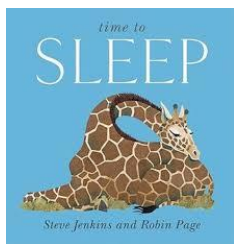


Early Learning Express: November 2016

The month of November brought a finger puppet play about a lost pot on the side of a road. It was just the right size to become a little house for Nibbler the Mouse, Croaker the Frog, Bandy-Legs-the-Hare-the-Hill-Hopper, Raynard-the-Fox-the-Fine-Talker, and Prowler-the-Wolf-Who-Lurks-Behind-Bushes. But when Bear-Squash-a-Lot happens by, there is no more room for him. He cried big bear tears... How is this problem resolved? No worries, it's a happy ending!



The book read after kept with the theme of a big bear and a shared home. In Karma Wilson's book Bear Feels Scared our friend Bear gets caught alone in the woods as dark sets in and a storm approaches. Fortunately, his good friends form a search party and come to his rescue. Everyone gets to enjoy a cozy night snuggled together in their cave. Though multiple children called out, "I don't get scared," early in the story, breaking down the situation - that bear is all alone in the woods, it's getting dark, and a storm is coming - everyone agrees: That would be scary! What's more, it's okay to feel scared.



We wrapped up the fall season with stories of hibernation. Sueño adapted Denise Fleming's book Time to Sleep into a shadow puppet play. Woodland animals relay the news to one another about winter's arrival and the need to find a warm place to hibernate. When the chain of animals circles back around to bear, already snoring in her cave, we get a good chuckle as she's woken up by an excited ladybug exclaiming the importance of finding a place to sleep.

It just so happens that the Early Learning Express has a completely different book with the same title, Time to Sleep. This book, by Steve Jenkins and Robin Page, has informational text describing some of the fascinating ways other animals catch some Z's. Did you know dolphins sleep half of their brain at a time, so the other half can continue focusing on the immediate tasks of swimming and breathing? What about the parrot fish, which protects itself from predators while sleeping by covering its body in a mucus sac to cover its delicious smell?! True story!

The Early Learning Express is settling into its own winter's rest. Staying safely off the roads for the season, the big green and purple beast will return in April. Come January, Sueño will hit the road in WCCA's faithful Subaru bringing books and adventurous story times into classrooms. See you then!

