



## CAPS FOR SALE - Program 1

This program complies with New York State Standard 1. Students will actively engage in processes that constitute creation and performance in the arts (dance music, theatre, and visual arts) and participate in various roles in the arts.

### Overview

The following program guide is designed to encourage children to listen and work together in a happy environment. They will think about what makes the characters in the book *Caps for Sale* special and why they are special.

During this program, children:

- Are asked the meaning of special words
- Mimic body movements
- Distinguish colors
- Become active players in the story using their creativity to play the parts of the peddler and the monkeys

### Tools and Preparation

- You will need the *Caps for Sale* storybook, blackboard, and chalk.
- Prepare the blackboard by drawing a large stack of caps. Include 1 checked cap, 4 gray caps, 4 brown caps, blue caps, and 4 red caps.
- Prepare the children for 45 minutes of story and activity time.

### Action

1. Read the title of the story.
  - a. Have the children repeat the title.
  - b. Read the author's name: "Esphyr Slobodkina," pronounced: **ess-FEER slow-BOAT-kee-nah**
  - c. Have the children repeat the author's name.
2. Relate a bit about Esphyr Slobodkina's childhood.
  - a. Let children know that the author was born in Russia in 1908.
  - b. When she was a little girl, Esphyr was sick for a long time. While she was sick she used to like to cut out paper dolls and other shapes and make collages. Esphyr was both the writer and illustrator of *Caps for Sale*. Ask if anyone knows what an illustrator does? Hold up the cover so that the children can see the drawing on the cover.
3. Ask children to describe the picture on the cover.
  - a. What do they see?
  - b. How many monkeys?
  - c. How many colors?

- d. What is the peddler doing in the picture?
  - e. Does the cover of the book make the children curious? Why? What are they wondering about?
4. Open the book and read the first page showing the picture to the children. Have the children describe what they see:
    - a. Is the peddler happy or sad?
    - b. What does he do for his work?
    - c. Does he like what he does for a living?
      - i. What makes the peddler different?
      - ii. Where does he carry his caps?
      - iii. Can anyone carry caps on their heads without dropping them?
      - iv. Does this make the peddler special?
  5. Read the next page.
    - a. What are the colors of the peddler's caps? Point to the blackboard and to the checked, grey, brown, blue and red caps.
    - b. Ask the children to say the names of the colors out loud together from bottom to top. First he had on his own "checked" cap, then a bunch of "grey" caps, then a bunch of brown caps...
    - c. Repeat
  6. Read the next page and have the children listen to the line the peddler calls. "Caps, caps for sale, fifty cents a cap." Ask the children to stand and become the peddler. Repeat the calling line pointing to imaginary caps on your head first with your right hand and then with your left hand. Place your feet slightly apart and with each hand movement tilt your head a bit from side to side and doing the following while repeating the calling line "Caps, caps for sale, fifty cents a cap." (right hand point to the right side of the head), "Caps," (left hand point to the left side of the head), "Caps for sale," (right hand point to the right side of the head), "Fifty cents a" (left hand point to the left side of the head), "cap."
    - i. Let the children make believe that each is the peddler. Have them stand up and spread their legs slightly apart. Then they should repeat the peddler's call following your instruction.
    - ii. After 2-3 repetitions ask the children to give themselves a round of applause and sit down.
  7. Read the next page and allow the children (while seated) to call out with the peddler again. Then read the rest of the page. Ask the children some questions about what has happened to the peddler's work day.
    - a. Does the peddler become unhappy when he cannot sell his caps?
    - b. Does the peddler become unhappy when he realizes he has no money for lunch?
      - i. No, the peddler does not become unhappy. He makes a plan to do something to take his mind off his troubles.
      - ii. What does the peddler do instead? He goes for a walk.

8. Read the next page. The peddler finds a big tree. Ask the children the following questions.
  - a. Has the peddler forgotten his troubles?
  - b. What does he do here instead?
  - c. Can you help the peddler check to make sure his caps are straight? Point to the blackboard and caps. Ask the children to say the names of the colors out loud together from bottom to top. “First his own “checked” cap, then the “grey” caps, then the brown caps...
  
9. Read the next page. “So he went to sleep. He slept for a long time.”
  - a. You and the children make believe you are the sleeping peddler. Snore out loud and let the children snore out loud. (A little smiling and giggling is encouraged).
  
10. Read the next few pages. Have everyone:
  - a. stretch in their seats when the peddler stretches.
  - b. Make believe they are the peddler by placing their hands on their heads to discover they have no more caps.
  - c. Look left and right, behind their backs, and then behind their chairs (tree) when the peddler hunts for his caps.
  - d. After a brief pause, look up into the tree and feign surprise.
  
11. Read the page “On every branch was a monkey. On every monkey was a...
  - a. Ask the children to say the colors with you. Count the monkeys in the tree. How many caps? How many grey, brown, blue, red?
  
12. Read the next page. Ask the children what they might do if they were the peddler? How do they think the peddler feels?
  
13. Teach the children the “monkey speak” from the book. Tsz, tsz, tsz. Esphyr Slobodkina actually pronounced this sound in a Russian translation of the combined letters which translates in English as tsch, tsch, tsch. Ask the children to stand and become monkeys. Read the pages that follow allowing the children to act out the part of the monkeys. After the page where the peddler stamps both his feet and the monkeys do the same, (children stamp both their feet), have the children give each other a round of applause and then sit down.
  
14. Read the pages that begins “At last he became so angry...But then , each monkey pulled off his cap.” Have the children join in (while seated) when all the colored caps are mentioned again. Point to the blackboard and to the checked, grey, brown, blue and red caps.
  
15. Read the page that begins “So the peddler picked up his caps and put them...” Have the children (while seated) join in again, making believe they are picking up

their caps. Point to the blackboard and caps and to the checked, grey, brown, blue and red caps.

16. Read the last page. Have the children clap at the end and again acknowledge themselves and their classmates with a round of applause for all participants. NOTE: If some children are too shy to participate, they should be acknowledged from the beginning as the audience and thanked at the end for listening and watching the story.

After the story: Discussion Period

17. Review colors and counting of caps
18. Ask the children about their favorite parts of the story
  - a. Did they like participating?
  - b. Did they prefer listening?
  - c. What makes the story fun to each child?
19. Discussion Period
  - a. How did the peddler use his imagination to make his work fun and easy?
  - b. Does everyone have an imagination?
  - c. Does anyone NOT have an imagination?
    - i. If a child answers that they do not have an imagination, remind them that they do by employing a simple technique. Ask the child to describe something. Example: "What kind of dog, (cat, house, monkey) can you imagine? Is it big or little? What color is it?"  
Voila! There is your imagination.
    - ii. Ask a few other children to use their imaginations to describe a dog, or cat, or monkey that they imagine. Help children understand that everyone has a different way of imagining things and that this makes each of us unique and special, too.