

CREATIVE DRAMATICS

Picture Window™
Books



Happy Easter, Gus! by Jacklyn Williams

- Characters:** Gus
Bean
Mr. Chase
Billy
- Props:** Easter baskets
Plastic eggs
- Genre:** Realistic fiction
- Ages:** 4-6

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NOTES TO THE LEADER OF THE CREATIVE DRAMATICS SESSION

Before acting out the story, read *Happy Easter, Gus!* to the entire class.

The leader/narrator of the creative dramatics session needs to give clear, simple clues to the children who are acting out the story. First, select the children who will be playing the separate parts. Gus and Bean can be played by two individuals or by a group. The same for Mr. Chase and Billy.

The leader might want to ask the children to describe the characters before the session begins. For example, "What are words to describe Gus and Bean?" Answers could include friendly, curious, smart, happy, excited, etc. Also, "What are words to describe Billy?"

The children can act out the story from their chairs, sitting on the floor, or by standing in clearly marked places where the action will take place. The front of the room could be for the egg toss; the left side of the room could be for the egg hunt. It is always a good idea to make sure that all the characters and locations (if you decide to use them) are clearly established before the play session begins.

Narrator: Gus and Bean raced through the park on their bikes. The town was having its annual Easter egg hunt. They did not want to be late.

(Narrator could prompt, "Do you celebrate Easter? Does anyone celebrate a holiday other than Easter?")

This year, the prize for finding the most eggs was a gigantic chocolate rabbit! Gus said, "I am sure I am going to win."

Gus: I am sure I am going to win!

Narrator: Gus had practiced hiding eggs and finding them all year long.

(Narrator could prompt, "What are some other things you do at Easter time? Does anyone color eggs? What do you do with the eggs once you've colored them? What foods do you eat at Easter?")

Mr. Chase, the school principal, had been busy hiding eggs in the park all morning. At noon, a crowd of happy, noisy children gathered around him.

(Students playing Gus, Bean, and other children gather around student playing Mr. Chase.)

Billy was there, impatiently waiting for things to get started.

Mr. Chase said, "Let's play a game. Then, we'll look for eggs."

Mr. Chase: Let's play a game. Then we'll look for eggs.

Narrator: Mr. Chase said, "Time to line up for the egg toss."

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Mr. Chase: Time to line up for the egg toss!

Narrator: *(Have students pair up to act out the egg toss.)*

Bean walked over and stood next to Gus. “Let’s be partners,” he said.

Bean: Let’s be partners!

Narrator: Mr. Chase gave each pair of children an egg.

Mr. Chase: *(Student playing Mr. Chase hands out a plastic egg to other students.)*

Narrator: Bean tossed Gus the egg. Gus caught it and tossed it back.

The children tossed their eggs back and forth. One by one, the teams dropped their eggs.

(Give students plastic eggs to toss gently back and forth to one another.)

Finally, there were only two teams left — Gus and Bean and Billy and his partner.

Bean tossed the egg to Gus.

“Hey, Gus, don’t forget to catch it,” said Billy.

Billy: Hey, Gus, don’t forget to catch it!

Narrator: Gus caught the egg and tossed it back to Billy.

Bean said, “No fair, Billy. You’re making us nervous.”

Bean: No fair, Billy. You’re making us nervous.

Narrator: SPLAT! The egg slipped through Gus’ fingers and landed on his shoe.

“Billy and his partner win the egg toss,” said Mr. Chase.

Mr. Chase: Billy and his partner win the egg toss.

Narrator: Then Mr. Chase told everyone, “It is time for the EGGS-citing hunt!”

Mr. Chase: It is time for the EGGS-citing hunt!

Narrator: “Get ready! Get set! Go!” Mr. Chase shouted.

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Mr. Chase: Get ready! Get set! Go!

Gus saw an egg hiding in a big bush and rushed toward it. But just as he reached for it, Billy jumped out from behind the bush.

“ROAR!” Billy yelled.

Billy: ROAR!

Narrator: “Yikes!” said Gus.

Gus: Yikes!

Narrator: Sharp branches poked Gus and his basket. One poked a hole in the bottom of his basket, but Gus didn’t see it.

Gus struggled free and went to find more eggs. Billy followed him.

Gus and Billy: *(Have student playing Billy follow student playing Gus around the classroom looking for eggs.)*

Narrator: Every time Gus found an egg and put it in his basket, it slid out through the hole in the bottom! On and on went Gus, picking up eggs and putting them in his basket. On and on went the eggs, slipping and sliding back out. On and on went Billy, scooping them up and filling his own basket.

Narrator prompt: Who remembers what happens in the story? Does Gus win, or does Billy ruin it for him? Then let’s have our own egg hunt!

THE END