

# WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE

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By Maurice Sendak (HarperCollins)

Themes: Imagination/Feelings

Grade Level: PreK – 2

Running Time: 8 minutes, animated

## SUMMARY

*WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE* is about a little boy named Max who misbehaves and is sent to his room by his mother, without his supper. While Max is alone in his room, his imagination takes him far, far away to a land where wild things live. These large, strange-looking creatures are tamed by Max, who stares directly into their yellow eyes and becomes king of the wild things. Soon Max grows tired of being in the land of the wild things and longs to return home "where someone loved him best of all." The end of the story finds Max back in his own bedroom, where his supper is waiting for him, and "it is still hot."

## OBJECTIVES

- Children will explore the world of the imagination.
- Children will investigate parent/child role reversals.
- Children will explore feelings including fear, anger, happiness, and contentment.

## BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Share the book *WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE* with children. Then ask:

- How do you think Max felt about being sent to his room?
- Why do you think Max wasn't afraid of the wild things?
- Why do you think Max decided not to stay with the wild things?
- How do you think Max felt after he returned home?
- How do you think the wild things felt without Max?
- What do you think the wild things did once Max was

gone?

Talk with children about things they may have done that they shouldn't have and the ways their parents may have punished them. Ask: How did you feel after doing something you shouldn't have? How did you feel about being punished? How do you think your mom/dad/caregiver felt about punishing you?

Discuss feelings with children. Give them an opportunity to talk about when they might have felt frightened, angry, happy, safe, and content. Ask: What might have helped you feel better when you were frightened/angry? What could you do the next time you feel this way? How would you help your little brother or sister if he/she felt frightened?

## AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Supply clothing and props children can use to dress up as adults. After children have had some fun with the clothing, have them dramatize some simple situations involving parents and children. For example, have the children pretending to be parents set down some rules for the children about bedtime or play time. Have children representing young children respond to those rules. Ask: How did it feel to be the parent telling your children what to do? What other things would you like to say to your "children?" How did it feel to be the child? What other things would you like to say to your "parents?"

Talk with children about what it would be like to visit the land of the wild things. Then have children close their eyes as you play some lively music. Encourage children to imagine that they are traveling to a very special place. After giving children a minute or two to imagine, ask: Where did your imagination take you? What was it like there? What did you like most about this imaginary place?

Supply paper plates and other art materials, including pipe cleaners, crayons, yarn, glue, tongue depressors, and scraps of fabric that children can use to create their own Wild Thing masks. Have children design "Wild Things" faces on the paper plates and attach tongue depressors to them to complete the masks. Later, play some lively music, have children hold the paper plates in front of their faces, and have a "Wild Things parade" around the classroom.

Have a "Wild Things Day." Help children create life-size Wild Things from large sheets of cardboard and prop them up around the classroom. Then string long lengths of colorful yarn from the classroom ceiling, and from wall to wall, to represent the vines and trees of the wild things' forest. At lunch or snack time, have children sit on the floor, enjoy some light, happy music, and have a picnic in the land of the Wild Things!

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