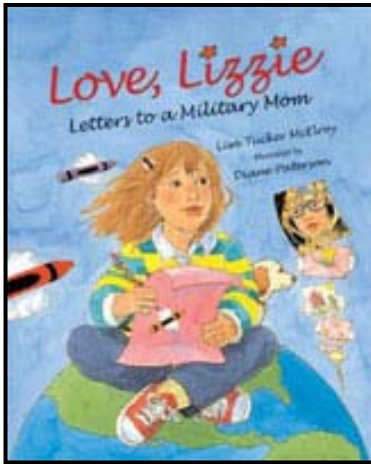
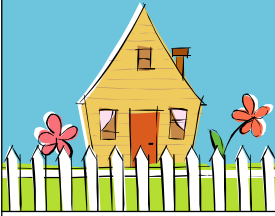


LOVE LIZZIE:

LETTERS TO A MILITARY MOM

Lesson Plan



BACKGROUND

This story is about nine year old girl named Lizzie. She misses her mom terribly, because her mom was deployed overseas. To stay close to her mother, Lizzie writes her mom a series of letters, which make up the content of the story. Her letters range from sharing events that happen in her life and everyday stories from home. Lizzie's letters are followed by maps, so her mom can better see what she is talking about. Lizzie struggles with life away from her mom, but her dad remains a helpful role-model in her life. Eventually, Lizzie's mom ends up sending Lizzie a map in the mail. When Lizzie reads and follows the map, she finds that the map leads her to her mom, who surprises her at home.

WHAT TO DO

Activity 1: Read Love Lizzie: Letters to a Military Mom and Discuss

Make sure you read it out loud. Have your youth follow along and look at the illustrations as you go. This way, they'll gain a visual understanding of what is being read. In this story, the maps and visuals play a huge role in understanding.

After reading, ask your youth to tell you about the map they loved best and why. You can also ask them what they thought would happen when Lizzie received the letter from Mrs. Collins. Allow your youth time to share their feelings and ask questions about the story.

Activity 2: Create a Memory Book

When a loved one leaves home, whether it is for deployment, a trip or a job, missing them comes naturally. When we miss someone, it helps to talk about our feelings and record those moments we want to share with our loved one when they come back. Keeping a memory book is not only a great way to communicate feelings, but a great way to remember things. Memory books can be more than just for words; they can hold pictures and maps, too.

First, help your youth stack their paper bags so that the bottom flaps are facing up. Switch off the direction the bags are facing so that the bottom bag flap is on the left, the middle bag flap is on the right and the top bag flap faces left again. Once the bags are stacked correctly, have your youth fold the bags in half.

Next, on the side where the folded edge sits, help your youth make five hole-punches near the edge. Once the holes are made, your youth can feed ribbons or string into the holes and tie them together.

Visual Example on the Next Page

Life Skills:

- How to communicate visually and verbally
- How to cope with difficult situations
- How to think creatively

Grade Levels:

- K-4th Grade

Supplies Needed:

- 3 Small Paper Lunch Bags
- Hole-Puncher
- Variety of Ribbon or String
- Markers/Crayons/Colored Pencils
- Glue Stick
- Writing Paper
- Pencil

Do Ahead:

- Read the book ahead of time to become familiar with the story



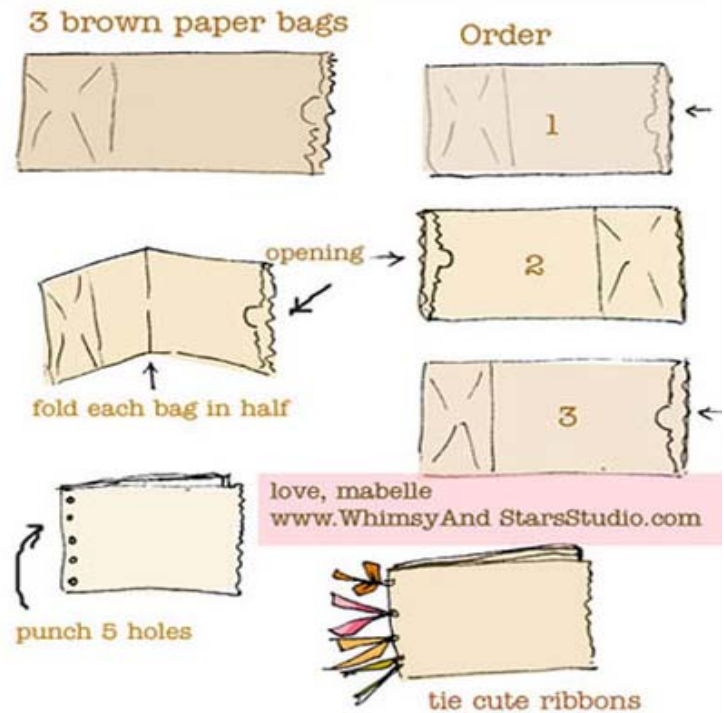
WHAT TO DO CONT'D...

Once your youth has completed their bag journal, they can decorate the front cover however they please.

Inside, the pages of the bag are perfect for map drawing, picture making or photo pasting. If they need inspiration, have your youth reflect back on some of the maps from the story.

Your youth can write memories/thoughts on the pages the book created or on a separate piece of paper. If they choose to write on a separate piece of paper, they can fold up those memories/thoughts and put them inside the pages of their memory book where the bags open.

Now, with a memory book, your youth will have the freedom to creatively record their memories to share with their loved one. If pages run out, new memory books can always be created!



TALK IT OVER

Any time after reading the story or completing the activity, time should be set aside to talk with your youth about the military and deployment. Here are some suggestive questions you may want to cover:

- ★ What do you remember most about the person you miss so much?
- ★ What should you do when you have a question about the military?
- ★ What are some of the ways life is harder without the person you love there?
- ★ What can you do when you miss your loved one so much?
- ★ What memories would be great to record?
- ★ When Lizzie's mom was gone, her dad took care of her. Who are you thankful to have taking care of you while your loved one is gone?

These are just suggestions, but it is important to discuss how your youth feels about deployment. They need to know that it is okay to miss someone, and they can cope with the pain by preparing for their loved ones return.

This lesson plan is meant to ease the pain one goes through when missing somebody who has been deployed. It is our hope that it will help your youth to positively deal with deployment, and for families to grow closer together.

