Sloth Slept On  
The 2016 CLEL Bell Award Book for READ

by Frann Preston-Gannon  
Sterling Children’s Books, 2015

A group of children discover an animal sleeping in a tree. They set out to discover what the animal is and where it comes from by reading books, comparing it to other animals, looking at a globe, and telling their own stories about the creature. The various examples of print and reading in Sloth Slept On show the importance of reading not only books, but also signs, newspapers, and globes to discover new and important information.

Activity Ideas for Sloth Slept On:

• The children in the book compare the sloth to their stuffed animals to try to identify him. Gather some toys and talk about how they are alike and different. How is a stuffed animal like a block? Are they the same color or are they completely different? What makes them different? What makes them the same? Two stuffed animals may be alike because they are soft. Making comparisons between different objects is a good way to learn about how things are alike and different, a skill that will help children understand the difference between letter shapes. Making comparisons also provides an opportunity to practice using descriptive language.

• The children in the book create stories about the sloth and act them out while they play. After reading the book, pretend to be a sloth: move slowly, visit a playground and hang upside down (with a grown-up’s help if necessary), pretend to be sleeping, find things outside that sloths like to eat and have a pretend picnic of leaves, twigs and maybe even bugs. Acting out stories builds comprehension, sequencing, and critical thinking skills.

• In the book, we learn that a sloth can sleep up to 20 hours a day! Write out each number from 1 to 20 and point to each number as you practice counting to 20 with the children. Making connections between the words and numbers we say and words and numbers on the page helps children make the important discovery that print represents meaning. Talk about how many hours you sleep in a day. How many hours do the children sleep? Practice counting to these numbers too. Counting out loud develops early math skills and increases vocabulary.

The CLEL Bell Picture Book Awards are given to books that provide excellent support of early literacy development in young children. For more information and for other activity sheets, visit http://www.ciel.org and select the CLEL Bell Awards tab.

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