

Contents

Introduction	2
Birthdays:	
<i>The Secret Birthday Message</i> by Eric Carle (Harper Collins)	3
Making a Panel Story Big Book — A Patterning Activity — The Surprise Package — Hide a Bone Maths — The Surprise — Opposites — New Ending — Using Birthday Poems — Birthday Graph — Place Value Cakes	
Valentine's Day:	
<i>The Valentine Bears</i> by Eve Bunting (Jackaranda Wiley)	17
Bear Pattern — Poetry — Valentine Maths Puzzles — Bear's Valentine Heart — Bears and Honey Roll-Ups — Hearts in Order — Count the Hearts — How a Heart Pumps	
Halloween:	
<i>The Biggest Pumpkin Ever</i> by Steven Kroll (Scholastic, Inc.)	30
Sharing is Fun — Listening Skills — Mouse Maths Measurements — Food Collage — Pumpkin Seed Growth Experiment — Paper Bag Puppet — Paper Mouse Characters — Goblin Good Snacks — Halloween Vegetable Carving	
Easter:	
<i>The Tale of Peter Rabbit</i> by Beatrix Potter (Random Century Party Ltd)	43
All About Rabbits — Fill-In Little Book — Peter Rabbit Story Props — Jelly Bean Graph	
St Patrick's Day	57
Vocabulary Worksheet — Leprechaun Marionette — Limericks — Rainbow Shape Book — Autumn Vocabulary Worksheet — Lou the Leprechaun — Green Riddles — Pots of Gold — Shamrock Teaser — Hidden Pictures — Weather Diary — About the Republic of Ireland	
Hanukkah	75
The Dreidel Game — Making a Hanukkah Card — Hanukkah Garland — Music and Movement — Food Experiences — Star of David	

Introduction

Celebrations is a captivating, whole language, thematic unit. Its exciting, reproducible pages are filled with a wide variety of lesson ideas designed for use with primary children.

Activities are included which set the stage for reading and extend the concepts gained. In addition, the theme is connected to the curriculum with activities in language arts, maths, social studies, art, music and life skills. Many of these activities encourage co-operative learning. Suggestions and patterns for a display board and unit management tools are additional time savers for the busy teacher.

This thematic unit includes:

- literature selections
- poetry
- display board ideas
- curriculum connections
- culminating activity
- planning guides
- writing ideas
- homework suggestions
- group projects

The Secret Birthday Message

by Eric Carle

(Available through Harper Collins)

Summary

Tim finds a coded message under his pillow, which reveals the path to his birthday gift. He follows the directions and is rewarded with a puppy. The pages of the book have cut-out shapes which add to the children's interest.

The plan below suggests a timetable for using the activities in this unit. You may adapt them to your situation.

Sample Plan

Day 1

- Read *The Secret Birthday Message*.
- Write a journal entry describing how Tim feels about his puppy.
- Review basic shapes. Share the patterning activity (page 8).
- Have children retell the story in their own words using the shapes as "props."

Day 2

- Trace Tim's path back to his house using the illustration at the back of the book.
- Make a Big Book sequencing the path forward and/or backwards (page 7).
- Look at pictures of many breeds of dogs.
- Write a language experience story describing Tim's puppy.
- Students share photos of their pets.
- Brainstorm a list of the responsibilities of pet ownership.

Day 3

- Write a journal entry about favorite birthday gifts.
- Share several life skills books and begin discussing organizing a birthday party.

- Brainstorm a list of things needed for the party.
- Complete the birthday graph (page 15).
- For homework, have children complete a family tree. It should be finished at home with the help of a grownup and returned on Day 5.

Day 4

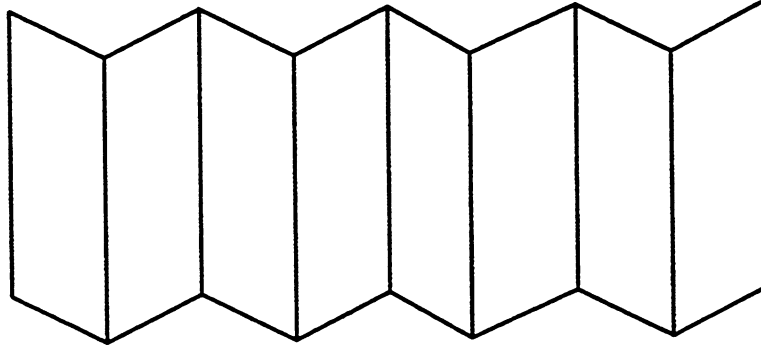
- Write a sequel explaining what Tim will do with his puppy.
- Make a bookmark with a puppy theme.
- Discuss surprises that the children have had.
- Research information about Eric Carle.

Day 5

- Share the completed family trees.
- Make a booklet about family members and the things they do together.
- Reread *The Secret Birthday Message* and ask the class their opinion of the story.
- Write a journal entry about a surprise.
- Ask children to visit a supermarket and report the cost of a party for 30 people.

Making a Panel Story Big Book

1. Cut a 360-centimetre length of white butcher paper.
2. Accordion fold the paper into eight 45-cm sections.



3. Spread the paper on the floor so that the children can have access to it for coloring.
4. Print the following sentences on the panels.

Tim gets a secret message.
 The moon comes up.
 He looks for the star.
 He finds the rock.
 He goes to the cave.
 He walks down the steps.
 He opens the door.
 He finds the surprise puppy!



At a later time you may want the children to reverse Tim's story. Print these sentences on new book panels. This is an excellent sequencing activity.

Tim picked up the puppy.
 He opened the door.
 He walked up the steps.
 He went out of the cave.
 He walked by the rock.
 He looked at the stars.
 He went into the house.
 Tim played with his new friend.



5. Let groups of children illustrate the panels of the story.
6. Display the finished product as a mural. Practise shared readings of the text.
7. Fold the mural on the original accordion folds. Staple it close to the left edge. Tape over the staples, if desired.