



# Bobby's Books

Book: Knots on a Counting Rope

Possible Themes: Illness of a grandparent, lessons learned from loved one, memories

Publisher, Publishing Date and ISBN Number: Henry Holt & Co., 1997, 0-805-05479-0

Author: Bill Martin and John Archambault

Illustrator: Ted Rand

Recommended Age of Child: Ages 5-12

## Description of Book:

Grandfather uses a counting rope to tell his grandson his birth story. "Once there was a boy child," Grandfather begins, and he tells his grandson about his birth and struggle for life. Yet Grandfather gently underscores the boy's blindness, showing how the boy overcame it to do things that others thought impossible, such as training a horse. The boy interjects throughout the story, explaining why he did certain things, such as Rainbow, his horse, becoming his eyes. Each of Grandfather's stories on the counting rope allows the boy to reflect and to grow as he continues to overcome the challenge of being blind. When Grandfather finishes tying the knots on the counting rope, the boy will know his own stories.

## Quote from Book:

"I always feel strong when you are with me, Grandfather. *I will not always be with you, Boy.* No, Grandfather, don't ever leave me. What will I do without you? *You will never be alone, Boy. My love, like the strength of blue horses, will always surround you.*"

## Lesson Plan Ideas:

### Storytelling

Since storytelling is an important tradition to different cultures, including the Native Americans, assign a group of three students to retell the story. Have one tell the beginning, one the middle, and one the end.

### Creating a Counting Rope Story

Make your own Counting Rope story. Give each child a piece of twine with enough knots tied in it to represent their ages. Have them to think about important things that they remember from their lives as they see and feel the knots on their counting rope. Have the children share their counting rope stories in their groups, then they can write about it. (Volunteers should be available to help children who need assistance).

## Materials Needed:

Book, a piece of twine for each child, writing and illustrating materials, blank booklets