

Teddy Bear Day

• Keep 'em Reading •

by | Pat Miller

We all have had those shining moments when the selfless and just act was what we chose to do and the impact of that action long out-lived the decision. Such a moment happened to Theodore Roosevelt on the afternoon of November 13, 1902. Odds are very good that you have a remembrance of that moment in your home. That decision was to spare an exhausted bear from being shot in an unsportsmanlike way, and the remembrance is called a Teddy Bear.

October 27, 1858, is the birth date of the asthmatic child who would grow up to be an adventurer, a Rough Rider and the twenty-sixth president of the United States. That date has been designated Teddy Bear Day to honor Theodore Roosevelt. Teddy Bear Day can be celebrated as the conclusion of a study of bears, of famous bear fiction or as a good citizenship day.

For the story and the political cartoon that gave the Michtoms the idea for making a stuffed bear in Teddy's honor, go to www.theodore.roosevelt.org/kidscorner/tr_teddy.htm.

Writing

Invite students to bring their bears to school. In the invitation, include a tag that should be tied to the bear's neck telling the name of the bear and its owner. Display bears along shelves or make a large cone-shaped "tree" from chicken wire. Tie the bears on with colorful ribbon around their necks.

Ask students to write stories about their bears' personalities, how they came to have the bear, why this bear is a good friend, what the bears will be doing when the school is closed at



night, etc. With student permission, share one story each day of the week in which Teddy Bear Day (Oct. 27) falls.

Reading

Share teddy books about Paddington Bear, Winnie the Pooh, Corduroy, My Friend Bear and others you have in your collection. Have students decide which wild bear the teddy is most like and explain why. See the bibliography for a list of fiction and nonfiction titles that will interest all your bear lovers.

Science

To inform your students about the eight species of bears, gather your nonfiction books and put them in a display. Bookmark The Bear Den Web site (www.bearden.org/species.html) so students can also use the Internet. Because children are interested in unusual facts, you might tell them that a group of bears is called a "sloth." Male bears are "boars," females are "sows" and babies are called "cubs." Distribute the Wild Bear Challenge sheets from www.librarysparks.com



and have students complete them individually, in pairs or as a small group. For fun, you might also challenge students to find a fictional bear and decide which species it would be if it was real.

Math

Have students bring their bears to school. Before displaying them, have students group their bears and record information about the groups. Students can group by size, color, width of stomach, eye color, etc. Students can make charts, graphs and word problems using the information they gather.

Additional Activities

- Have a Teddy Bears' Picnic by having classes march around the library with their stuffed bear buddies to the music of "The Teddy Bear's Picnic." Conclude by seating the children and their bears on red-and-white checked tablecloths for a snack of bear-shaped graham cookies and the chance to read a book to their bear.
- Give students a book list of bear titles you have in your library. Circle three for each group so students are not working on the same books at the same time. Students work together to locate the book in the catalog. Each listed book will have bear die cuts in the front (different color in each book). As they locate the book on the shelf, students remove a paper bear and return the book to the shelf. Student teams that find three win a bag of bear-shaped honey grahams, jellied gum bears or bear stickers.
- Read Michael Rosen and Helen Oxenbury's version of *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* (Simon & Schuster, 1989) to primary students. Help children enact the bear hunt either during or after the reading using the following gestures as you read:

For the refrain:

We're going on a bear hunt. (*Hand above eyes as if searching.*)

We're going to catch a big one. (*Arms spread to show size of bear.*)

What a beautiful day. (*Palms up.*)

We're not scared! (*Cross arms and shake head with a fierce look.*)

For the lines, use these gestures:

Oh no! (*Slap head gently.*)

We can't go under it, (*Hands dive under.*)

Can't go over it, (*Hands dive up.*)

We'll have to go around it. (*Spread arms as if to encircle something.*)



Act out the other adventures as well, when they go through the grass, the river, the mud, the forest and even a snowstorm until they reach the cave. After discovering the bear, reverse all your motions in fast speed until everyone is safe under the covers in bed.

Songs and Chants

Act out some of these traditional bear chants and songs:

Fuzzy Wuzzy

Fuzzy Wuzzy was a bear.

Fuzzy Wuzzy had no hair.

If Fuzzy Wuzzy had no hair,

Then Fuzzy Wuzzy wasn't fuzzy,

Was he?

The Bear Went Over the Mountain

(*Sung to the tune: "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow"*)

The bear went over the mountain,

The bear went over the mountain,

The bear went over the mountain,

To see what he could see.

To see what he could see,

To see what he could see.

The bear went over the mountain,

To see what he could see.



Keep 'em Reading

The other side of the mountain,
The other side of the mountain,
The other side of the mountain,
Was all that he could see.

Was all that he could see,
Was all that he could see,
The other side of the mountain,
Was all that he could see!

Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear

(Chant while clapping, jumping an imaginary rope or bouncing an imaginary ball.)

Teddy bear, teddy bear, turn around.
Teddy bear, teddy bear, touch the ground.
Teddy bear, teddy bear, show your shoe.
Teddy bear, teddy bear, that will do!
Teddy bear, teddy bear, go upstairs.
Teddy bear, teddy bear, say your prayers.
Teddy bear, teddy bear, turn out the light.
Teddy bear, teddy bear, say goodnight!



Contests

Wild Bear Challenge. Students who complete the Wild Bear Challenge (under “Science” on page 42) can submit their worksheets as entries in a contest. All students who get 80% win a Teddy Bear Day bookmark (see page 45). Draw three names from those students to win a stuffed bear.

Name the Bear Character. Use book jackets, calendar pages or book character dolls to feature a variety of book bears. Give students an entry form that contains a number and blank for each bear. Supply a list of answers, with one more bear name than in the display. Students who get 80% of the names correct are entered in a drawing for bear bookmarks, books or a stuffed bear.

Games

Squirrel, Squirrel, Bear. Play a version of Duck, Duck, Goose by having students sit in a circle to play Squirrel, Squirrel, Bear. The center of the circle is called the honey pot. A child is appointed to walk around the outside of the circle, touching each child lightly on the head

and saying either “squirrel” or “bear.” When the caller says “bear,” the child on the floor jumps up with a growl and chases the caller. If the bear catches the child before he/she can sit down in the bear’s spot, the child goes into the center with the honey pot. If the child gets to the spot first, the bear goes in the center and game proceeds in the same manner.

Play Jeopardy Bear. For directions on how to make a shower curtain jeopardy board, see *Stretchy Library Lessons: Seasons & Celebrations* by Pat Miller (UpstartBooks, 2004), pages 39–40. A version for the overhead is also included along with multiple-choice questions about real bears, German bears, Winnie the Pooh, Famous Bears and Bear Facts.

Sequency Game. Read *How Teddy Bears Are Made: A Visit to the Vermont Teddy Bear Factory*, then play this game using the twelve picture cards on page 46 of *Stretchy Library Lessons: Seasons & Celebrations*. Give student partners an envelope containing all twelve cards. Make a set of the pictures for the overhead to display the sequence for checking when all are finished. (If you don’t have the Morris book, have the students guess the order.)

Books

- *Bears: Paws, Claws, and Jaws* by Adele D. Richardson. Capstone Press, 2001. 1–3.
- *The Boy Who Thought He Was a Teddy Bear: A Fairy Tale* by Jeanne Willis. Peachtree Publishers, 2002. K–2.
- *Famous Bears & Friends: One Hundred Years of Teddy Bear Stories, Poems, Songs, and Heroics* written and collected by Janet Wyman Coleman. Penguin Putnam, 2002. 2–5.
- *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* retold by Jan Brett. Penguin Putnam, 1987. K–3.
- *How Teddy Bears Are Made: A Visit to the Vermont Teddy Bear Factory* by Ann Morris. Scholastic, 1994. K–3.
- *The Hutchinson Treasury Teddy Bear Tales*. Hutchinson, 1997. 1–3.

- *Jesse Bear, What Will You Wear?* by Nancy White Carlstrom. Simon & Schuster, 1986. K–2.
- *Know It Alls: Bears!* by Christopher Nicholas. Learning Horizons, Inc., 2000. K–2.
- *The Legend of the Teddy Bear* by Frank Murphy. Sleeping Bear Press, 2000.
- *My Friend Bear* by Jez Alborough. Candlewick Press, 1998. K–2.
- *The Teddy Bear Encyclopedia* by Pauline Cockrill. DK Publishing, 1993. 3–5.
- *A Teddy Bear for President Roosevelt* by Connie and Peter Roop. Scholastic, 2002. K–3.
- *Teddy Bear Tears* by Jim Aylesworth. Simon & Schuster, 1997. K–2.
- *The Teddy Bears' Picnic*. HarperCollins, 1999.

Web sites



- **The Bear Den—Species by Species**, www.bearden.org/species.html Click on any of the eight species to learn more about its description, range, habitat, diet, social organization and reproduction. Also indicated are the bears' conservation status and threats to its survival.

- **The Story of the Teddy Bear**, www.theodoreroosevelt.org/kidscorner/tr_teddy.htm Learn the brief facts of the creation of Teddy's bear and see the political cartoon that began the teddy's life.
- **Teddy Bear Story—100 Years of the Teddy Bear**, www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/wml/exhibitions/bear/ Click on a selection of interesting topics including Bears in Books, Bear Beginnings and Showbiz Bears.


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