

#10031 SUMMER OF THE MONKEYS

DISNEY EDUCATIONAL PRODUCTIONS, 1997
Grade Level: 4-12
102 mins.

DESCRIPTION

Fourteen-year-old Ozarks farm boy Jay Berry Lee wants a horse in the worst way, but the family is struggling and money is scarce. A train wreck, escaped monkeys, a reward, and an old moonshiner combine to make a memorable summer. In the end, Jay Berry finds what his real desire is as he makes adult choices. Based on the book by Wilson Rawls.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Subject Area: Language Arts–Viewing

- Standard: Uses viewing skills and strategies to understand and interpret visual media
 - ♦ Benchmark: Understands different messages conveyed through visual media (e.g., main ideas and supporting details; facts and opinions; main characters, setting, and sequence of events in visual narratives) (See INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS 1.)

Subject Area: Language Arts–Reading

- Standard: Uses reading skills and strategies to understand and interpret a variety of literary texts
 - ♦ Benchmark: Uses reading skills and strategies to understand a variety of literary passages and texts (e.g., fairy tales, folktales, fiction, nonfiction, myths, poems, fables, fantasies, historical fiction, biographies, autobiographies, chapter books) (See INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS 2.)
 - ♦ Benchmark: Understands the use of specific literary devices (e.g., foreshadowing, flashback, progressive and digressive time, suspense) (See INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS 3.)
 - ♦ Benchmark: Understands elements of character development (e.g., character traits and motivations; stereotypes; relationships between character and plot development; development of characters through their words, speech patterns, thoughts, actions, narrator's description, and interaction with other characters; how motivations are revealed) (See INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS 4.)

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- ◆ Benchmark: Makes inferences and draws conclusions about story elements (e.g., main and subordinate characters; events; setting; theme; missing details; relationships among story elements, such as the relevance of setting to mood and meaning in text) (See INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS 6.)

Subject Area: Grades K-4 History—Living and Working Together in Families and Communities, Now and Long Ago

- Standard: Understands the history of a local community and how communities in North America varied long ago
 - ◆ Benchmark: Understands the challenges and difficulties encountered by people in pioneer farming communities (e.g., the Old Northwest, the prairies, the Southwest, eastern Canada, the Far West) (See INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS 5.)

INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

1. To become familiar with a film adaptation of the award-winning children's book *Summer of the Monkeys* by Wilson Rawls.
2. To encourage the reading of quality children's literature.
3. To learn about the use and effectiveness of literary foreshadowing.
4. To depict the choices the main character makes in this coming-of-age story.
5. To illustrate the lifestyle of a rural farming family at the dawn of the twentieth century.
6. To show the connection of the weather to the geographical location of the story.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Wilson Rawls was raised on a small farm in the Ozark Mountains of Oklahoma. There were no schools where he lived, so Rawls and his sisters were taught how to read and write by their mother. Rawls remembers *The Call of the Wild* by Jack London as a story that changed his life and inspired him to become a writer when he grew up. When he confided to his father that he dreamed of one day becoming a writer, his father encouraged him with these words: "Son, a man can do anything he sets out to do, if he doesn't give up." This advice proved to be a strong theme in Rawls's writing. Wilson Rawls went on to create two novels about his boyhood that have become modern classics: *Where the Red Fern Grows* and *Summer of the Monkeys*.

VOCABULARY

- | | | |
|----------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. bait | 7. hide (skin) | 12. supplies |
| 2. barter | 8. hooch (illegal alcohol) | 13. switch (a flogging stick) |
| 3. chimpanzee | 9. liniment | 14. territory |
| 4. contraption | 10. mercantile | 15. trespasser |
| 5. disobedient | 11. still (distillery) | 16. undertaker |
| 6. fetch | | |

BEFORE SHOWING

1. Discuss the time period and setting of the story. Consider:

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- a. How are the daily tasks and chores of farm children living in the late 1800s different or similar to what you do?
- b. How do the household rules that farm parents had for their children in the late 1800s differ from the rules that your parents have for you?
2. Discuss issues related to monkeys.
 - a. What is the difference between a monkey and a chimpanzee? (The book is about monkeys but the film uses chimps.)
 - b. What do you think makes monkeys and other primates so funny and entertaining for humans to watch?
 - c. Where do apes and monkeys normally live?
 - d. Would a boy living on an Oklahoma farm in the late 1800s be familiar with monkeys or chimps? Where would he have seen them before, if he's seen them at all? What would he know about them?
 - e. How would you try to capture a monkey or a group of chimpanzees?
 - f. Do you think a trained monkey would be easier to capture than a wild monkey? Why or why not?
 - g. Can people communicate with monkeys and apes?
3. Review the elements of a story (plot, characters, setting, theme, and point of view). Encourage the students to watch for each element as they view the video.
4. Discuss character development techniques. Encourage the students to watch for different methods of conveying a character's personality and underlying qualities.
 - a. When using direct characterization, the narrator describes or shows what the character is like.

Example: "Bayliss Hatcher is a recluse and a drunk."
 - b. When using indirect characterization, the person's actions and words, and how he or she is perceived by others, reveal that character's traits and personality.

Example: "Grandfather's comments, Jay Berry's experiences, and Mr. Hatcher's actions show that Bayliss Hatcher is a kind, lonely, and compassionate man."
5. Introduce and discuss the use and significance of foreshadowing as an effective writing tool. Look for the use of foreshadowing in the movie. (See DURING SHOWING.)

DURING SHOWING

1. View the video more than once, with one showing uninterrupted.
2. Pause to discuss foreshadowing when the following events occur. What do these things tell us about possible future actions in the movie?
 - a. When Jay Berry fights the bullies who make fun of his sister. What do we know about Jay Berry's sister? What can we predict about his relationship with her?
 - b. We learn the price of the horse and the amount of the reward for the escaped monkeys.
 - c. The bullies find the poster before Jay Berry can tear it down.
 - d. Jay Berry's apprehension about the forbidden area of "the bottoms" and his fear of Bayliss Hatcher.

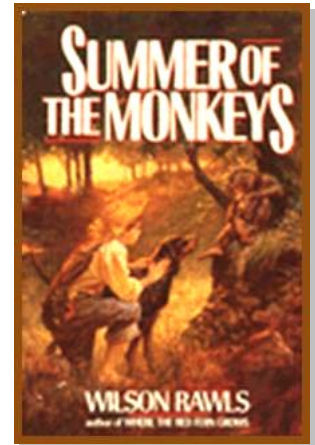
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- e. Jay Berry working at his grandfather's store and the fact that his grandfather can't pay him very much.
- f. Jay Berry's mother mentioning that "a pie is cooling in the window," and his parents' insisting that Jay Berry stay at home.
- g. When Daisy goes looking for Jay Berry when we know that he is responsible for her.
- h. Jay Berry meeting Rose in the town library and learning a few words of French.
- i. The arrival of a storm, Daisy's response to her leg hurting, and Jay Berry's offer to help.

AFTER SHOWING

Discussion Items and Questions

1. What is Jay Berry's primary motivation for capturing the chimps?
2. What things does Jay Berry consider while trying to capture the chimps?
3. Why do you think Daisy is so skeptical about Jay Berry's efforts to capture the chimps?
4. What is the significance of the gold watch in the movie?
5. Why is Grandfather so willing to help Jay Berry? How does Grandfather help Jay Berry's parents understand the importance of allowing him to accomplish his goal?
6. How do Jay Berry's feelings about Bayliss Hatcher change?
 - a. Why do you think this happens?
 - b. At what point do his feelings change?
 - c. How does the house in town help Jay Berry understand more about Hatcher?
7. How is Jay Berry changed by his trip into town with his grandfather?
8. Why do you think the chimps in the story are so difficult to trick and capture? Would the situation change if the setting of the story were different?
9. How does Daisy show that she believes in what Jay Berry is trying to accomplish?
10. What do you think Daisy wished for in the circle of toadstools?
11. What do you think finally causes the chimps to trust and accept Jay Berry?
12. What things suggest that Jobert is a good and kind animal trainer?
13. What do you think causes Jay Berry to change his mind about owning Annie?
14. At the end of the movie Jay Berry says, "There's more to life than being the center of things." What do you think he means when he says this?
15. Revisit the element of foreshadowing. By its use, were you able to correctly predict what would happen? Were there other instances of foreshadowing? (See DURING SHOWING.)
16. Discuss the various elements of the story including:
 - a. The plot development, sequence of events, problem/solution, and climax.
 - b. Character development through indirect and direct characterization.
 - c. The importance of the place and time period to the story.
 - d. Possible themes (i.e., dedication to a cause, compassion for others, and learning about yourself through what you do for others).
 - e. Point of view.



Applications and Activities

1. Rewrite a portion of the story from the point of view of one of the chimpanzees. Possible ideas to include how the chimp would describe:
 - a. Invading and ransacking of the Lee's house.
 - b. Discovering and dismantling Jay Berry's traps.
 - c. What it felt like during and after the storm.
 - d. Reuniting with Jobert.
2. Design a Lost and Found or Reward poster for the circus chimps.
3. Write a live news report covering one aspect of the story. Be sure the news piece answers the questions who, what, when, where, why, and how. Reporting ideas include:
 - a. From the site of the train crash, reporting on the missing animals.
 - b. From "the bottoms" after the chimps have been discovered.
 - c. From the Lee's house after the "invasion" has occurred.
4. Research the dietary preferences of primates. Create recipes that would be likely to tempt the chimps.
5. Demonstrate how you would teach a series of tasks or tricks to a monkey or chimp. Remember they learn through careful observation and imitation of what they see.
6. Work individually or in groups to design an underground storm shelter.
 - a. Stock the shelter with relevant supplies, tools, and objects that would have been available during the time period of the story (late 1800s).
 - b. Use a 3-D model, diorama, painting, multimedia presentation, or a scale drawing on graph paper to lay out the space needed for supplies and furniture.
7. Work cooperatively in small groups to create a "*Summer of the Monkeys* Board Game." The game should follow the film's storyline as it takes players through the adventures of Jay Berry.
8. Discuss the importance of having dreams and setting goals for oneself.
 - a. Individually, identify a personal goal that can be achieved through determination and work rather than luck.
 - b. Create charts illustrating the goal and showing the steps to take to achieve the goal. Display the charts on a bulletin board for others to see.
9. On his trip to town with his grandfather, Jay Berry sees many new things. Imagine you are Jay Berry, and write a journal entry about the trip into Ridgewell.
10. Write a letter to Jay Berry from Daisy expressing her feelings and thanks for giving up the horse for her. The letter could be right after the operation or years later.
11. Write a journal entry from Daisy describing the first time that she rides on a horse. Encourage the use of simile, metaphor, and other elements of figurative language.
12. Imagine what the chimps would do if they broke into your house. Write a short story describing the kind of mischief and trouble they cause and your parents' reactions.

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13. Read Wilson Rawls' other book or books about animals or coming-of-age. Examples include:
 - a. *Where the Red Fern Grows* by Wilson Rawls.
 - b. *The Incredible Journey* by Sheila Burnford.
 - c. *Old Yeller* by Fred Gipson.
 - d. *Shiloh* by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor.
 - e. *Rascal* by Sterling North.
 - f. *The Circus Comes Home: When the Greatest Show on Earth Rode the Rails* by Lois Duncan (nonfiction).
 - g. *Next of Kin: What Chimpanzees Have Taught Me About Who We Are* by Robert Fouts (nonfiction).
 - h. *My Life with the Chimpanzees* by Jane Goodall (nonfiction).
14. Read the book *Summer of the Monkeys*. Discuss the similarities and differences between the book and the movie. Use a Venn diagram to show the comparison.
 - a. Why do you think there are differences between the book and the movie?
 - b. Why isn't the film exactly the same as the book?
 - c. What things did the film highlight that the book did not?
15. Work in teams to find out more about the Ozarks and the history and geography of Oklahoma. Share findings by making a travel poster or brochure, skit, or short story.
 - a. Identify where Oklahoma is, what states border it, where the Illinois River is, and in what county the town of Tahlequah is located (where Jay Berry went to the library).
 - b. Investigate the state's icons and notable facts.
 - c. Explore Oklahoma's history. Find out when it became a state, and describe the "land runs" organized by the U.S. Federal Government in the late 1800s.
16. Find out about Cherokee history. What is the Trail of Tears? When was Indian Territory created? How were Indians treated by white settlers?
17. Prepare biographies of famous people from Oklahoma. Wilson Rawls (author), Will Rogers (cowboy humorist), and Wiley Post (one-eyed aviator) are examples.
18. Investigate when automobiles were first invented and began appearing across America. See a covered wagon and automobile "meet" at:
http://www.archives.gov/digital_classroom/history_day/migration_history/images/car_wagon.gif.

SUMMARY

Summer of the Monkeys is a fictional story based on the book by Wilson Rawls. Set in Oklahoma's Cherokee Country Ozarks in the late 1800s, the story follows Jay Berry Lee, a 14-year-old farm boy who struggles with school, bullies, his parents, and his sister. His greatest challenge, however, is that he wants to earn enough money to buy his very own horse.

One day, Jay Berry and his dog discover a band of escaped circus monkeys in the river bottom land near home. Jay learns that there is a handsome reward for their return. He is determined to capture them, despite his family's disbelief, a madman, and unpleasant rivals.

The pursuit of the chimps is halted by a violent storm. To rebuild the farm, the Lee family must use money that was being saved for an operation for Jay Berry's

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sister, Daisy. After the storm, one of the chimps leads Jay Berry to an injured member of the group. When he carries it home, the others follow, and Jay soon earns his reward—enough to buy the horse he wants. He loses no time in getting the horse and taking Daisy for her first horseback ride.

As it turns out, Jay Berry has only borrowed the horse for the day. He decided to give up his own dream in order to pay for the operation that will fix Daisy's leg so that she will know "what it feels like to be free."

CMP RELATED RESOURCES

- [Call Of The Wild #6299](#)
- [Black Beauty #3108](#)
- [Chimpanzees Of Uganda #8676](#)
- [Teaching Signs To The Chimpanzee, Washoe #5676](#)

World Wide Web



The following Web sites complement the contents of this guide; they were selected by professionals who have experience in teaching deaf and hard of hearing students. Every effort was made to select accurate, educationally relevant, and "kid safe" sites. However, teachers should preview them before use. The U.S. Department of Education, the National Association of the Deaf, and the Captioned Media Program do not endorse the sites and are not responsible for their content.

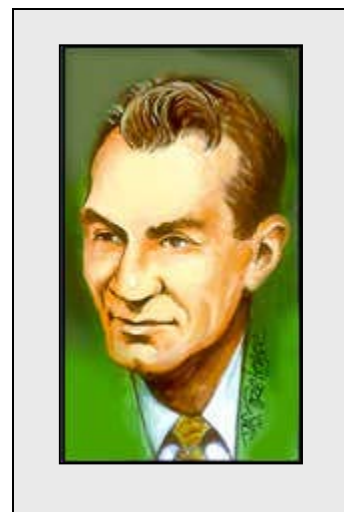
• AUTHOR PROFILE: WILSON RAWLS

<http://www.trelease-on-reading.com/rawls.html>

Biography of Wilson Rawls written by Jim Trelease.

• THE IMPACT OF ANIMALS

Get ideas for teaching *Summer of the Monkeys* from this Literature Circle lesson plan.



http://www.ltl.appstate.edu/litcircleunits/litcirunits_Spring02/Winn_dixie/index.htm

- **SUMMER OF THE MONKEYS TEACHING GUIDE**

<http://www.randomhouse.com/teachers/catalog/display.pperl?isbn=0440415802&view=tg>

In addition to a lesson guide that incorporate all subject areas, this site has information about the book and the author and a link for more information.

- **CHIMPANZEES**

<http://www.tc.umn.edu/~joha0103/chimpfr.html>

A great site for chimpanzee information, this site includes an introduction, diet, description, behavior, population, and more. Photos are included.

- **OKLAHOMA STATE ICONS**

<http://www.state.ok.us/osfdocs/stinfo.html>

The state's official Web site documenting Oklahoma at a glance.