



**SOUTH DAKOTA STATE
UNIVERSITY EXTENSION**

Growing Active
READERS

Jingle Dancer

Target Age: K to 3rd Grade

About the book:

Jingle Dancer

by Cynthia Leitich Smith

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Jenna wants to dance at the next powwow. She needs to have bells that jingle on her dress before she can dance. Jenna gets help from her family to find jingles for her dress before the powwow.

Key Ideas

By the time you finish this discussion guide, your child will be able to **point to examples** of these key ideas in the book you read and discuss **real-life examples**, too. Use these definitions to explain the ideas. We have also included ways children can show they are ready to use them in their daily lives.

1. **Solving problems** – When problems come up, we try to deal with them. Solving problems means finding what works best for us and taking action to make things better.

How kids show it: They can describe problems and come up with a few ideas to make things better.

2. **Sharing and borrowing** – There are two kinds of sharing: Something shared that does not have to be returned or paid for is a gift. Something borrowed must be returned.

How kids show it: They can explain the difference between lending and giving something away.

3. **Flexibility** – It's important to learn from mistakes. We can change our plans and try something new if our first idea isn't working.

How kids show it: They can talk about a time when their plans didn't turn out how they wanted and what they did instead.

Something to think about

First, read the book yourself and think about these ideas:

- When we have problems, we can look for a solution. Jenna wants to dance in the powwow. Jenna's dress does not have any jingles and she does not have time to make any jingles before the powwow.
- Jenna needs more than one row of jingles. Jenna turns to her family and neighbor to borrow jingles from them for her dress.
- Jenna needed to be flexible for her dress to be ready for the powwow. Jenna also needed help from others to meet her goal.

Something to talk about

Before you begin to read the story with your child, look at the cover of the book together. Ask what the story might be about. As you read the story with your child, talk about these ideas:

- Jenna told her grandma that she wanted to jingle dance. What was Grandma's response?
- How did Jenna learn to jingle dance?
- While Jenna was practicing, she knew her dress would not jingle because she had no bells. How do you think Jenna felt?
- How did Jenna get her first row of jingles? Why didn't she ask for all the jingles to make her dress?
- When Jenna got her second row of jingles from Mrs. Scott, did Jenna have enough jingles?

What did she do next?

- Jenna's cousin Elizabeth let Jenna borrow some jingles. Did Jenna have enough jingles yet? What do you think will happen next?
- When Jenna went to her grandma's house, she was thinking about what to do to get the last row of jingles for her dress. When she opened the door at Grandma Wolfe's house, what did she find on the floor? What was special about those moccasins?
- How did Jenna get her fourth row of jingles?
- Jenna got to dance at the powwow. What did Jenna think about while she was dancing?

Something to do

What's the difference? (Ages 4+): In this story, Jenna was given the bells and was not asked to return them. You can help children understand the difference between sharing and borrowing. When your child asks to use an item, talk about whether it's sharing or borrowing. For example. Paper given for coloring will be shared and not returned because it's used. But a pair of scissors used to cut out a picture is borrowed and needs to be returned so that other people can use it. What rules does your family have for sharing toys or clothes with friends? Do you treat a book borrowed from the library or school differently than a book you own?

Puzzles (Ages 4+): Putting puzzles together helps children learn problem-solving skills. Kids learn which pieces go where, by looking for clues on each piece, and by trial and error. You can make your own puzzles by drawing a picture together on sturdy paper. You can also use pictures from magazines. Then cut or tear the paper up into different size pieces – bigger pieces for younger children and smaller pieces for older children. As you put the puzzles back together, talk about how you decide what pieces fit together. Is it the shape or the color of the piece what other clues do you use?

It all adds up! (Ages 4+): There are many different coins you can use to make 50 cents. You can use two quarters, five dimes, 50 pennies, and so on. You can help children learn about coins and be flexible in their thinking by playing games to show that coins have different values. It is helpful to use real coins or else use pictures of coins. With younger children, begin with the number of pennies it takes to make a nickel or dime. Or quarter. For older children, you can add up higher amounts, like a dollar, and use a paper bill along with coins.