

Just Me and My Mom

Publisher

GT Interactive Software

System Requirements

Macintosh

- Macintosh computer
- System 7.1 or later
- 4 MB RAM
- 5 MB ROM
- CD-ROM drive
- Color monitor

Other PC

- IBM or compatible 486BX/33 or higher processor
- Windows 3.1 or later
- 4 MB RAM
- CD-ROM drive
- Super VGA (640x480), 256-color display
- Sound Blaster 16 or 100% compatible sound card

Optional

- Speakers recommended

Software Description

Join Little Critter and his mom on their trip to the city. After Little Critter reads the story, children can interact with each page. Pages are full of animation, sounds, humor, and surprises. Look for seven secret screens throughout the story. Screens are either movies or interactive pages.

In the story, Little Critter and his mom take the train to the city. While in the city, they visit the museum of natural history, an aquarium, an art museum, and a department store. Little Critter and his mom try having lunch at a restaurant, but frog was not allowed. Little Critter, Mom, and frog end up eating at the hot dog stand. After they eat, mom and Little Critter take a taxi ride through the city on their way to the train station.

On each page of the program, children can find Little Critter's friend, the frog. The frog is a hot spot on most of the pages. Often he sings and dances, imitating a famous singing star such as Elvis or Michael Jackson.

Children make several choices at the Main Menu. If they choose "Play," the story is read page by page, and the children can click on hot spots to interact. If they choose "Read," the story will be read with no interaction. Another option takes each child to a specific page. The fourth option is "Music" in which children can listen to six different songs as well as find hot spots. Little Critter and his band perform each song. The words to the songs appear across the bottom of the screen. With a click on the keyboard icon, children play the piano to make their own music. The many activities in this software make it suitable for curriculum integration.

Just Me and My Mom

Introduction

Mothers or mother figures are very important parts of children's lives. Mothers and children share special adventures together. On this particular day, Little Critter and his mom go to the city, an opportunity many children living in rural areas do not often experience. Children interacting with *Just Me and My Mom* can experience several aspects of a big city. The program offers an exciting way to travel about the city at leisure.

Materials

- Computer
- *Just Me and My Mom*
- *Just Me and My Mom* book (M. Mayer)
- Books and poems about cities and moms for the reading center

Introductory Activity

- Read selected poems from *Street Music City Poems* by Arnold Adoff. The poems in this book celebrate city life. Talk about the children's favorite poems and make a chart for classroom display. Also, display pictures of cities, including trains, restaurants, museums, aquariums, department stores, taxis, and city streets. Children may share their ideas about city experiences or what they might like about the city.
- Children may share stories about special times with their moms. Read the book, *Say It*, by Charlotte Zolotow. The story is about a mother and daughter's walk together on an autumn day.

Computer Activity

- View and interact with *Just Me and My Mom* at the technology center individually or in small groups during center time.
- Ask children open-ended questions such as the following as they view the program: "What do you and your mom like to do together?," "Have you ever been to the city?," and "How was the city different from where you live?"

Extended Activity

- Communicate with pen pals or classmates on the computer. Children from smaller towns/cities or rural communities can communicate with a Pen Pal over the Internet. The children can share everyday experiences with other children. This will offer them the opportunity to learn about both city and country life. A teacher may find another classroom to adopt as their "city" or "country" friends.
- Create a *HyperStudio* stack of city sounds. Read *City Sounds* by Rebecca Emberley in which sounds of the big city are brought to life in labeled pictures. Children can choose a city sound (one of their own or an idea from the book) and illustrate it in *HyperStudio* or draw it on paper and scan it. Sounds can be recorded with the picture. Children can make sounds; sounds can be imported from a sound library and/or captured on tape around the school community.
- Use Little Critter's music section in your music center. If you have two computers, move one to the music area. Display a variety of instruments for children to play as they listen to the songs. There are six songs to choose from, and the words appear at the bottom of the screen. Children can sing along as well as play instruments. Chart the songs for children so the words can be seen by a group. A keyboard could also be placed in the center for children to

make their own music. Don't forget that headphones can be attached to the computer for individual listening experiences.

Summary

Just Me and My Mom provides an opportunity for all children to visit a big city. Although a child may live in a rural community, he or she can learn about the city through computer software.

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CURRICULUM INTEGRATION IDEAS

Art



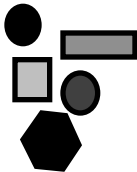
- Paint at the easel; provide a variety of paintbrushes and colors. Change the art media throughout the unit (e.g., watercolors or pastels). Use different tools for paint (e.g., Q-tips, sponges, straws).
- Create collages around under the sea themes. Children can make artwork with seashells, sand, rocks, and so on.
- Create sculptures from modeling clay.
- Create an area of the room for the art museum.
- Paint or draw a picture of mom.

Construction



- Build skyscrapers using assorted boxes (shoe boxes, cereal boxes), glue, tempera paint, scissors, and collage materials.
- Make a train ticket booth from an appliance box and then create props (e.g., tickets).
- Use cardboard and paint to decorate wheel toys like train engines and train cars.
- Construct dinosaurs or buildings from Popsicle sticks and glue. Use markers to color them.

Blocks/Manipulatives



- Construct roads and buildings from blocks. Try making buildings from used milk cartons.
- Use fabric printed with roads on the floor. Place toy cars, trucks, and motorcycles in the area.
- Place toy people in the block area. Turn cars into taxis by making a sign for the top.
- Encourage children to make or color billboards, streetlights, and street signs for the city.
- Display photographs and drawings of city buildings, taxis, billboards, museums, department stores, and an aquarium.
- Place a train set in the block area.

Cooking/Snacks



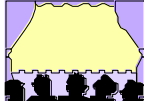
- Eat at the Coffee Shop.
- Make hot cocoa mix; prepare and serve it with animal crackers.
- Make tuna salad sandwiches with lettuce, tomato, and a green olive. Serve any of the following ham dishes: fried eggs and ham, ham and cheese, ham kabobs, glazed ham, and/or ham on toast.
- Eat lunch at the hot dog stand; serve mini-hot dogs with the works.

Music and Movement



- "Child of Mine" (C. King)
- "Down By the Station"
- "I've Been Working on the Railroad"
- "It's A Mother and Child Reunion" (P. Simon)
- "Little Red Caboose"
- "Gartan Mother's Lullaby"

Dramatic Play



- Create a restaurant or coffee shop. Add the following props to the housekeeping area: menus, ticket pads, play money, tablecloth, cloth napkins, apron, bow tie, dishes, utensils, flowers and vase, and salt and pepper shakers.
- Create an aquarium. Children can act out the Seal Show by adding the following props: stuffed sea animals, beach balls, hoops, noisemakers, balance beam, and ruffle collars.
- Re-create the Native American exhibit in the story with a teepee (sheet and newspaper), homemade costumes, drums, Indian corn, totem poles, and lots more.

Group/Individual Story Experiences



- Read *Just Me and My Mom* by Mercer Mayer. Set up a train and/or taxi with chairs. Play act a ride to the city with mom.



- Produce a book of "What I Like to Do with My Mom." Create the class book on paper or make a stack with *HyperStudio*.

Outdoor Play/Motor



- Play "Train Express." Use decorated wheel toys and a ticket booth.
- Make tracks with tape and post railroad signs.
- Play "Dinosaur Walk" for creative movement using large muscles.
- Re-create a "Seal Show." Provide beach balls, hoops, jump ropes, etc. Let the children try tossing the beach ball through hoops or tossing them with their noses.

Science/Math



- Study dinosaurs.
- Study mummies.
- Set up a department store. Use play money to purchase toys.
- Make shelves and let children sort and display toys like in a store.
- Exchange money at the coffee shop.

Sensory



- Play city sounds for the children and let them try to identify the sounds.
- Set up the sensory table with sea animal toys, boats, and measuring tools.
- Dig for dinosaur bones. Fill the sensory table with dirt and add fossils, bones, and rocks.
- Place small toys in a box with a hole so children can feel different objects.

Literacy Links



- Name and make a sign for the "Train Express," including a ticket booth. Make tickets to various cities.
- Make cards for Mom on the computer or in the writing center.
- Create menus for the restaurant in the dramatic play area. Make a "Today's Special" sign on the chalkboard.
- Create billboards, street signs, and a taxi sign for the block city.

Related Books, Poems & Stories



- *City Seen from A to Z* (R. Isadora)
- *Jonathan and His Mommy* (I. Smalls)
- Little Critter books by Mercer Mayer
- *Round Trip* (A. Jonas)
- *Underground* (D. Macaulay)

Related Software



- *ArtSpace*
- *Big Job*
- *Dinosaur Adventure 3-D*
- *Green Eggs and Ham*
- *HyperKeys*
- *Just Grandma and Me*
- *Just Me and My Dad*
- *Kid Pix Studio*
- *Putt Putt Saves the Zoo*
- *Sleeping Cub's Test of Courage*

Related Websites



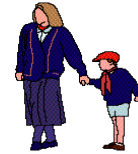
- **Metropolitan Museum:**
www.metmuseum.org/
- **Safety City:**
www.nhtsa.dot.gov/kids/
- **St. Louis Zoo:**
www.stlzoo.org/
- **San Diego Zoo:**
www.sandiegozoo.org/
- **Shedd Aquarium:** www.shednet.org/

Extensions Beyond the Classroom



- Visit a museum. Local colleges or universities have an art museum on their campus. Many towns or counties have local historical museums.
- Take a field trip to a local department store.
- "Dine Out" at a restaurant or coffee shop (or just visit).
- Go for a train ride on Amtrak or a local commuter train.

Family Connections



- Share experiences children have had with their moms. Bring photos and video of a special time with mom.
- Bring mom to class. Have a "Just Me and My Mom" day. Make "You're Special" cards for mom using the computer. Decorate the room with banners and signs.
- Invite parents who work in the city to talk and share with the class, or invite a parent who works for the railroad or drives a taxi.