



NATIONAL YOUNG READERS WEEK

An Annual Celebration of Reading Created by Pizza Hut® and The Center for the Book in the Library of Congress.

Epossumondas

by Coleen Salley

Southern charm and lovable antics flow from beautifully illustrated pages, creating a story centered around two women's most loved opossum and the troubles he finds on his way home.

Read

Before:

Before you read:

Introduce the book and tell the children a little bit about it. Follow with a comment or question that is related to the story such as, *the opossum has a bit of trouble carrying things home. How would you carry a cake, butter, a puppy and bread?* Encourage a discussion so the children can comment, ask questions, and express their feelings. Set the stage for listening by asking an "I wonder" statement based on the cover illustration.

- *I wonder if the opossum is nice?*

During:

Encourage the children to comment on the illustrations, ask questions, and predict what will happen next in the story. Children gain confidence and a sense of achievement through being able to correctly predict how a story will end. Point out "rare words" (e.g., those words that are not commonly used in every day conversation) and help the children relate the meaning in a way that makes sense to them.

Rare Words in *Epossumondas*:

- rich: of vivid, full, deep appearance
- scrunched: to contract or squeeze together
- fist: the hand closed tightly
- visiting: to go to and stay with a person or family or at a place for a short time
- churned: to agitate in order to make into butter
- brook: a small, natural stream of fresh water
- bedraggled: limp and soiled, as with rain or dirt
- porch: a low structure projecting from the doorway of a house and forming a covered entrance
- middle: the central part of something

After:

Discuss the story. Ask questions...

- How often did Epossumondas go see his auntie?
- What was the first thing that Epossumondas' auntie gave him?
- Who did Epossumondas meet on the way home from his auntie's house?
- How does mama say you are supposed to carry cake?
- What was the next thing Epossumondas' auntie gave him?
- Did Epossumondas care the butter in his hands? How did he carry it?
- What animal did Epossumondas pass by while carrying the butter?
- How does mama say you are supposed to carry butter?
- How did Epossumondas carry the puppy? Was it the correct way?
- What type of animal is Nutria?
- How many pies did mama leave out to cool?
- What did Epossumondas do with the pies?

Do

My Family

You will need: blank white paper, markers, crayons and construction paper

After reading the story, discuss the importance of family and how everyone has a different type of family. Talk about how the opossum's auntie and mom spend the entire story trying to teach the opossum how to carry things. Next, allow every one enough time to talk about their own families. Then, give each child a blank piece of paper, markers and crayons. Allow each child enough time to draw a picture of his/her family members.

If desired, place each family portrait on a piece of construction paper and display on a wall or bulletin board.