



Classroom Guide for
SATURDAY AT
THE NEW YOU
 by **Barbara E. Barber**
 illustration by **Anna Rich**

Reading Level

Interest Level: Grades 1-4

Reading Level: Grades 3-4

(Reading level based on the Spache Readability Formula)

Accelerated Reader® Level/Points: 4.0/.5

Lexile Measure®: 710 AD

Scholastic Reading Counts!™: 3.1

Themes

Working Mothers, Community, Taking Children to Work

Synopsis

Saturday is Shauna's favorite day of the week, because that's the day she helps Momma at her hair salon, The New You. Shauna describes how she and Momma prepare for the day's customers—stacking clean towels, donning matching smocks, making fresh coffee. They're ready when the first customers arrive: Mrs. Johnson, who brings treats from her bakery; Ms. Escobar, a teacher at Shauna's school who never yells; and Tiffany Peters, a temperamental five-year-old who absolutely refuses to cooperate with Momma.

Though Shauna is a big help, Momma is the only one who gets to do the hairstyling. But when temperamental little Tiffany proves to be the toughest customer to please, it's Shauna who comes up with the perfect solution. This is a story about cooperation and sharing between a loving mother-and-daughter team.

Background

Author Barbara E. Barber first visited a hair salon when she was 11 years old and was graduating from grade school. It was from her memories of this occasion that *Saturday at the New You* came about. As she began her writing, Barber was looking to convey that everyone has beautiful hair. But as she continued, her message began to evolve and include "the attachment this little girl, Shauna, has for her mother and the joy of learning about what her mother does."

To prepare for the illustrations for *Saturday at the New You*, Anna Rich returned to her childhood hair salon—Ms. L's Beauty Room. She took photos of many salon

items, such as the hairdryers, to use as reference for her illustrations. Another technique she used was making faces into a hand-held mirror to help her capture her expressions on the page.

BEFORE READING

Prereading Focus Questions

Before students read the story, you might want them to discuss one of the following questions as a motivation for reading.

1. Do you have a special time you spend with a parent or older relative? How is it special?
2. Does your mother work? Do you ever help with your mother or father's work? Would you want to do the same kind of work as your mother or father? Why?
3. Do you have a favorite activity that you like to do on Saturdays?

Setting A Purpose For Reading

Have students examine the cover of the book and the first few pages. Encourage them to speculate about the girl on the cover. Who is she? What is The New You? Who are the people they see in the illustrations? Tell students to think of some questions they have about the story. Suggest that they think of these questions as they read the book.

AFTER READING

Discussion Questions

1. Do you think that Shauna and her mother make a good team? Why or why not?
2. Do you know anyone who owns their own business? Do you know anyone who works at home?
3. Not all jobs are for pay. If your mother or father does not work outside of your home, what jobs does she or he do as a homemaker? Do you have to be paid money for a job for it to be an important job? What about people who work as volunteers (e.g., at a soup kitchen, as a scout master or troop leader, etc.)? Are these jobs important?
4. Would you like to own your own business one day? What kind of business would you like to have? What is the best part about being your own boss? What is the worst part?

Reader's Response Journal

To promote active reading, you might want to have students keep a reader's response journal. The journal will help students personalize what they are reading.

Ask students to write their reactions to the people and events in the story: Does Shauna's Saturday seem like fun? Why or why not? Would you like to work with your mother or father as Shauna does? Why or why not?

Shauna finds herself saying to customers who have just had their hair done, "It's a new you," just like her mother does. Have you ever found yourself saying or doing things that remind you of either of your parents? What is your reaction to Tiffany? Would you have let Tiffany play with your toys as Shauna did? Why do you think Shauna shared her dolls with Tiffany?

ESL Teaching Strategies

You might want to consider the following activities to engage students who speak English as a second language:

1. Give students the opportunity to act out the story for the class. Suggest that students bring in props to the classroom, such as dolls, hairbrushes, and combs. (The more extroverted students might be chosen to act out the roles of Shauna, Tiffany, and Shauna's mother. Other students might serve as customers in the shop.)
2. Let the students work together as they read the story. They might take turns reading, pausing from time to time to ask one another questions about words or sentences that are confusing.
3. Ask the students to cooperatively compile a list of adjectives that describe hair, such as short, long, straight, brown, etc.

Other Writing Activities

Students may choose to write on one of the following:

1. Pretend that you have just opened a hair salon. Now you need to hire stylists. Write an advertisement describing the job and what skills and abilities are necessary.
2. Pretend you are Shauna. Write in your diary about another *Saturday at the New You*.

Be sure to remind students to save their work in their writing portfolios.

INTERDISCIPLINARY ACTIVITIES

In order to integrate students' reading experiences with other subject areas, you might want to have students complete some of these activities.

Social Studies

Hair stylists work in a service industry. Explain to students that service industries provide services for people and businesses. Brainstorm other service-related occupations. List them on chart paper. Discuss how each of these professions contributes to our society. Survey students to find out how many of their parents work in service-related jobs.

Mathematics

Have students make up a price list for The New You. Tell them to include the cost of a haircut, a permanent wave, a manicure, hair coloring, and braiding. Students can compare prices, and add totals for a number of services.

Also, they can make up bills for customers using a variety of services. Other class members can add up the totals. Students might also calculate the change each customer would receive from a \$10, \$20, or \$50 dollar bill.

Science

1. Have students do some research on hair. Tell students to photocopy a picture of hair growing from its follicle or make a drawing of it. Ask them to label their picture. This picture will be the cover for a booklet on hair. Tell students to find out all they can about hair and write a booklet on the subject. Their booklets should answer such questions as: what makes naturally curly hair? What foods promote healthy hair? Why do some people go bald? What happens to hair when it is dyed?
2. Discuss the different purposes that hair serves, such as warmth, filtering dirt or germs, beauty. The class can even proceed to discuss the uses of hair among different animals (e.g., warmth, camouflage, sensory guidance, attraction).

Art

Have students design a series of different hairstyles for Tiffany. Suggest to students that they give each style a name.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND ILLUSTRATOR

Barbara E. Barber is the author of *Allie's Basketball Dream*, also published by Lee & Low Books. She has published over 60 poems. Her work has appeared in major newspapers such as *The New York Daily News*, literary magazines such as *The Writer*, and anthologies such as *Lions, Lizards and Ladybugs*. She lives in New York City with her husband.

Anna Rich, who says today she "can't even eat without a book in my hand," has illustrated many picture books including *Joshua's Masai Mask*, and a contributing artist to *America: My Land, Your Land, Our Land*, both published by Lee & Low Books. She is a graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design. She lives in Elmont, New York with her husband.

Awards & Reviews

Children's Books of the Year Selection, Bank Street College

"Barber makes readers feel as if they have really spent the day with Shauna and Momma, and she makes a day spent working hard at a beauty parlor seem very appealing. Particularly touching is the end, when Shauna, who is both real and likable, brushes her exhausted mom's hair. Rich's paintings are just right, matching the warm story with warm, soft colors, and the depiction of the African American cast has an expansive spirit." –*The Bulletin Of The Center For Children's Books*

"Barber, a poet and first-time children's author, brings bountiful atmosphere and sensuality to the text...y skilled in the art of ambiance, Rich paints with joie de vivre, imparting kindness to every face. Story and illustrations overflow with familial tenderness and neighborly love."—*Publishers Weekly*

Resources on the Web

Learn more about ***Saturday at the New You***

http://www.leeandlow.com/books/102/pb/saturday_at_the_new_you

Also by Barbara Barber:

Allie's Basketball Dream

http://www.leeandlow.com/books/9/hc/allie_s_basketball_dream

Also illustrated by Anna Rich

Joshua's Masai Mask

http://www.leeandlow.com/books/73/pb/joshua_s_masai_mask

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