

#10090 THE AMAZING BONE

WESTON WOODS STUDIOS, 1985
Grade/Interest Level: K-3
11 mins.

DESCRIPTION

On the way home from school, Pearl the pig finds an enchanted bone that speaks to her. As they travel together, they meet a fox who forces them to his home where he plans to eat them. The bone manages to save Pearl, and they spend happy days together. Animated version of the Caldecott Honor Book by William Steig. Narrated by John Lithgow.



ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Subject Area: Health

- Standard: Understands the relationship of family health to individual health
 - ♦ Benchmark: Knows characteristics needed to be a responsible friend and family member (e.g., participating in family activities, assuming more responsibility for household tasks) (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 familiar literary passages and texts (e.g., fairy tales, folktales, fiction, nonfiction, legends, fables, myths, poems, nursery rhymes, picture books, predictable books) (See INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS 2 and 3.)

INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

1. To explore friendships.
2. To illustrate a fantasy story involving magic.
3. To promote the reading of children's literature.



VOCABULARY

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|--------------|----------------|---------------------|
| 1. amazing | 6. flabbergast | 11. purse |
| 2. bone | 7. hideaway | 12. robbers |
| 3. dawdle | 8. imitate | 13. spring (season) |
| 4. fox | 9. main course | 14. witch |
| 5. grown-ups | 10. parents | 15. wonderful |

BEFORE SHOWING

1. Read the book *The Amazing Bone* by William Steig. Discuss fantasy components including a talking pig and fox and a talking bone.
2. Discuss special friends. Share reasons why these friends are special. Discuss the things friends enjoy doing together.
3. Discuss magicians. Discuss tricks the students have seen magicians do or magic tricks the students know how to do.
4. Discuss the spring season.
 - a. What do you like to do outdoors when the weather is warm and sunny?
 - b. How does it feel to be outdoors in this weather?
 - c. What kinds of things do you notice are growing outdoors?
 - d. What are your favorite kinds of flowers?

DURING SHOWING

1. View the video more than once, with one showing uninterrupted.
2. Pause the first time the bone speaks. Point out the short black lines moving away from the bone. Explain that these lines indicate that the bone is speaking.
3. Pause after the robbers' ask what is in the purse. Clarify that the bone makes the noise of a lion and a snake to scare away the robbers.
4. Pause when the fox says that Pearl will be his "main course." Clarify that the fox intends to eat Pearl for dinner.
5. Pause when the bone says magic words. Clarify the bone is speaking a magic spell. Predict what will happen to the fox.

AFTER SHOWING

Discussion Items and Questions

1. Discuss why Pearl dawdled on her way home from school. Describe the things that she did as she dawdled home.
2. Where did Pearl stop and sit down? What talked to her?
3. Describe the amazing things the bone could do.
4. Why did the bone agree to go home with Pearl? What did Pearl imagine would happen when she arrived home with the bone?
5. Describe what happened when Pearl met the robbers. Why did the robbers run away?
6. What did the fox plan to do with Pearl?
7. Discuss why the fox wasn't fooled by the talking bone.
8. How did Pearl and the bone know that the fox was preparing dinner?
9. Describe what happened as the fox carried Pearl to the stove.

10. What was the reaction of Pearl's parents when she told them about the talking bone? What was the first thing the bone said to her parents? Why was that a smart thing to say?
11. Describe the last scene of the movie. How did this scene indicate that the bone may talk or make music too much?
12. Both the fox and the bone made the comment, "I didn't make the world." What did each mean by this comment?

Applications and Activities

1. Write or dictate stories called "The Day I Met a Talking Bone." Display the stories with cut-out construction paper bones. To assist with story writing, answer the questions:
What would you want the bone to say?
What kinds of things would you like to discuss with the bone?
Where would you take the bone?
How could the bone be helpful to you?
2. Invent an imaginary friend. Compose a short dialogue about yourself and your friend. Act out the dialogue with a partner.
3. Discuss fantasy versus reality. Can a bone really talk? Can animals really talk? Discuss how fantasy and imagination contributed to this story's uniqueness.
4. Walk outdoors to observe the natural environment. Collect rocks, flowers, plants, etc., to bring back to class for further study. To assist in appreciating the environment, ask:
How does the sunlight on the rock make the rock look different?
How many colors can you see in this flower?
How do the blades of grass feel against your chin?
How does it feel to run your hand lightly over a dandelion?
5. Discuss idiomatic phrases used in the video. Examples include: "hold everything," "hand over," "hanging around with," "have you no shame," "to no avail," and "nothing personal."
6. If age appropriate, investigate real bones. Do experiments with bones. Locate a skeleton for viewing.
7. Read other books about magic objects. Consider:
 - a. *Sylvester and the Magic Pebble* by William Steig.
 - b. *Jack and the Beanstalk* author unknown.
 - c. *The Sweetest Fig* by Chris Van Allsburg.
 - d. *My Ol' Man* by Patricia Polacco.
 - e. *The Magic Hat* by Mem Fox.
 - f. *The Magic Toolbox* by Mie Araki.
 - g. *The Magic Bed* by John Burningham.
8. Read books about magic tricks. Practice various tricks. Put on a magic show for younger children.

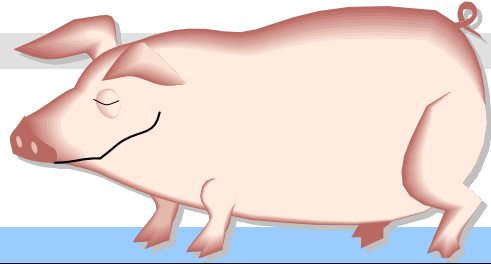
SUMMARY

The Amazing Bone is about a female pig named Pearl who dawdles on her way home from school in order to appreciate the beauty of the day. When she stops to sit by a tree in the forest, a bone speaks to her from its place by a rock near the

tree. The bone explains that it once belonged to a witch, but it was unhappy and didn't want to belong to her any longer. Pearl and the bone become friends, and Pearl decides to take the bone home to meet her parents. As they move along towards home, they are met by a mean fox. The fox forces Pearl, along with the bone, to his home, where he plans to devour them both. The end of the story finds the bone reciting a magic chant which turns the fox into a mouse and saves the day for Pearl. Finally, Pearl takes the bone home, where they both spend happy days and nights with Pearl's parents.

CMP RELATED RESOURCES

- [Doctor DeSoto #2375](#)
- [Pete's a Pizza #10080](#)
- [Sylvester and the Magic Pebble #3080](#)



World Wide Web

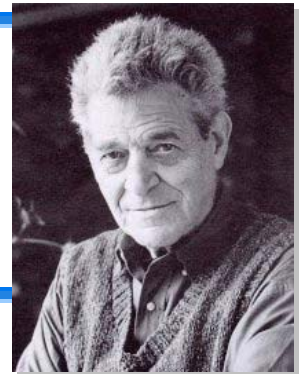


The following Web sites complement the contents of this guide; they were selected by professionals who have experience in teaching deaf and hard of hearing students. Every effort was made to select accurate, educationally relevant, and "kid safe" sites. However, teachers should preview them before use. 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.

• WILLIAM STEIG

<http://www.williamsteig.com>

This is the author's Web site. Included here is a reading guide for *The Amazing Bone* and three other Steig stories, plus summaries of almost all his books, and the his biography.



• THE AMAZING BONE TEACHERS' GUIDE

<http://www.fsgkidsbooks.com/teachersguides/amazingbone.htm>

This sites features a short guide for teaching the book. The guide touches on themes such as friendship and problem solving.

• ABRACADABRA

<http://www.funology.com/abracadabra/index.htm>

This is a collection of simple magic tricks that the instructor or the students themselves can try. Includes optical tricks, guessing games, and number tricks.