

Title: Naked Mole Rat Gets Dressed

Author: Mo Willems

Grade Level: Primary

Category: Picture Book

Synopsis: Wilbur is different from the other Naked Mole Rats in his colony because he likes to wear clothes. The other naked mole rats are so upset that they tell the wisest and oldest and most naked mole rat Grand-pah about it. What will happen to Wilbur now that Grand-pah knows?

Thematic/Curriculum Connections: Naked Mole Rats, Individuality, Courage, Rules, Bullying

Pre-Reading Activities:

Look at some websites to learn about naked mole rats. For example, the website of the San Diego Zoo: www.sandiegozoo.org. This is the type of info you can find at this site:

They eat what?

Yucky, but true: naked mole-rats eat their own poop. But they have a very good reason for doing this. Naked mole-rats eat roots and tubers, which are very hard to digest. Their intestines are full of microscopic organisms to help with digestion. But in order to absorb more of the nutrients from their food, they will eat the poop. It's like getting two meals for the price of one. And not only do they eat their feces, they also roll in it! Because naked mole-rats live in the dark, they have nearly lost the use of their eyes. In order to identify members of the colony versus an intruding colony, they all roll around in the toilet chamber. This way everyone smells the same!

Another good site:

<http://nationalzoo.si.edu/Publications/ZooGoer/2002/3/nakedmolerats.cfm>

Questions for writing prompts or discussion:

1. If you were Wilbur what kind of clothes would you like to wear? Why?
2. When Wilbur gets dressed he can feel different depending on what he is wearing. What are some other feelings he can have?
3. How would you feel if someone said they didn't like your clothes?

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4. Have you ever had to follow a rule that you didn't think was important?
5. Grand-pah decided to change the rule about clothes because clothes don't hurt anyone.
6. What are some of the rules that protect us?
7. If you could only have two pieces of clothing what would you choose?
8. Have you ever decided to wear something no one else liked? Or have a hairdo no one else liked? How did you feel?

Activities:

Hot Seat:

- Ask for a volunteer to play Wilbur and have the rest of the class interview him.

Newspaper:

- Have the students write an article for a newspaper or magazine to report on the story of the first naked mole rat to wear clothes.
- Divide the class in half and ask each side to write an opinion piece for or against naked mole rats wearing clothes.

Fun:

- Have the students come to school dressed in clothes they think no one else would like. Or have them come with a different hair style.

Other book connections:

- *Animals Should Definitely Not Wear Clothes* by Judi Barrett
- *Naked Mole-Rat Letters* by Mary Amato
- *The Naked Mole Rat* by Jody Sullivan Rake
- *Dumpy La Rue* by Elizabeth Winthrop
- *Fashion Kitty* by Charise Harper