Too Tall Houses

Written and Illustrated by Gianna Marino
Viking, 2012

Rabbit and Owl are good friends and neighbors until one day Rabbit’s garden grows too tall and Owl can’t see the forest. Owl solves the problem by making his house taller, but now Owl’s home blocks the Rabbit’s garden from the sun. The two neighbors keep building taller and taller houses until both homes are blown down. What will they do now? Luckily they have just enough material left to build a new home – a small one, perfect for the two friends to share.

About the Author & Illustrator
Gianna Marino has traveled all over the world and worked in a variety of creative fields, including children’s toy design. After leaving the corporate world, she embarked on painting, illustrating and writing books. In addition to children’s books, Ms. Marino writes and illustrates articles for travel and leisure magazines.

Accompanying Activities

1. **Science: Animal Habitats**
   After reading the book, discuss the fiction features of *Too Tall Houses*. Investigate the habitats of rabbits and owls using PebbleGo™ Animals (subscription required) or a similar database. Students can compare the houses in the story to the habitats of jackrabbits and owls.
   
   - Organisms and Environments - The student knows that plants and animals have basic needs and depend on the living and nonliving things around them for survival.
     
     - Examine evidence that living organisms have basic needs such as food, water, and shelter for animals and air, water, nutrients, sunlight, and space for plants
       TEKS: SCIENCE 112.11 (b) 9 A
     
     - Identify the basic needs of plants and animals
       TEKS: SCIENCE 112.13 (b) 9 A
     
     - Identify factors in the environment, including temperature and precipitation, that affect growth and behavior such as migration, hibernation, and dormancy of living things
       TEKS: SCIENCE 112.13 (b) 9 B
2. English Language Arts and Reading: Fables
After reading *Too Tall Houses*, share Jerry Pinkney’s wordless picture book *The Lion and the Mouse*. Discuss the similarities between the stories, using the accompanying interactive whiteboard file. Use student responses to identify the elements of a fable and the lesson.

- **Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Theme and Genre** - Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about theme and genre in different cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.
  - Discuss the big idea (theme) of a well-known folktale or fable and connect it to personal experience
    
    TEKS: *ELAR 110.11 (b) 6 B*
  
  - Connect the meaning of a well-known story or fable to personal experiences
    
    TEKS: *ELAR 110.12 (b) 7 A*
  
  - Identify moral lessons as themes in well-known fables, legends, myths, or stories
    
    TEKS: *ELAR 110.13 (b) 6 A*

**Companion Books**

**Other Books by Gianna Marino**

**Fables**

**Internet Resources**
Author Website
http://www.giannamarino.com/books/