

• • • She gets pie with a little help from her friends! • • •



An Apple Pie For Dinner Discussion Guide

Lessons and activities based on *An Apple Pie For Dinner*,
retold by Susan Vanhecke, illustrated by Carol Baicker-McKee

Language Arts:

An Apple Pie For Dinner is a retelling of an English folk tale called *The Apple Dumpling*.

Introduce the concept of the folk tale – a story or legend of the common people, or "folk," of a nation, passed down orally from generation to generation, often with the intent to teach a lesson.

Background for teachers and parents: Before newspapers, radio, television or computers, people relied on storytellers for entertainment and education. Storytellers told folk tales – stories that often included royalty, peasants, talking animals, or unusual creatures, and often taught a lesson. In most folk tales, good deeds are rewarded and bad deeds are punished. *An Apple Pie For Dinner* is a cumulative folk tale, where an action is repeated or "accumulated."

A retelling is a new version of an old story. The plot and action usually remain the same, but the setting, characters, or other details might be different.

Questions for students:

- Do you think *An Apple Pie For Dinner* teaches any lessons?
- Are any good deeds rewarded in *An Apple Pie For Dinner*?
- Can you think of other folk tales? (*Little Red Riding Hood*, *Three Little Pigs*, *The Princess and the Pea*)
- Can you think of other cumulative folk tales? (*There Was An Old Lady Who Swallowed A Fly*, *The House That Jack Built*)
- Can you think of other retellings of folk tales? (*The Napping House*, update of *House That Jack Built*; *Cactus Soup*, update of *Stone/Nail Soup*)
- Can you tell or write your own retelling of a favorite story?

Social Science:

Research and explore apple pie history using the "Yummy Apple Pie Facts" page and "Fun And More Info" links on www.AnApplePieForDinner.com.

Questions for students:

- Using what you've learned about apple pie history, what do you think this popular saying means: "As American as apple pie"? (came to America from another part of the world;

creative and resourceful, like settlers of the American West who made mock apple pie; etc.)

- What connections can you make between apple pie and these countries: England, Australia, United States? (first apple pie thought to be English; Granny Smith apple, used in pies, developed in Australia; English settlers brought apple pie to the United States)

Have students think of other food/country connections (i.e. pizza/Italy, tacos/Mexico, won ton/China, crepes/France, sushi/Japan). Make a "food map" of the world using student drawings or pictures cut from magazines affixed to a world map. Discuss how foods of different nations made their way to America, as settlers from other lands came to the United States and brought their food traditions with them.

Science:

Research and explore the topic of apples using the "Fun and More Info" links on www.AnApplePieforDinner.com.

Have an apple tasting with many different types of apples. Keep a tally or make a graph of which apples were most liked.

- Questions for students:
- Where and how do apples grow?
- When are apples harvested?
- Why would an apple make a healthy snack?

- In addition to baking them in a pie, what are other ways to enjoy delicious apples?

Math:

Granny Smith barters, or makes trades or swaps, to acquire the apples for her pie. Have students think of examples where they bartered to get something they wanted. Perhaps they traded a collectible card they already had for one they wanted. Perhaps they swapped a part of their lunch for a part of someone else's. Perhaps they traded doing a chore for earning a privilege, i.e. picking up their toys in exchange for watching their favorite TV show.

Bartering is based on the concept of equivalency – the items being traded are of equal value to the traders. Discuss equivalency or "equal to" and have students create concrete, numerical examples, i.e. four red jellybeans are equal/equivalent to four green jellybeans, ten blue blocks are equal/equivalent to ten yellow blocks. Then ask students to create examples of trades that would not be equal or equivalent, i.e. four red jellybeans are not equal/equivalent to two green jellybeans, ten blue blocks are not equal/equivalent to five yellow blocks.

Critical Thinking and Character Building:

Discuss with students and together find examples in *An Apple Pie For Dinner* that show Granny Smith:

- Goal-setting. (Granny decides she will find apples for her pie)
- Problem-solving. (Granny comes up with the "swap" idea)

- Being persistent. (Granny's trades don't immediately result in apples, yet she doesn't give up; because she doesn't give up, she reaches her goal of finding apples for her pie)
- Cooperating. (With every trade, Granny and the person she trades with both benefit; Granny and her new friends work together to make a pie)
- Being generous. (Granny Smith gives whatever she has to whomever needs it)
- Sharing. (Instead of keeping the apple pie she's worked so hard for to herself, she shares it)

Visual Arts:

Carol Baicker-McKee, *An Apple Pie For Dinner's* illustrator, created the pictures using a variety of things – clay, fabric, lace, ribbon, beads, buttons. This is called mixed-media.

Have children make their own mixed-media artwork, perhaps to illustrate their own retelling of a favorite folk tale.

Culinary Arts:

Help children bake their own yummy apple pie using Granny's recipe, found in the book and at www.AnApplePieForDinner.com.

Performing Arts:

Have children perform their own *An Apple Pie For Dinner* musical drama by downloading the lyrics and music to the "Apple Pie For Dinner" song at www.AnApplePieForDinner.com. Have children create costumes and props.

After the performance, serve the cast and audience an apple pie made with Granny's recipe, found in the book and at www.AnApplePieForDinner.com.



For more fun and info, visit www.AnApplePieForDinner.com!