Grandma’s Purse
The 2019 CLEL Bell Award Book for TALK

by Vanessa Brantley-Newton
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When Grandma Mimi comes to visit her granddaughter, she always brings her magical purse! As they explore her purse together, the little girl learns about her grandma and what is important to her. Talking together with the adults in their lives helps children build vocabulary and think creatively as they start to understand the world around them.

Activity Ideas for Grandma’s Purse:

• In the story, the little girl and her grandma talk about the fascinating things in the grandma’s purse. Help your children write a list of some items they would like to carry! Make different lists for different types of bags: what would they carry in a purse, a pocket, a suitcase, a grocery sack, or a backpack? Make different lists for different places they might go: what would they carry in a backpack to the park? to school? to visit Grandma? The more words children hear and use, the better they will be at recognizing the different words and ideas they will read in books.

• Children love to play dress up and use their imaginations! Ask children who they would like to pretend to be, talk together about what clothes each character might need, then think creatively about what clothes or materials might suit the part. The arms of a long-sleeve shirt can be tied around a waist to make a fancy skirt; a grown-up’s big shoes can become deep sea diver flippers; a scarf can become a prince’s sash; a paper bag can become a chef’s hat. Get into the spirit of it by dressing up yourself! Playing allows children to build their knowledge about the world around them, and the more they know, the more they will understand as they read.

• Reading is a fun way to learn more about our favorite things. On your next library visit, ask for help finding nonfiction books! When children read fact-based books about their favorite things, they learn that the things they love can be found in books. Knowing that books have information that is important to them can motivate children to become good readers themselves.

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.clel.org and select the CLEL Bell Awards tab.

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