

Teddy Bear Celebration

• Keep 'em Reading •

Grades
K–2, 3–5

by | Carol Thompson

B.E.A.R. **(Be Enthusiastic About Reading)**

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Note: November 14 is National American Teddy Bear Day. Adapt the following library program for a day-, week- or month-long program.

What better to snuggle up with while you're reading than teddy bear? Ever since President Roosevelt refused to shoot a captured baby bear back in 1902, "teddy bears" have been popular with kids. Thus in our library was born the Teddy Bear month. To capitalize on this love of the cuddly stuffed animals, we initiated a motivational unit incentive to get kids to read, read, and read!



As always, the first thing we do while planning is pull books on the theme. We make a "cuddly" display that may say something like, "READY, TEDDY?" Around the display we exhibit all of our books that go along with teddy bears or related materials. I try to pull all genres to reach every age and interest. (See the abbreviated bibliography on the next page.)

Joint planning between me, my clerk, and the other teachers helps to narrow down which activities we will do in the media center. In our resource file we keep tons of other activities that teachers can come and pull at their discretion.

While this unit can be accommodated for any grade level, I have found to have the most fun and participation with my K–2 students. While in the media center, students are exposed to "Bear" activities that cover objectives that span across the curriculum. There is inside and outside work for the students.

To be invited to the Teddy Bear Party at the end of the month, students have to earn it. For example Kindergartners may have to read twenty books at home and have appropriate documentation to show for it. One way that we have done this in the past is giving them a "Bear Bookmark" to keep up with their books. Every book that they read earns a paw print stamp. Fourth grade students may have to accumulate ten points in the Accelerated Reader program on their reading level. The media specialist should keep in mind to always make the goal obtainable. The object is to have students motivated enough to read but able to successfully reach the goal too. During the month while students are working independently on their reading goals, we are having Teddy Bear activities in the media center—see the suggested list at right.

At the end of the month we celebrate those students who have reached their goal. This particular year. We go all out for these parties because that is what motivates the students for the next party. After assembling the guest list, each student receives a “Teddy Bear Invitation” to the party. They were asked to also bring their favorite teddy bear with them. This year, we decorated with the entire teddy bear ensemble. We made it resemble the picnic from the book, *The Teddy Bears’ Picnic*. We served lemonade, teddy bear suckers, gummy bears, a teddy bear cake, and picnic sandwiches. We watched the movie from The Library Store that shows the Vermont Teddy Bear Factory. So the students got to see how a teddy bear was made. Then we had circle time and allowed each student to “show and tell” about their own teddy. Our principal brought her teddy bear that she had when she was a little girl. The kids thought that it was “100 YEARS OLD.”

According to the theme of the month and the number of participants, I decide whether I want to break the parties into grade levels. After we had our show and tell, we go on a Teddy Bear Parade around the school. This is always a fun time because the students get to show off their hard work. We also have a group picture as well as individual pictures for the school scrapbook. Each student is given a certificate to commemorate this special event.

Sampling of Activities

- Have students read a Teddy Bear fact or joke of the day during the morning announcements.
- Make teddy bear masks. See the October 2007 issue of *LibrarySparks* Magazine for a pattern.
- “Bear-Nap” students who are caught reading; they receive a sticker and get to come to the library for “beary” special activities.
- Display and read teddy bear books aloud in the library including *The Story of Smokey the Bear*, *A Teddy Bear for President Roosevelt*, and *The Legend of the Teddy Bear*. See the suggested booklist at right.
- Host a Web scavenger hunt searching for information about famous bears.
- Assign bear-related writing prompts: (The day I ran from a grizzly... My pet bear cub....)
- Play Bear Bingo using gummy bears.
- Compare/Contrast various species of bears (Alaska Brown Bear, Polar Bear, American Black Bear, Grizzly Bear, etc.).
- Hold a Teddy Bear culmination party and/or parade at the end of the program.
- Have students complete the Name that Famous Bear worksheet on page 4.

Jokes about Teddy Bears

- What did Teddy Bear’s friends say to him after he had blown out the candles on his cake?
HAPPY BEAR-THDAY!
- Where do teddy bears go to get books?
THE LI-BEAR-Y
- What famous teddy bear was born in a log and became president of the United States?
A-BEAR-HAM LINCOLN
- How do you start a Teddy Bear race: TEDDY, SET, GO!
- How do Teddies keep their houses cool in summer? THEY USE BEAR CONDITIONING
- What animal do you look like when you get into the bath? A LITTLE BEAR
- What did the Teddy Bear say when he was offered a second helping? NO THANKS; I’M ALREADY STUFFED.

Books Related to Teddy Bears

- The Berenstain Bears books by Stan and Jan Berenstain. HarperCollins.
- *The Boy who Thought he was a Teddy Bear: A Fairy Tale* by Jeanne Willis. Peachtree Press, 2002.
- Corduroy books by Don Freeman. Viking Press.
- *How Teddy Bears are Made: a visit to the Vermont Teddy Bear Factory* by Ann Morris. Scholastic, 1994.
- *Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear: Poems* by Alice Schertle. HarperCollins, 2003.
- *Teddy Bears Picnic* by Jerry Garcia. HarperCollins, 1996.
- *The Legend of the Teddy Bear* by Frank Murphy. Sleeping Bear Press, 2000.
- *The Story of Smokey Bear* by Robin Bromley. Dutton, 1996.
- *A Tale of Two Teddies* by Kathleen Bart. Portfolio Press, 2001.

Keep 'em Reading

- *A Teddy Bear for President Roosevelt* by Peter and Connie Roop. Scholastic Book Clubs, 2002.
- *The True Story of Smokey the Bear* by Jane W. Watson. Simon & Schuster, 1955.
- *Ultimate Teddy Bear Book* by Pauline Cockrill. DK Publishing, 1991.
- *When the Teddy Bears Came* by Martin Waddell. Walker Books, 1998.
- *Who wants an old Teddy Bear?* by Ginnie Hofmann. Random House, 1979.

Teddy Bear-related Web Sites for kids

- Smokey Bear: www.smokeybear.com/kids
- Walt Disney's Winnie-the-Pooh: disney.go.com/disneyvideos/animatedfilms/pooh/
- Theodore Roosevelt Association: Teddy and the Children's Room: theodoreroosevelt.org/kidscorner/trchildrens.htm

Teddy Bear Foods

- BEAR-b-que sandwiches
- hamBEARgers
- blueBEARY muffins
- Gummi BEARS
- Teddy Grahams

Answers: Name that Famous Bear Worksheet (page 4)

- Who was the mascot of the US Forest Fire Prevention Campaign who first appeared in 1944? (Smokey Bear)
- What Teddy Bear came from Darkest Peru and usually wears a blue coat and yellow hat? (Paddington Bear)

- What bear was featured in a series of books illustrated by Maurice Sendak? (Little Bear)
- What was the name of the bear of the famous rhyme that had no hair? (Fuzzy Wuzzy)
- Name the 3 bears that Goldilocks encountered in the woods. (Mama Bear, Papa Bear, and Baby Bear)
- What is the group of bears called that includes: Bedtime Bear, Birthday Bear, Cheer Bear, Share Bear, Good Luck Bear, etc.? (The Care Bears)
- What are the names of the bears that live in Jellystone Park and have their own cartoon? (Yogi Bear, Boo Boo, and Cindy Bear)
- What is the name of the bear that appeared in Disney's animated classic, "The Jungle Book"? (Baloo)
- What famous, shy, yellow bear is a classic for Disney and has a friend named Piglet? (Winni-the-Pooh)

Carol Thompson, a media specialist in Rockmart, Georgia shares her passion for literacy with her students and community at the same elementary school in which she attended. Author of four books from the Mr. Wiggle series and countless magazine articles, Carol strives to make reading fun. Please feel free to e-mail her at cdthomp@bellsouth.net.



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