
Literature Selection: *Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge* by Mem Fox

Summary

Gordon helps his older friend, Miss Nancy, when he learns that she has lost her memory.

Suggested Activities

- Making Memories -- Meeting Seniors
- Interviewing Seniors--Writing a News Story
- Journal -- Friendship Memories I'd Hate to Lose
- Making Thank You Notes

Making Memories

If your school is close to a senior's home, arrange for your students to be paired off with a senior for a meeting. Prepare the students for the meeting by discussing what types of behaviors and attitudes will help them make friends with the seniors.

Interviewing Seniors¹

Have students spend time in class creating a list of interview questions (7-10) to ask their new friend in order to learn specifics about the senior's life. Discuss what types of questions would be appropriate to ask in the interview. Discuss interview behavior and the importance of listening to the interviewee's responses. Have students practice interviewing one another a few times. Discuss how it feels to be the interviewer and how it feels to be the interviewee. Perform the interviews with the senior citizens. Have students write news stories about their senior friends using the information they have gained from the interview. Consider making a class newspaper for the news stories.

Journal

Following a reading of *Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge* discuss how Miss Nancy must have felt when she was losing her memory and how Wilfrid's collecting memories for her might have made her feel. Have students write a journal entry entitled *Friendship Memories I Would Hate to Lose*. Also, encourage students to respond to the interviews and the experiences they shared with their senior friend.

Making Thank You Notes

Have students construct thank you notes and cards for the senior citizens who took the time to meet with them. Students may also want to include a copy of the news story they wrote about the senior based on the interview.

¹ For additional information on interviewing refer to *Language Arts Activities for Children, 3rd ed.*, by Donna Norton.

Additional Literature Suggestions

***Mr. Silver & Mrs. Gold* by Dale Fink**

The characters develop a friendship that eases their loneliness.

***The Gift* by Helen Coutant**

When Anna's elderly friend suddenly goes blind, Anna describes what she has seen during the day in hopes that Nana Marie can "see" what Anna has seen too.