

# Traveling With Miss Rumphius

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Promoting Geographic Knowledge Through Literature Workshop  
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**Background Literary Preview:** *Miss Rumphius*, a delightful piece of literature by Barbara Cooney, takes the reader on an adventurous trip all over the world and teaches an inspiring message. The book is written from the voice of the grandniece of Alice Rumphius as she remembers the important values taught to her as a young girl. Alice wishes to travel to faraway places and live by the sea, just like her beloved grandfather. However, her sage grandfather stresses that she must also make a commitment to make the world more beautiful. Miss Rumphius fulfills her three goals in her own way and in her own time. Readers come away from this writing with a renewed sense of journey, self-actualization, and dedication to better the world.

**Lesson Overview:** Students will cooperatively read *Miss Rumphius* predicting, discussing, analyzing, and connecting the literature to their own lives. Groups will research, collect, and document information about world regions.

**Connection to Curriculum:** Language Arts, Social Studies, and Art

**Suggested Grade Level:** Grades 2 to 4

**National Geography Standards:**

Essential Element: Places and Regions

Standard #4: The physical and human characteristics of places.

Essential Element: Human Systems

Standard #12: The processes, patterns, and functions of human settlement.

**Geography Themes:** Location, Place, Human Environment Interaction, Movement, and Regions

**IL State Learning Standards:** English Language Arts--1.B, 1.C, 2.A, 2.B, 3.C, 4.A, 5.A, 5.B, 5.C and Social Science 17.A

**Topics/Themes:** Travel, Family Relationships, Making a Difference in the World

**Time:** Four to five 40-minute class periods

**Materials:**

- Classroom set of *Miss Rumphius* by Barbara Cooney
- Reciprocal teaching card sets—one card set per group (see attached master—cut one question per card)
- Reader response journals—one notebook/journal per student
- 12" x 12" square white construction paper—one per student
- Crayons, colored pencils, and/or markers
- Scissors—one pair per student
- Glue
- Atlases, travel guides, encyclopedias, geography computer software (like *Encarta*, *World Book Encyclopedia*, *Cartopedia*, *National Geographic Society Picture Atlas of the World—Revised Edition*, etc.), and various other world regional resource books.
- Computer with Internet access (See references for websites.)

- Optional: *Microsoft Office PowerPoint* program

**Teacher Background:** Knowledge of author Barbara Cooney

**Objectives:**

- Students will activate prior knowledge and predict outcomes for a story.
- Students will silently read in groups making predictions, questions, summaries, and wonder statements (using reciprocal teaching).
- Students will relate their own experiences/thoughts with those of the main character in the story by writing in a reader response journal.
- Students will create a triorama (a three dimensional story scene) that will depict the students' extension for the story.
- Students will research and document facts about specific world regions.

**Procedure:**

1. As an opening, the teacher will show the cover of *Miss Rumphius* to the class and ask for story element predictions.
2. To make possible connections, the teacher will ask, "What does the cover remind you of?"  
Listen to student responses.
3. Give a short author talk about Barbara Cooney.
4. Divide the class into heterogeneous groups of approximately five students.
5. Tell each group that they are to read *Miss Rumphius* using the reciprocal teaching card sets.
6. Instruct the class that when each group is finished reading, the students from the group should  
respond in their reader response journals to the following questions (written on

a chart or

blackboard): 1. “Where would you like to live when you grow up?” 2. “What would you like to

do when you are older?” and 3. “What would you do to make the world more beautiful?”

7. During the next class period, ask for a few student volunteers to read their responses connecting to the *Miss Rumphius* theme. Each volunteer could sit in the “author’s chair” to read the response. Other students may ask questions or offer comments after each response.
8. Tell the class that today they will be making a triorama, using their responses from their journals. Pass out instruction sheets for the trioramas. (See attached.)
9. Demonstrate each step for the triorama as the class constructs each part.
10. Offer assistance when needed.
11. Share the finished products and relate back to *Miss Rumphius*.
12. For the next two-three class periods, students will again work in their original cooperative groups.
13. Each group will become a “travel agency” that needs to design a “Traveling With Miss Rumphius” travel brochure/itinerary that follows the travels in the book. Group members may collect information from the provided atlases, encyclopedias, software, etc. The brochure should include the following for each region traveled: mode of transportation to travel there, what clothes, supplies, or travel tips for the climate, name of country and continent, at least one major tourist attraction, and landform of the area.

14. If desired, the group members may consist of different roles: recorder, researchers, computer experts, etc. The instructor should act as a facilitator.
15. Groups should be encouraged to be as creative and informative as possible.
16. On the last day of the lesson, group members should present their version of “Traveling With Miss Rumphius”.
17. Optional: The brochures/itineraries may be documented on *Microsoft PowerPoint*.

**Assessment:** Grade each triorama, reader response journals, and group brochure presentations. Informal assessment may include observational notes.

**Extensions:**

Language Arts—Write a poem about a better world. Design and write a postcard from each region visited. Have each group make a “television commercial” promoting their brochure. Pretend you are Miss Rumphius and write a travel journal (see attached travel journal sheet).

**References:**

Cooney, Barbara. *Miss Rumphius*. Puffin Books USA, Inc., New York, New York, 1982. ISBN 0140505393

Grupper, Jonathan. *Destination: Rain Forest*, National Geographic School Publishing, 2002.

<http://www.nationalgeographic.com>

<http://www.geography.about.com>

<http://nationalgeographic.com/education/alliancelinks>

# Reciprocal Teaching

Linda Hoyt

#1

Please get ready to read to \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Name the page or a bold face heading)

#2

I predict that \_\_\_\_\_.  
Does anyone else have a prediction?

#3

Please read silently. (The group could choose to occasionally read in unison  
but never in round robin format)  
Remember to look for interesting words and ideas.

#4

Are there any words you thought were interesting or  
that you had questions about? Please give us the  
page number.

#5

Are there any ideas you thought were interesting or  
had questions about? Did you have any "I wonder  
questions?"

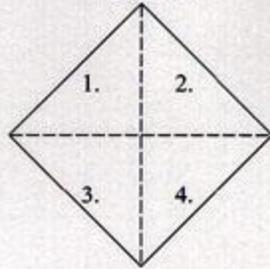
#6

This section of the reading was about \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Summarize for your group.)  
Does anyone have something to add to the  
summary?



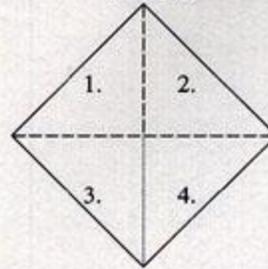
## MAKING A TRIORAMA

### STEP 1.



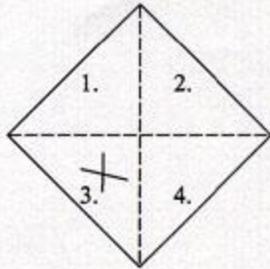
Fold both sides of 12 x 12 inch paper in half diagonally.

### STEP 2.



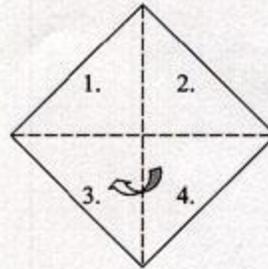
Cut between panel 3 and 4.

### STEP 3.

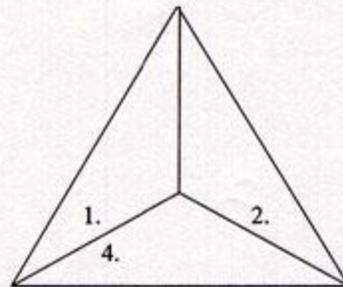


In panel 1, draw a scene to depict where you would like to live. In panel 2, draw what you would like to do when you get older. In panel 4, draw what you would do to make the world a better place. Be careful to turn panel 4 before drawing so that it is drawn in the right direction. Note: Panel 3 is left blank.

### STEP 4.



Turn and glue panel 4 on top of panel 3.



Sample