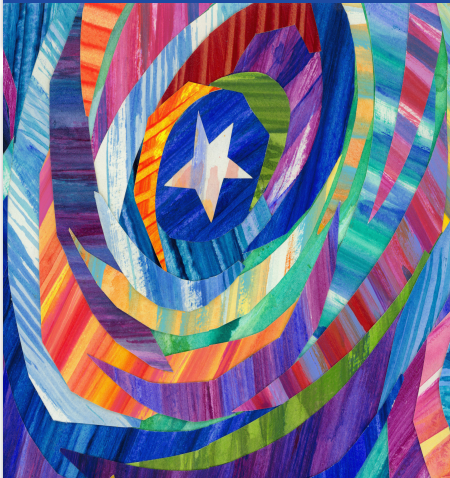


# The Early Years Count Literacy Connection



## The First Starwberries. A Cherokee Story

Retold by Joseph Bruchac  
Illustrated by Anna Vojtech

Preschool edition  
August 2018

### Overview of Book

This old Native American legend begins with love and happiness. But when the man and woman quarrel, the woman leaves in anger. The man feels very sorry for his words. Eventually, he is helped by the Sun, who takes pity on him, and the man finds a way to make amends.

Genre: Folktale

### Vocabulary

Books are a rich source of words new to children. Here are some words from *The First Strawberries* to introduce in your classroom:

lonesome	foolish
appeared	pity
prepare	quarreled

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

Social and Emotional  
Development  
Item D (Emotions)

Creative Arts  
Item AA  
(Pretend play)

Science and Technology  
Item DD  
(Natural and physical world)

Social Studies  
Item HH (History)

### Reading Tips

As with most legends and folktales, this one starts out with "Long ago..." As you read, use a "wondering" tone and linger on the first two pages so the children can observe the illustrations and absorb the words. Continue to read slowly and deliberately.

Ask questions as you read, such as, "Why isn't she turning around?" Make comments like, "The man keeps following her to say he's sorry. Will he get to tell her?" Talk about emotions; brainstorm with the children things they can do when they are angry.

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.

Have a berry taste-test at **Snack** or **Small Group Time**. Chart children's responses as they try and compare blueberries, raspberries, blackberries and strawberries.

Plant berries at **Small Group Time** with choices of berry seeds from the story.

Pretend to go berry picking at **Work Time**.

Look for dandelions or other "meadow" flowers at **Outside Time**. Invite children to pick some and bring inside to "share the beauty" like the story character wanted to.

### **Around the Room**

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

In the House Area, hang pictures of berries and use blue and red beads as pretend berries for "cooking" or "picking."

Put *Blueberries for Sal* by Robert McCloskey in the **Book Area** for children to read and compare.

Place garden and seed catalogues in the **Writing Area**, along with "order sheets" for the children to fill out.

Have magnifying glasses in the **Toy Area** to observe strawberries up close.

### **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 *The First Strawberries*:

Where do you think the woman is going?

What kind of special memories do you have when you eat something you like a lot?

What did the man and the woman do with the strawberries?

Can you tell about a time when you needed to tell someone you were sorry?

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

website—  
[www.famconn.org](http://www.famconn.org)

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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 *The First Strawberries* with their children. Here's a sample message you can send:

We've enjoyed reading *The First Strawberries*, an old Native American folk tale. As you read this story with your child, you'll find that it opens the door to talk about different emotions, such as angry, sad, or lonesome. The story also brings an opportunity to explore the whole world of berries! Is there somewhere nearby to take your child berry-picking? If you are in the grocery store with your child, see how many different kinds are in the produce section. What other foods contain berries? Your child can go on a berry hunt in your own kitchen too. Even better, make a strawberry pie!