



RedRover Readers and Early Ages Gathering to Learn Empathy Through Stories (EAGLES) Program

GRADE(S): 3-5 **SEL ALIGNMENT:** Self-awareness; Social Awareness; Relationship skills; Responsible decision-making

JOHNNY'S PHEASANT

Written by Cheryl Minnema, illustrated by Julie Flett

TIME: 35 minutes (reading and discussion - 15; activity - 10)

MATERIALS: Anchor text ("Johnny's Pheasant")

KEY CONCEPTS

- Relationships with family, both people and animals. What can family teach us? (Relationship skills)
- How do both nature and animals give back to us? (Social awareness)
- Passing down customs and stories by elders. What have you learned from your family? (Social/self-awareness)
- Kids noticing things adults may miss / tenacity – Johnny doesn't give up on the pheasant.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT:

You may want to do a land acknowledgment before this reading and lesson to determine what land you are on. Native-land.ca is an app to help map Indigenous territories, treaties, and languages.

BEFORE READING:

As a class, discuss the following topics:

- Ask: "What do you think a pheasant is? Have you ever come across a pheasant or another kind of bird?"
- What does family mean to you? Who is in your family?
- When you think of a grandma, what do you imagine?
- Show the students the cover of the book and ask, "What do you think this book will be about?"

DURING READING:

- Ask, "How old do you think Johnny is? Do you remember when you were this age? Does this story remind you of other stories you have learned? Which ones?"
- On the page where Johnny finds the pheasant on the side of the road, ask, "What would you do if you were Johnny? What are some options you have when you encounter a sick or hurt animal?"
- On the page where Johnny exclaims, "HOOT HOOT!", ask, "How do you think he is feeling? How do you express yourself when you feel this way?"
- On the page where Johnny and the pheasant are on the swingset ask, "How do you think Johnny feels in this picture? What might the pheasant be feeling?"

AFTER READING:

- The pheasant gives a gift of a feather to Johnny when he flies away, and then Johnny gives the feather to Grandma. Ask, "Why do you think he did that?"
- Johnny saw the pheasant when his grandma did not. Ask, "What are some other things you have noticed that adults may have not noticed?"
- "Howah" is an Ojibwe expression meaning 'oh my!' Ask, "How do you think grandma felt when Johnny gifted the pheasant feather to her? What do you think your family might say if you gave them a feather? What kind of feather would you give to others?"
- Think about what the land gives us. What are they? What are some ways we can help take care of our surroundings so that we can live peacefully with nature and animals?



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ACTIVITIES:

Role-play Activity:

- Create two equal groups of students and have them imagine they are an elder. What stories, customs, food, or crafts will you pass down to the younger generation? Have students try and recall what they have learned from their parents or grandparents. If they feel comfortable, have them take turns sharing their stories while passing a talking stick.

Mindfulness Activity:

- Go outside and find a comfortable place to sit. Close your eyes and listen to your surroundings. What sounds or animals do you hear? What do you smell? What can you feel with your hands?

Optional activity about feathers:

- Reach out to the local Tribal community to ask if they have a speaker who could talk to the students for guidance about feathers.

Gratitude Activity:

- Animals give us many things. What are the gifts from animals that you are most grateful for? Think about everything animals and nature give to us. On a piece of paper, write or draw five things nature and animals give us that you are thankful for. After the activity, ask students: How can we take care of nature? How does nature take care of us? What can we give back to nature to show our gratitude?
- Invite students to draw or write what they are thankful for on a sticky note and add it to a group chart.

AT THE END OF THE LESSON:

Ask students to reflect on these questions. Try this with the whole group, in a sharing circle, or ask students to fill out index cards.

- How did you feel about today's book and discussion?
- Did today's book and discussion change how you think about anything in your life?
- What did you learn from today's book and discussion that you didn't know before?



DON'T FORGET TO REPORT YOUR READING:

RedRover.org/reportreadings