



ILLINOIS HOLOCAUST MUSEUM
& EDUCATION CENTER

Swimmy

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For grades K-2

Overview:

Students will listen to the story of [Swimmy](#) read aloud on YouTube (approximately 3.5 minutes). After listening to the story, students can complete the following activities below to learn more about teamwork, community, and acceptance of others' differences.

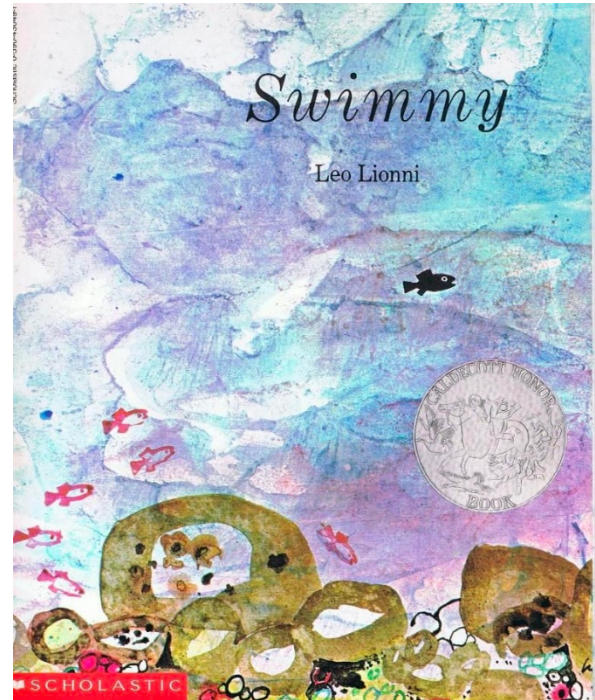
Book Synopsis:

Swimmy tells a story of a little fish who makes a big difference in helping his fellow fish. Swimmy is a little black fish, living among many red fish in a big school. He can swim faster than the others and is very smart. One day, however, the whole school Swimmy lives with is devoured by a very hungry big black fish, and poor Swimmy is the only one to escape. At first, he is alone and sad in the deep vast ocean. Then, however, he sees that the ocean holds many beautiful wonders—rainbow-colored jellyfish, lobsters, seaweed from sugar-candy rocks, and so much more. Swimmy is delighted. One day, Swimmy comes across another school of red fish, just like his own. He wants to share all his discoveries of the ocean with them. But the little fish are terribly afraid of the big black fish that can eat them all, just like what happened to Swimmy's other friends. Together, Swimmy and the school of red fish come up with a plan to save everyone from the big black fish.

Classroom Activities

Book Club Discussion:

These questions can either be used as a group discussion if you are meeting with your class synchronously or you can choose one or more questions for students to



answer in a short written or video response if you are meeting non-synchronously.

1. Describe how Swimmy was different from the other fish. Are the differences internal, external, or both?
2. How did Swimmy's differences end up helping him?
3. What did the red fish and Swimmy do to scare the big black fish away?
4. What did you learn from Swimmy's story?
5. Where do you see the importance of community and teamwork in this story?

Underwater Illustrations

Using the beautiful illustrations in *Swimmy* as inspiration, have students draw their own interpretation of the ocean that Swimmy journeyed through on his way to find a new home. Students should reference the animals and plants that Swimmy met along the way (jellyfish, lobster, seaweed, eel, etc.) in their drawings.

Teamwork!

Swimmy and the red fish had to work together as a team to come up with a solution to save themselves from the big black fish.

1. Have students think about a time that they had to solve a problem with the help of another person. Maybe they were being bullied and a teacher or parent helped them, or maybe they couldn't solve their homework assignment and their older sibling stepped in to help.
2. After students have chosen the moment they want to focus on, have them draw a picture of the problem and what they did to solve it. They can utilize any materials easily accessible at home to do so. Students should write 1-2 sentences underneath their drawing to describe the situation and how they used teamwork to solve the problem.