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# MY LIFE WITH THE WAVE

Based on the story by: Octavio Paz

Translated and adapted by: Catherine Cowan

Illustrated by: Mark Buehner

Publisher: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard

## THEME:

An ocean is a wondrous thing, filled with amazing animals, plants, and... waves! But there is a place for everything, and everything has its place.

## PROGRAM SUMMARY:

*My Life With The Wave*, a sheer magical tale about a boy who brings home a wave, is narrated by Broadway actor Scott Irby-Ranniar. LeVar explores the beauty and fascination of water, the rhythm and energy of waves, and visits people who are fulfilling the dream to save endangered sea life.

## TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION:

Discuss experiences visiting the ocean. Students who have never been to the ocean might talk about beaches along other bodies of water they have visited.

Pose the question that LeVar asked: "What would you bring home that's absolutely crazy?" Discuss some of the problems that might occur as a result of having this unique "guest."

The family in the story froze the wave and returned it to the ocean as the solution to their problem. Brainstorm other possible solutions.

Invite students to share experiences with new responsibilities or acquisitions that seemed like a good idea at the time, but later developed into more than they had anticipated.

## CURRICULUM EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

Recalling the story, make a two-column chart detailing the advantages and disadvantages of having a wave as a houseguest. For fun, record the students' ideas on blue paper cut like a wave.

As a class, compose the sequel to this story that is suggested by the boy's decision to bring a cloud home from vacation the following year. Use the final illustration of the book as a springboard for generating ideas. Record the students' ideas on a chart, edit the story together, divide the text into segments, and print or type the segments on blank sheets of paper. Give each student a piece of the story to illustrate, then bind the pages into a book.

Provide a shallow pan of water and a variety of materials for students to experiment with making waves. Make the activity entirely "free exploration," but include objects to drop in the water (small stones, coins), to trail through the water (a spoon, a small boat), and to wave across the water (cardboard, paper). Have students discuss the results of their wave-making experiments.

Brainstorm a list of bodies of water (e.g., oceans, seas, lakes, rivers, etc.) with which students are familiar. Locate these places on appropriate maps (world, U.S., state, etc.) and pinpoint them with a "flag" in the shape of a water droplet. As students encounter new places in their reading or research, add the names to the list and mark the sites on the maps.

Enlist the aid of the school library media specialist in helping students research waves and tides and how they are formed.

Pair students' imaginations with the importance of preserving our waters by having them make a bulletin board, "How to Take Care of Your Wave." Encourage them to be creative in developing a set of "Do's" and "Don'ts" for the "care and feeding" of a wave. Invite humorous as well as serious ideas (e.g., "Don't feed trash to your wave."). Have them make signs for their pieces of advice, draw pictures, and locate photographs of oceans, waves, etc. for the bulletin board.

Have students paint watercolor seascapes. Play music to inspire the painting, such as Debussy's *La Mer* or Handel's *Water Music*. Discuss what the music makes them think of or how it makes them feel.

Although forms of life cannot exist without it, water can threaten our lives. Have students watch newspapers and television reports for news about the dangers of water, such as floods and tidal waves. Invite them to bring in articles and pictures and discuss how people deal with water out of control.

Using students' ideas from the discussion question (see above) about something "absolutely crazy" they might bring home, have them write and illustrate their own "My Life with the \_\_\_\_\_" books.

## RELATED THEMES:

water cycle  
ocean habitat

## RELATED READING RAINBOW PROGRAMS:

Program #67 — Jack, The Seal And The Sea  
Program #88 — Seashore Surprises  
Program #86 — Come A Tide  
Program #61 — Dive To The Coral Reefs  
Program #83 — Sam The Sea Cow

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**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:**

Octavio Paz has published more than 30 volumes of poetry and prose and is the recipient of nearly every major literary prize, including the Nobel Prize in 1990. He lives in Mexico City with his wife and several cats.

**ABOUT THE TRANSLATOR:**

When Catherine Cowan was a little girl, she asked her grandmother to bring her a cloud. That marked the beginning of her wonder-filled imagination. She makes her home in Long Beach, California, with her husband and, like Octavio Paz, several cats.

**ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR:**

Mark Buehner has enjoyed drawing all his life and began painting as a teenager. He is the illustrator of the READING RAINBOW feature book, *The Adventures of Taxi Dog*. He and his wife, Caralyn, with whom he has collaborated on several books, live with their children in Salt Lake City.

**BOOKS REVIEWED BY CHILDREN:****WATERDANCE**

by Thomas Locker (Harcourt Brace)

**HERE IS THE CORAL REEF**

by Madeleine Dunphy, illus. by Tom Leonard (Hyperion)

**OUR WET WORLD**

by Sneed B. Collard III, illus. by James M. Needham (Charlesbridge)

**SUPPLEMENTARY BOOKLIST:****THE MAGIC SCHOOL BUS ON THE OCEAN FLOOR**

by Joanna Cole, illus. by Bruce Degen (Scholastic)

**HOW THE SEA BEGAN: A TAINO MYTH**

by George Crespo (Clarion)

**THE EARTH IS MOSTLY OCEAN**

by Allan Fowler (Children's Press)

**THE OCEANS ATLAS**

by Anita Gamera, illus. by Luciano Corbella (DK)

**DOWN AT THE BOTTOM OF THE DEEP DARK SEA**

by Rebecca C. Jones, illus. by Virginia Wright-Frierson (Bradbury)

**SEA SONGS**

by Myra Cohn Livingston, illus. by Leonard Everett Fisher (Holiday House)

**THE BOY WHO WAS FOLLOWED HOME**

by Margaret Mahy, illus. by Steven Kellogg (Dial)

**OCEANS**

by Don P. Rothaus (Child's World)

**OCEAN DAY**

by Shelley Rottner & Ken Kreisler, photos by Shelley Rottner (Macmillan)

**OCEANS**

by Seymour Simon (Morrow)

**POWERFUL WAVES**

by D. M. Souza (Carolrhoda)

