



#1993 MOLLY'S PILGRIM

PHOENIX/BFA FILMS & VIDEO, 1985
COLOR
GRADES 4-12
24 MINUTES
1 INSTRUCTIONAL GRAPHIC INCLUDED

DESCRIPTION

A young, Russian-Jewish immigrant, Molly, is teased by her classmates because of her accent and mannerisms. The teasing stops and an appreciation begins due to a Thanksgiving assignment on Pilgrims. The students realize that it takes all kinds of pilgrims to make a Thanksgiving. Based on the book by Barbara Cohen.

GOALS

1. To point out that friendship is based on an appreciation of the person: their similarities as well as their differences.
2. To emphasize that America is a free nation of people that have different customs and traditions.
3. To compare the plight of the Russian Jews to the plight of the Pilgrims.
4. To present a literary work by Barbara Cohen.

BEFORE SHOWING

1. Explain that the media is based on a true incident experienced by a member of the author's family.
2. Have the students watch for the street crossing guard in the media because she is played by Barbara Cohen, the author.
3. Share experiences of your first day in a new school as a new student. How did you feel? What did other students say and do to you? Did people treat you differently because you were hearing impaired? How?
4. Explain prejudice. List as many prejudices as you can think of. Are some people prejudice against people who are hearing impaired? Should that prejudice be included in the list?
5. List some different religions of the world.
6. Are people prejudiced against certain religions?
7. Identify the Star of David as a Jewish symbol.
8. Locate Russia on a map or globe.

C a p t i o n e d M e d i a P r o g r a m

9. Have two students stand in front of the class. Write down all of the things that are different about them and then write down all of the things that are the same about them.
10. Review why the Pilgrims came to America.

AFTER SHOWING

Discussion Items and Questions

1. Why did Molly want her mother to speak only English?
2. Why didn't Molly want to use her real name?
3. Where did Molly grow up?
4. How do you think Molly was feeling on her first day of school?
5. When did you notice the other girls making fun of Molly?
6. How did Molly's classmates react when she did a perfect cartwheel? What was Elizabeth's reaction compared to the other classmates' reaction? Why?
7. What was Molly's most difficult subject in school? Who tried to help her with that subject? Why do you think that subject was especially difficult?
8. When Molly went home from school, she said that she wanted to go back to Russia. Why did she want to go back to Russia? Why couldn't they go back?
9. Molly's father explained to her why the other girls were teasing her. What did he say?
10. Why did the Pilgrims come to America? Why did Molly and her family come to America?
11. What is Molly's religion? How do you think people with that religion are treated in Russia?
12. What is Thanksgiving? Who came to the first Thanksgiving?
13. Molly's mother made her a Pilgrim doll. What did it look like? Why?
14. How did Molly feel about her Pilgrim doll?
15. What did Molly's classmates do and say when they first saw her doll?
16. What makes Molly a new kind of Pilgrim?
17. What did Arthur say about Thanksgiving? What did he mean?
18. What did Jenny say to Molly? It was the first nice thing that any of her classmates said.
19. Where did the Pilgrims get the idea of having a Thanksgiving feast?
20. How is Molly feeling by the end of the media?
21. What is the significance of where Molly is standing in the class picture?
22. How did Molly's doll help to tell the story of Thanksgiving?
23. How would you have felt about bringing a different type of doll to school?
24. If you were one of Molly's classmates, how would you have acted towards her?

Applications and Activities

1. On one side of a paper, have the students list all of the ways they are different from Molly. Have them list all of the ways they are the same on the other side. Compare and discuss.
2. On the chalkboard, give examples of inappropriate behavior by the students towards Molly. Under each example, write something that would have been more appropriate for the students to say or do to make Molly feel welcome.
3. Make a list of different customs that Molly had.
4. Determine the nationality of everyone in the class.
5. Read the book, *Molly's Pilgrim*, to the students.
6. Compare the book to the media.
7. Duplicate the class project seen in the media. Have each student make a Native American or a Pilgrim. Students should keep in mind that it takes all kinds of Pilgrims to make a Thanksgiving. (See INSTRUCTIONAL GRAPHIC.)
8. Have an International Day. Have the students study the customs of their nationality. On International Day have them dress in the traditional clothing of that country. Make lunch in class, and include ethnic foods so that lunch has an international flavor (check for food allergies in your class). Have the students make flags out of construction paper representing all of the countries. Use them to decorate the room. Invited guests may include family members who are familiar with various countries and can speak to the class about them. The teacher should represent Russia on International Day to represent Molly, if there are no other students with a Russian background in the class.
9. Characterize Holly and Arthur.
10. Research traditional Russian clothing, food, and customs.
11. Write a report comparing the plight of the Russian-Jewish immigrants to the plight of the Pilgrims.
12. Research and report to the class on how Russian-Jewish people are presently being treated in their country.
13. Write an outline of the history of Jewish people in Russia.
14. Molly's mother told Molly that she did not want her to forget where she came from. Do you agree or disagree with Molly's mother? Debate the issue. Is it important for students who are hearing impaired to know and understand deaf culture? Debate the issue.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

1. Role-play conversations between a new student at school and a classmate. Have the students practice using some of the conversation starters that follow:
 - a. Where did you live before you moved here?
 - b. What was your previous school like?

C a p t i o n e d M e d i a P r o g r a m

- c. Tell me about your family.
- d. What do you enjoy doing after school?
- e. Where do you live?
2. If the student is from another country, practice the following:
 - a. How would you compare your native food to the food here?
 - b. What are some things you are used to that we don't have here?
 - c. Why did you move here?
 - d. Do people in your country dress the same as we do?
 - e. What language did you use in school? Could you write something in that language for me to see?
3. One of the things that the children tease Molly about is her speech and language. Point out ways that the English spoken by Molly and her parents has been influenced by having spoken another language (Russian) first and then learning English as a second language.
 - a. Molly and her parents pronounce words differently. (Sink/think, svimming/swimming. Vater/water, dis/this, vere/where. Fazer/father, rolls "r" as in pilgrim.)
 - b. The order of words in sentences is sometimes different or the endings of words are sometimes omitted. (She work all night on that/she worked all night on that. I never do nothing to them/I never did anything to them.)
 - c. Incorrect forms of English words are used. (Catched/caught.)
 - d. Russian words are substituted when the English word cannot be recalled easily or the speaker is excited. (Da/yes.) Relate the problems Molly is having with English to those the hearing impaired students have when learning and using English. Have the hearing impaired students experienced discrimination or teasing because their English is not the same as others?
4. *Da* means "yes" in Russian. Look up the Russian words for the following: *no, dad, mom, love, school.*

RELATED RESOURCES

Captioned Media Program

- [*The Color of Friendship* #10032](#)
- [*Girlfriends* #8267](#)
- [*Lost in the Barrens* #7903](#)
- [*Mela's Lunch* #3055](#)
- [*The Red Shoes* #10095](#)

Book

- Cohen, Barbara. *Molly's Pilgrim*. New York: Lathrop, Lee, and Shepard Books, 1983.

INSTRUCTIONAL GRAPHIC

The following instructional graphic is included with this lesson guide. It may be used to create thermal overhead transparencies, thermal spirit masters, or copy machine copies.

- DOLL CUTOUT

SCRIPT

(Door Opens)

[Mama] Mashinka. "Dobrey utra."

[Molly] Mama, speak the English. Ve need to practice. You said yourself. And do not call me Mashinka.

[Mama] But that is your name.

[Molly] Call me Molly now.

[Mama] I don't want you to forget where you came from.

[Papa] Hey. Have a good day.

[Molly] You, too, Papa.

[Elizabeth] See that Russian girl.

[Kate] Look at her scarf.

[Jenny] She looks like an old lady.

[Kate] Her lunch box is a paper bag.

[Elizabeth] Did you do the homework?

(Car Horn Honks)

[Miss Williams] How do fish sleep? On the ocean bed or swimming around? Elizabeth, let's give someone else a chance. Somebody I haven't heard from yet. Molly, do you know?

[Molly] The fishes sleep svimming in the vater.

[Ellizabeth] We say fish, not fishes. And water, not vater.

C a p t i o n e d M e d i a P r o g r a m

[Miss Williams] Good, Molly. Now, how do fish hear? Do they have ears? Arthur?

[Gym Teacher] Okay. Now, go. Nice. Okay. Good. Next.

[Arthur] I'm scared.

[Gym Teacher] Don't worry. The trick is not to be afraid. OK? Hands up stiff. Right hand down. Kick this left back over. There you go. We will work on that. Next.

[Elizabeth] *Ow!*

[Gym Teacher] Are you okay?

[Elizabeth] I'm fine.

[Gym Teacher] Molly, you are next.

[Elizabeth] I bet Molly can't get her legs over.

[Gym Teacher] Okay. Now, go. Careful. Good. Good. Excellent.

[Student] She did it with one hand.

[Gym Teacher] Excellent!

[Elizabeth] Daddy says Russians are good at that stuff.

[Girl 1] Hi.

[Girl 2] Hi. Guess what? Peanut butter and jelly again.

[Girl 1] Again?

[Boy] Where is she from?

[Arthur] Russia.

[Elizabeth] Look who is here. That Russian girl.

[Girl] Yeah.

[Elizabeth] Look what she did. She wore her napkin like a baby.

(Girls Laughing)

C a p t i o n e d M e d i a P r o g r a m

[Elizabeth] Gross.

[Girl] What is she eating?

[Kate] Cold ravioli. Yuck!

[Jenny] That is Italian, not Russian.

[Miss Williams] Write a sentence. Use the verb 'to catch" in the past tense.

(School Bell Ringing)

[Miss Williams] Leave your paper on my desk. See you tomorrow.

[Student] I thought it was easy.

[Miss Williams] Bye. See you tomorrow.

[Arthur] Oh, boy.

[Miss Williams] Bye. Thank you. Hi, Molly. Having trouble?

[Molly] I can't remember if you spell "caught" with k or c.

[Miss Williams] Would you like to spend extra time on your English?

[Molly] Yes. Please.

[Miss Williams] Can you come to school early tomorrow?

[Molly] Okay.

[Miss Williams] I will give you extra homework, too. All right?

[Molly] Da! I mean, yes.

[Girls Jumping Rope] "One. Two. Bubble gum, bubble gum in a dish. How many pieces do you wish? One, Two. Three."

[Elizabeth] What are you staring at, big nose?

(Girls Laughing)

[Mama] How was your day? Masha, what is it? What happened? Mashinka.

[Molly] Speaking In Russian!

C a p t i o n e d M e d i a P r o g r a m

[Mama] You want to go home? But you are home. We can never go back to Russia, even If we want to.

[Molly] But Marina and Alexandra are there. I miss them so much. I hate here. At school, girls laugh at me. Vhen I talk, they tease me.

[Mama] Don't worry, Masha. When they know you better they will love you.

[Papa] Your teacher is very nice. To learn you English before school begins. Don't worry, those girls will stop. You will see.

[Molly] I never do nothing to them. Vhy do they tease me? Because you're different. But I'm not different!

[Papa] Masha, everybody is different. But they forget.

[Molly] Forget vhat?

[Papa] That everybody is the same, too. One nose, big or small. One heart, big or small. Even those girls have heart.

[Molly] I don't sink so.

[Papa] Maybe you should look closer. Sleep good. Have beautiful dreams.

[Molly] Good night.

[Papa] Good night.

[Miss Williams] Ready for your English lesson?

[Molly] Yes.

[Miss Williams] Dam?

[Moll y] Da.

[Miss Williams] Do that. That should help.

[Student] What will you have for Thanksgiving?

[Another Student] Turkey.

[Molly] The first Thanks . . . Thanksgiving?

[Miss Williams] Right.

C a p t i o n e d M e d i a P r o g r a m

[Molly] What is Thanksgiving?

[Miss Williams] The story will explain. Go ahead. Keep reading.

[Molly Reading Aloud] When the brave Pilgrims landed . . .

(Girls Laughing)

[Miss Williams] Girls, be quiet.

[Molly Reading Aloud] They faced many hardships.

[Miss Williams] Go on, Molly.

[Molly] It was very cold. They ran out of food.

[Miss Williams] Very good. Molly. Arthur.

[Arthur] Me?

[Miss Williams] Who else?

[Arthur] An Indian named Squanto . . . I mean Squanto . . .

[Miss Williams] Be quiet.

[Arthur] . . . lived with them and showed them how to plant corn and where to hunt and fish. The Pilgrims had a feast of thanks with the Indians. We still celebrate this day to honor the bravery of Pilgrims. They came to find religious freedom.

[Miss Williams] Thank you, Arthur. Let's make a model of the first Thanksgiving feast. Dress dolls like Pilgrims and Indians. We can build Pilgrim houses.

[Arthur] I will do Squanto.

[Students] I will do an Indian. I will make a great Pilgrim woman.

[Jenny] Me, too.

[Kate] Me, three.

[Molly] Hi, Mama.

[Mama] Hi. You have homework?

C a p t i o n e d M e d i a P r o g r a m

[Molly] Um hmn. I must make a Pilgrim.

[Mama] What Is a Pilgrim?

[Molly] A person who comes to this country for freedom.

[Mama] I know what is that. Like us. Time for bed.

[Molly] But my Pilgrim. You promised to help.

[Mama] I will help. Miss Williams won't mind if I finish it for you.

[Molly] Okay. Good night.

[Mama] Good night.

[Molly] Where is it?

[Mama] Say, "Good morning."

[Molly] Good morning. Good morning. Good morning. Good morning. Good morning.

[Mama] You like it?

[Papa] What is it?

[Molly] It doesn't look like the Pilgrim.

[Mama] What you saying?

[Molly] It is beautiful, but it is not a Pilgrim.

[Mama] It's you, like in the photograph.

[Molly] What photograph?

[Mama] With Marina and Alexandra.

[Molly] But Mama, why?

[Papa] Masha.

[Molly] It is not a Pilgrim.

[Papa] Don't!

C a p t i o n e d M e d i a P r o g r a m

[Mama] A Pilgrim is someone who seeks freedom. In Russia, your passport says you are a Jew. Here your passport says, an American. I am a Pilgrim. Your father is a Pilgrim. You are a Pilgrim.

[Papa] Listen to Mama. She knows what she is talking. She work all night on that.

[Molly] I love it.

[Papa] Have a good day.

[Miss Williams] Don't worry. We can fix him.

[Arthur] I hope so.

[Miss Williams] Squanto will live.

[Arthur] Everybody, Squanto lives!

[Miss Williams] I thought you might be sick.

[Molly] Sorry I am late for English.

[Miss Williams] I missed you this morning. Is there a reason? I hope this won't happen again. Good. I'm glad. Why don't you take your seat?

[Arthur] Do you like my Squanto? I used a feather duster to make it.

(School Bell Ringing)

[Miss Williams] Okay. Everybody, bring your Pilgrims and Indians. Start with row one. Oh, nice. That is a lot of work. What a beautiful silk dress.

[Elizabeth] Thank you.

[Miss Williams] I like that nose. Very good. Molly? Aren't you in row one?

[Whispering] I don't think she brought anything. She Is taking her lunch out.

[Elizabeth] That is not a Pilgrim! It is a Russian or something.

[Kate] Weird.

[Whispering] She didn't make the right doll.

[Miss Williams] She is beautiful. But she is not a Pilgrim.

C a p t i o n e d M e d i a P r o g r a m

[Molly] She is dressed like me in Russia.

[Miss Williams] She is supposed to be a Pilgrim.

[Molly] Mama said . . .

[Miss Williams] What? Tell me what she said. Go ahead.

[Molly] She said that she is Pilgrim, Papa is Pilgrim, and...

[Miss Williams] And what?

[Molly] I am Pilgrim.

(Kids Giggling)

[Miss Williams] Quiet, children, please. Did you say a Pilgrim?

[Molly] Mama came here for freedom. Because in Russia it is hard to be Jewish. She says she is a Pilgrim. And I am Pilgrim. Okay?

[Miss Williams] Okay.

[Elizabeth] Nobody is a Pilgrim anymore.

[Miss Williams] Some of you probably understand what Molly is saying. But not all of you do. Who would like to explain? Jenny?

[Jenny] Molly is a modern Pilgrim. Her family came to America for the same reason the Pilgrims did.

[Miss Williams] That is right. Very good. And what reason is that? Kate.

[Kate] To be free?

[Miss Williams] That is right. You have something to add?

[Arthur] It takes all kinds of Pilgrims to make Thanksgiving.

[Miss Williams] I think so, too. Very good, everybody. Does anyone know where the Pilgrims got the idea for Thanksgiving? Elizabeth.

[Elizabeth] They made it up?

[Miss Williams] They read In the Bible about the Jewish holiday of the Tabernacle. Today we call it "Succoth." The Pilgrims got the idea for a feast

C a p t i o n e d M e d i a P r o g r a m

from Jews like Molly and her mother. Row two, bring your dolls. Your doll is beautiful, Molly.

[Molly] Thank you.

[Student] I hope the teacher likes my doll.

[Miss Williams] Nice. Very good.

[Molly] Good morning.

[Crossing Guard] Well! Good morning!

(Car Horn Honks)

[Miss Williams] Where Is Arthur?

[Arthur] Tying my shoe.

[Miss Williams] Where are you going, Molly?

[Jenny] I want Molly next to me.

[Miss Williams] Okay. Everybody, stand up straight. Look into the camera.

[Arthur] Wait, my hair is . . .

[Photographer] Everybody, say, "Cheddar cheese!"

[Class] Cheddar cheese!

DOLL CUTOUT

Directions: Glue this paper on heavy tagboard. Cut out the doll after the glue has dried. Cut out the stand. Dress and decorate your Pilgrim or Native American. Remember, it takes all kinds of Pilgrims to make a Thanksgiving.

