

The Gum Chewing Rattler

by

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Summary

This is a tall tale about a boy who is saved by his bubble gum-chewing addiction the day he is attacked by a rattlesnake.

Ideas for Family & Classroom Use

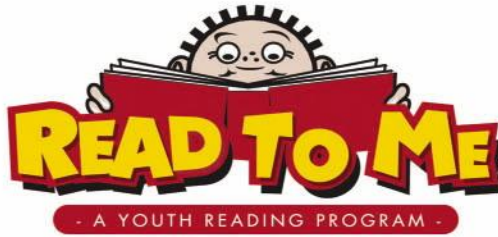
Discussion questions - encourage children to find examples from the story to document their answers.

Can you imagine having six or seven pieces of bubblegum in your mouth? Could you talk? Could you keep it a secret?

Do your parents or school have any rules about gum-chewing? If so, what are they? Would you add any rules?

Why did the boy's mom dislike his gum-chewing habit so much? Have you ever gotten gum stuck on something before? What happened?

Could this story really happen? What makes this a tall tale?



Responding to the Story

Writing

Tall Tales

What makes a tall tale so outrageous and fun? Remember that the people in tall tales are larger than life, have powers that are beyond human capacity, and tall tale heroes solve extremely difficult problems in ways that make us laugh. Sometimes tall tales are based on real people, but the tall tale stories about them have become exaggerated.

Write a tall tale together as a group. When children get the idea of how to put a tall tale together, encourage them to write their own tales. You might invite them to write a tall tale about something that might have happened in your city or state. Some ideas about writing tall tales can be found at this site:

<http://42explore.com/talltale.htm>

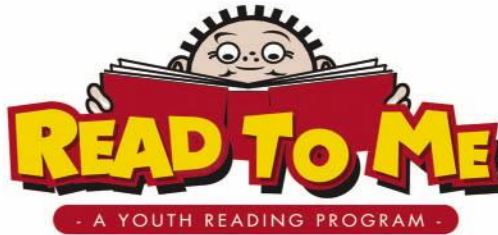
Bubble Gum

How much do you know about Bubble Gum?

Find a trivia challenge page at the following website. It includes questions to reflect upon such as, “How many sticks of gum does the average American chew each year?” <http://sciencespot.net/Media/bgumtrivia.pdf>

Find out about Walter Diemer, the inventor of bubble gum, and the history of bubble gum, here:

<http://www.ideafinder.com/history/inventions/bubblegum.htm>



Bubble gum brand contest

Bring in several different brands of bubble gum found in your area and compare them to one another. Create a simple record for children (and adults) to use to record the results that they get.

Include:

- Brand of gum?
- Number of chews it takes before a bubble can be blown?
- Is it easy, medium, or hard to blow a bubble with that brand?
- How big does the bubble become? (less than thumb-length, thumb length, pointer-finger length, width of hand or larger?)

Encourage children to compare results with others to see if a winner among the brands can be declared.

Bubble gum blowing contest

When a winning brand of bubble gum is chosen, use that kind for a bubble gum blowing contest. Given 5 tries, see who can blow the biggest bubbles in the group.

Gum removal

Have you ever tried to remove chewing gum from your clothes or your hair? It is really difficult, just ask any adult. What worked and what didn't? This site: <http://www.tipking.co.uk/tip/4451.html> , suggests that you can use things like peanut butter, mayonnaise and chocolate to remove gum from surfaces and/or hair. Using rags that gum has previously been applied to (and dried at least overnight), see if any of the remedies work. Perhaps someone in your life knows of another idea. Be sure to share that and try it out as well.

Science

Rattlesnake facts and activities

Find out true facts about rattlers and other kinds of snakes at this informational website for kids. You will also find activity sheets, songs, poems and riddles.

<http://www.kidzone.ws/lw/snakes/facts-rattlesnake.htm>