

The
Early Years Count
Literacy
Connection



**Blue Sky White
Stars**

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Preschool edition
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Overview of Book

Blue Sky White Stars is a visually stunning book that depicts the essence of our country through beautiful illustrations and sparse, but poignant words. The art of each picture depicts a sweeping view of America, from its natural beauty to its history to the diversity of its people.

Genre: Informational/Fiction

Vocabulary

Books are a rich source of words new to children. Here are some words from *Blue Sky White Stars* to introduce in your classroom:

waves	landscape
nation	wagon
woven	

Each time you read the book, choose 2 or 3 words to highlight.

Use age-appropriate definitions and/or the illustrations to help children gain an understanding of each word's meaning.

Use these new words throughout the day, reminding the children, "That's a word from our story!"

**Connecting with the
HighScope Curriculum**

COR Advantage 1.5

Mathematics
Item V
(Patterns)

Science & Technology
Item DD
(Natural and physical world)

Social Studies
Item GG
(Geography)
Item HH
(History)

Reading Tips

Look at and have a conversation around each illustration.

Talk with your children about a time when they saw fireworks.

Give some information about the Statue of Liberty—where on the map it is located, where it came from, what it stands for. Share pictures of statues from our own community.

After looking at the red rows in the book, ask the children if they can find other rows or stripes around the room.

Three readings are recommended to familiarize children with the story. Each reading provides an opportunity to introduce new vocabulary words, pose open-ended questions, and engage children in activities that make the story "come alive."

Throughout the Routine

Refer to the book throughout the day and use new vocabulary words in meaningful ways. Active engagement with the story helps the content come alive.

At **Transition Time**, invite the children to move using words from text, like rocket, rise up, walk like on the moon.

Get out the parachute or use a large bed sheet at **Large Group** and encourage children to make it wave like the flag in the book.

Play the "freeze" game at **Outside Time**, encouraging the children to freeze like a statue.

Around the Room

Highlight the book's content and build on the children's excitement in a variety of locations.

Make available various skin toned paint/marker colors in the **Art Area**; add red, white, and blue paint to the easel.

Take spray bottles with paint **Outside** to paint large paper or a big sheet.

Highlight lacing materials in the **Toy Area** that children can use to "sew."

Add photos throughout the room of famous statues and/or ones from our city. Find books on the Statue of Liberty or other statues at the library and add to the **Book Area**.

Open-ended Questions

Enhance active engagement and early critical thinking skills by asking open-ended questions. These questions encourage children to explain why or how things happen, make predictions, or brainstorm possibilities rather than give one "right" answer.

Here are some questions you might ask for *Blue Sky White Stars*:

While showing children the cover of the book: What do you think they are looking at?

What do you think it would be like to walk on the moon?

If you were a flag, where would you like to fly? Why?

For more information on how to use books and stories with children to enhance your curriculum, contact
The Family Connection:

website—
www.famconn.org

Facebook—
@famconnsjc

phone—
574-237-9740

@ Home

Since many of the children in our county will have this book at home, use it as a way to further the home-school connection. In your daily contact—in person or by text, email or other notes home—encourage families to share *Blue Sky White Stars* with their children. Here's a sample message you can send:

Blue Skies White Stars is a beautifully illustrated book that shows, in very few words, the strength and essence of our country. It celebrates our flag, our history, our diversity, and the natural beauty that can be found from shore to shore. In our classroom, we've been learning more about statues. Think about using the Statue of Liberty as a springboard for you and your child to visit the statues in our own community, especially the Martin Luther King Jr statue with Father Hesburgh in downtown South Bend. These two men are "woven" together similarly to the people in this book.