

**3rd Grade Curriculum Guide Book Summary**

**Book/DVD title: The Velveteen Rabbit**

**Author:** Margery Williams

**Main characters:** Velveteen Rabbit, Skin Horse, the boy, nursery fairy

**Executive summary:** The love of a young boy for his toy, the Velveteen Rabbit, turns the toy into a real rabbit.

**Detailed summary:** Once there was a stuffed toy, a Velveteen Rabbit, who was a Christmas gift for a young boy. Right away the boy loved him, until he opened his other presents, which were more modern, expensive mechanical toys. After that the Velveteen Rabbit spent all his time stored in the toy cupboard. The other toys snubbed the Velveteen Rabbit. They pretended they were real and certainly much better than the Velveteen Rabbit, whom they thought was common and old fashioned. The only toy that was kind to the Velveteen Rabbit was the Skin Horse, the oldest toy in the nursery. The skin horse was wise and had seen many mechanical toys arrive only to be discarded after their fancy parts broke.

One day the Velveteen Rabbit asked the Skin Horse what “Real” was. The skin horse told him, “It’s a thing that happens to you when a child loves you a long, long time, not just to play with, but REALLY loves you, then you become Real.” The Skin Horse tells Rabbit that it takes a long time to become Real. That was why the fancy mechanical toys couldn’t become Real; they never lasted that long. To become Real meant your fur was rubbed off, you might even lose an eye or whiskers.

One night, Nana grabbed the Rabbit from the cupboard and gave him to the boy to sleep with. For many nights after that, the boy slept with the Velveteen Rabbit. At first he missed his nightly talks with the Skin Horse, but soon he grew to love the time he spent snuggled in the bed with the boy. The boy would talk to him, play games with him and hug him tightly all night. C Continued on Back

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The Rabbit was happy. He didn’t even realize his fur was getting rubbed off in places. His seams were ripping and the pink on his nose was almost completely rubbed off. In the spring and summer the Rabbit played in the garden with the boy. Once after being left outside, the Rabbit was wet and dirty, but the boy still loved him. When Nana asked why he loved the old toy so much. The boy insisted that the Rabbit was not a toy. He was Real. Rabbit was very happy. Now he knew what the Skin Horse was talking about.

One day when they played together in the woods near the house, the boy put the Rabbit in a pile of leaves and sticks. While Rabbit waited for the boy to return, he saw two live rabbits. The Velveteen Rabbit didn’t know what they were. He thought they were some kind of mechanical toy. The live rabbits wanted the Velveteen Rabbit to play with them. When they came closer they discovered he didn’t have any hind legs. Then they shouted that he wasn’t a Real rabbit. The Velveteen Rabbit said, “I am Real. The boy said so!” When the boy returned, the real rabbits ran away. Time passed and the Velveteen Rabbit became even more worn and ragged. He lost his whiskers and his color faded, but the boy loved him anyway. To the boy he was the most beautiful Rabbit ever.

Then the boy got very, very sick. He had scarlet fever. Doctors and nurses came into the room to care for him. Rabbit wanted him to get better, so they could play together again. When no one was around, Rabbit would whisper into the boy’s ear all the fun things they would do.

Then the boy got better and he was able to get up and walk around again. The boy went to the seaside for fresh air. While he was gone the Doctor ordered all toys and bed clothes to be burned. The Rabbit was put into a bag with all the other things that were supposed to be burned. The bag was set behind the chicken house. That night, while the boy slept inside, the Velveteen Rabbit peeked out of the bag. He saw the places that he and boy used to play. He thought of all the wonderful times they had together and how much he loved being with the boy. What did it all matter, being Real, if it ended in such a horrible way, he thought. He was going to be burned and never see the boy again.

Then Rabbit cried a Real tear. Where it fell to the ground a flower grew. Out of the blossom came a tiny, beautiful fairy. She kissed him and told him she was the nursery fairy who turns the toys that children have loved into Real. She said that the Velveteen Rabbit had been Real to boy. Now she would make him a Real rabbit, like the ones he saw in the woods. The fairy told him to run and play with the other rabbits who had gathered around. But the Velveteen Rabbit didn’t know the fairy had already turned him into a Real rabbit. He remembered how he couldn’t play with the rabbits that he saw in the woods, and he was afraid to move. Then he scratched his nose with his hind leg. He was REAL! He jumped in the air and hopped off to play with the other rabbits.

The next summer when the boy was playing outside he saw two rabbits. He thought of them looked like the Velveteen Rabbit he used to have. The boy didn’t know that it actually was his old Velveteen Rabbit, who had come to visit the boy who made him Real.