreground or background? Do they seem powerful or weak; happy or sad; scared or confident, etc?
- What are the characters on this page doing and where are they looking? Why are they doing this? What effect does this have?
- Is the illustration framed or does it take up the whole page? Why do you think Philip Waechter illustrated it this way?
- Do the colours change from spread to spread? Make a list of the colours used in each area (this is called the colour palette).

How do the illustrations add to the story? How would the story be different if there were no illustrations?

Further Activities

What would 'a perfect, wonderful day' look like for you and your friends? Where would it be, and would it take place in more than one location? Who would be there? What activities would you do together? Write a short paragraph or draw a picture to show your 'perfect, wonderful day' plans.

Write your own short story about another day the friends share. What might they be doing together and why?

'A gripping book or a little exercise often help beat boredom.' When those two ideas don't work, Racoon likes to bake an apple cake! What do you do when you feel bored and why does it help? As a class, make a list of all kinds of boredom-busters that you can keep and refer to next time you feel bored!