

THE SQUIRRELS WHO SQUABBLED

Synopsis

Greedy squirrels Cyril and Bruce both have their sights on a very special prize: The last pine-nuts of the season. The race is on. Distracted by trying to get the nut first they soon find themselves in danger. Cyril manages to save Bruce just in time and finally they learn that teaming up and sharing is the better way, and a good friendship is worth more than any material thing.

Lessons and objectives

This story shows us that fighting over things is silly. It is much better to find a way to share and enjoy friendship. Over the next few days we will focus on how to deal with conflict when we have problems with our friends and practice working in teams.

Materials Needed

- Problem solving worksheet
- Pencils
- Conflict Resolution Poster
- Straws
- Paper plates
- Marbles
- Glue (bostick)
- Scissors
- Sheet / Blanket
- Elastic band
- Cups
- String

Discussion Questions

1. What do you think squabbling means?
2. Do you think Cyril was ready for winter? What should he have done?
3. Do you think Bruce needed that much food?
4. Why didn't the squirrels notice the bear and the bird?
5. Do you think the one nut was worth the danger?
6. What lesson did they learn in the end?

Activities:

1. Vocab - Hangman
2. Conflict resolution
3. Designing a maze
4. Practicing team work

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Lesson Focus and Goals

This story shows us that fighting over something without thinking of other ways to solve the problem will only get you into trouble. The aim of the lesson is to teach conflict resolution using 4 steps.

Materials Needed

- Problem solving worksheet
- Conflict Resolution Poster
- Pencils

Structure/Activity

Do an Introduction

In the book Cyril and Bruce both wanted the same nut. Instead of calmly discussing ways they may be able to share it they started fighting about it rushing to get to it first. This didn't work out for either of them in the end.

When we disagree with someone and we want different things to happen this is called conflict. It is a very normal part of life. We will at some point find ourselves in situations where we have conflict with another person.

Explain this concept to the children - you can use your own language to get the point across.

Get the children to think of times they had conflict in their life.

Step 1: Teach them to calm down

There are four steps to take if we want to deal with conflict properly. The first is to CALM DOWN.

Remember last term we learnt different ways to calm down. Ask the children if they remember any of the calm down techniques.

Practise the Hot cocoa breathing. Tell them to imagine they are holding a cup of hot cocoa in front of them and breathe through their nose, pretending to smell the delicious drink. Then slowly breathe out the mouth, pretending to cool off the hot cocoa. Let them continue to breathe in and out. Tell them when they have conflict they should stop and breathe like this until they are calm.

Step 2: Figure out the problem

The second step to conflict resolution is to figure out the problem. This can be tricky when you have two people who each have their own version of the story.

Put them into pairs to go through the Problem solving worksheet. Ask them to come up with a pretend situation where they would disagree or want different things to their partner.

Step 3: Remind yourself to LISTEN

Explain step 3 is to remind themselves to listen.

It is really important to stop and remind children to listen while they are working on defining the problem and before they move on to solving the problem.

One good trick that helps children become better listeners is to try to be curious. Have them ask as many questions as they can of their sibling. For example: what do you think happened, why did that make you mad, how are you feeling, etc.

Ask them to fill in the first two blocks of what the problem is and how this would make them feel.

Step 4: Finding a solution

The final step is to find a solution. In order to solve the problem the following rules need to be met:

- Both people should contribute ideas to solve the problem (Brainstorm ideas)
- In Brainstorming there are no bad ideas – remember we don't want to start arguing again!
- One or both people may need to apologize
- It's okay to ask for help if you keep falling back into arguing

Ask them to fill in the last four blocks on the worksheet.

Go over the four steps again

Remind them of the four steps again and encourage them to practise using this when they have conflict. If you can try put up the four steps in the space you host the class and when conflict comes up you can remind children to use the four steps to resolve their problem.

DESIGN A MAZE

Lesson Focus and Goals

After going over the four steps to resolving conflict the children will design their own maze. This may be a tricky task as they will need to use their logic to cut their pieces of straw to the right length to make a maze that the marble can go all the way through. Encourage them to plan well and persevere if they get stuck. You can tell them the marble will run through the maze like the nut rolled away in the book.

Materials Needed

- straws
- marbles
- paper plates
- Glue (bostick)
- pencils
- scissors

Activity

Step 1: Give them the materials

In the book the nut went rolling around into all sorts of places. To remind ourselves of the story we will make a rolling maze. Give them each 5 straws, a paper plate, a pencil, scissors and a marble

Step 2: Show them the picture

Explain that the aim is to design a maze that the marble can travel through all the way to the end.

Step 3: Plan the design

First they can plan their design using their pencil.

Step 4: Stick on the straws

Cut out the straws and stick them on to make the maze.

Step 5: Test with a marble

Test the plate with a marble



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DESIGN A MAZE stem activity for kids

Lesson Focus and Goals

The book shows us how it is always better to work together. Today we will be playing games that teach us to work together as a team. *To track the children's emotional awareness take note of the children who can easily own their mistakes and control their impulses if they get frustrated in the games.

Materials Needed

- Sheet / Blanket
- Elastic band
- cups
- string
- Scissors

Activity 1 - Birthday Line up

The aim of the game is for the children to line up according to the order their birthdays come in the year.

Step 1: Make sure all the children know their own birthdays.

Step 2: Divide them up into two teams. Each team must stand in a single file line behind each other.

Step 3: Explain that the aim of the game is to arrange themselves in a line according to their birthdays. So the people with birthdays in January will be in front and December at the back. If there are 2 children with birthdays in the same month for instance one person is on the 3rd of March and another on the 18th of March.. the person on the 3rd must be in front of the person on the 18th. The catch is that they have to do this WITHOUT SPEAKING.

The first team to finish must sit down then you can check if they have arranged themselves correctly.

Step 4: After the game is done talk about what they learnt. How it was important for them to calmly communicate and work together. Encourage the children to own their mistakes and learn from them.

Activity 2 - Flip the sheet

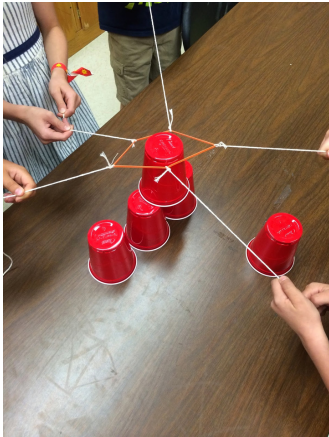
Step 1: Divide the children into two teams

Step 2: Put the sheet/blanket onto the floor and tell the first team to stand on it (they should fill up about one quarter of the space

Step 3: Tell the children that they need to flip the blanket over so they are standing on the other side WITHOUT STEPPING OFF THE BLANKET ON TO THE GROUND.

Activity 3 - Stack the cups

The aim of the game is to work together as a team to stack the cups. Divide them into 3 or 4 groups.



First get them to tie short pieces of string onto an elastic band so they each have a string to hold.



Using the elastic and strings the children must stack the cups like in the picture below.

The rules:

- No one is allowed to touch the cups with their hands
- The cups can only be moved by each person pulling on the strings and working as a team to put the elastic around them and move them.
- Stay calm and work together as a team

The first team to work together to build a cup pyramid wins.

