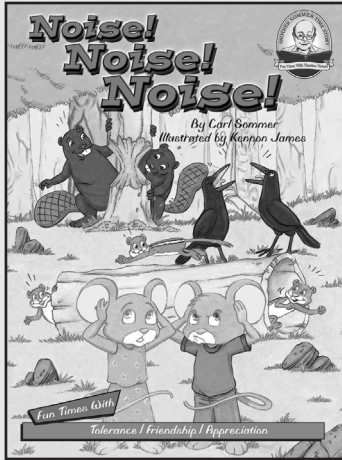# *Character Education Activities*

14. Noise! Noise! Noise!

Story **Description**

Marcus and Marcella hate the noice of the forest animals and the hard work in searching for food every day. Their eyes light up when a chipmunk tells them that the farm has no noise and lots of food.

In spite of being warned by Mama Beaver, they immediately move to the farm. Their dreams come true. But their dreams are shattered when the farmer and his wife come home. The chase is on. After barely escaping, they quickly return to their forest home. They discover that even with all the noise and hard work, the forest is a wonderful place to live.

Major **Objective**

To define and present the following virtues so they can be integrated into the life of each student:

- *Tolerance:* being willing to let other people hold opinions or follow practices different from your own
- *Friendship:* being an individual that someone likes and trusts
- *Appreciation:* valuing or regarding highly; an expression of gratitude

Story Time Interaction

Read the story, *Noise! Noise! Noise!*, and then write these three virtues on the board: tolerance, friendship, and appreciation. Define and discuss these virtues. Then discuss the main characters:

Marcus	Beavers	Chipmunks
Marcella	Papa Beaver	Farmer
Crows	Mama Beaver	Farmer's wife

Activities

Objective: To use the following activities to help reinforce the virtues of tolerance, friendship and appreciation:

Living Together

Goal: To teach students the value of tolerance

Uniqueness of Individuals: Each is different—a unique individual. These individuals may have different family history, culture, food or entertainment preferences, skills, etc. It is important to the individual and the community to be able to live in harmony and to appreciate (or make room for) each other's differences.

Community Lesson: A community is formed when a group of people (or *animals* in the case of Marcus and Marcella!) has close ties and common interests. Living in a community does not necessarily mean that each one is like each other. In a community, people have differences.

Marcus and Marcella wanted their community to be quiet. They also wanted to have their food without searching or working for it. They wanted a peaceful life of leisure. But what were they willing to trade for it? Use the next activity to help students think about what Marcus and Marcella traded before they discovered that they already had what they wanted.

What Do I Really Want?

Goal: To teach students that in life one cannot get everything one wants.

Class project: Have students bring from home catalogs that they are not using. Give each student a piece of white paper, scissors, and glue. If students did not bring a catalog, use an old catalog and give them some pages from the catalog that would interest them. They are to cut out at least six items they would like to have and glue them and the price onto their paper.

After the class is finished, tell them that they can get only three of the items. Tell the class that they are to add up the items that they chose. Ask them if they are willing to spend that money to get the items. Let them also calculate the cost of what they gave up.

Lesson: In life we have to make many choices. Marcus and Marcella traded friends, a comfortable home, and available food for possible harm, a temporary home, and safety. Was it a good trade? Were they wise to return to their old home? What did the experience do for them? They finally decided the noise and looking for food every day was not such a bad trade for the safety of their home and community.

Thumbs Up—Ways To Show Appreciation

Goal: To show students how to show appreciation of virtues in others and to encourage them to seek these virtues

Thumbs Up Game: This game is for those virtues we see in others and for those virtues we would like to have. Have 5 volunteers stand up. Ask other students to put their heads down, close their eyes, and put their thumbs up. Volunteers from behind will make their selection by touching the thumb of a classmate who displays one of the qualities or would like to have

the quality from the following list. The classmate who guesses correctly who touched him will take the volunteer's place. Explain that the fun of the game comes from keeping eyes closed and volunteers being willing to pick any student—not just best friends. This makes the game uplifting to all.

Find classmate who:	*Find classmate who wants to:*
Is kind to others	Be kind to others
Listens to others	Listen to others
Takes advice	Take advice
Is not bossy	Not be bossy
Works hard	Work hard
Can be trusted	Be trusted
Always gets his or her work done	Always get his or her work done
Does what is asked by the teacher	Do what is asked by the teacher
Is dependable	Be dependable
Is a good musician	Be a good musician
Is a good athlete	Be a good athlete
Likes to make others laugh	Make others laugh
Makes you feel special	Make others feel special

Friendship Wreath

Goal: To have classmates show appreciation for students and teachers

Project: As a gesture of friendship and appreciation for their school, have students make a heart wreath to go on the classroom door with a sign that says *"Friendship Wreath presented in honor of the teachers and students of school name."*

Have each student cut out a heart in red or pink. Use sparkles, ribbon, etc. to decorate hearts any way they wish. Arrange the hearts to overlap in a circle, put a bow at the top and mount on the door with the sign. Make hearts and wreath to fit the size of the door.

Tying It All Together

Marcus and Marcella learned the hard way that the *easy* way may not always be the *best* or the *safest* way. They almost lost their lives trying to get everything just the way they wanted. Only after a life-threatening experience did they learn to appreciate what they already had. It is important to understand that the wise thing would have been to listen to the wisdom and warnings BEFORE they decided to leave. They heard the noise, but they didn't hear the words of wisdom. We should learn from their mistake.