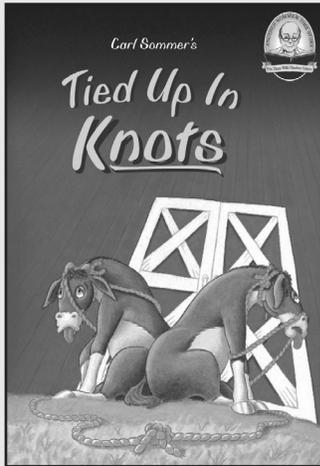


Character Education Activities

20. Tied Up In Knots



Story Description

Benny and Sally don't mind doing their farm chores and caring for their mules, but they absolutely refuse to share. Their mules, Bossy and Stiffy, imitate their owners' selfish ways by stubbornly refusing to let anyone else ride them, and fussing whenever they work together doing farm work.

Dad needs to teach the mules a lesson. He ties them together which forces them to learn to cooperate in order to eat. After much struggling, the mules learn to work together, and teach their owners Benny and Sally that sharing brings happiness.

This delightful story by Carl Sommer shows the importance of cooperation, tolerance and respect.

Major Objective

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

- **Cooperation:** working or acting together for a common purpose
- **Tolerance:** being willing to let other people hold opinions or follow practices different from your own
- **Respect:** showing high honor and regard for someone or something

Story Time Interaction

Paper Plate Sad Face

Before reading the story, *Tied Up in Knots*, provide each student with a paper plate. They are to draw a sad face on the paper plate. As you read the story, the students are to hold up the sad face every time Sally or Benny are sad. (They don't have to hold up the sad face for the two mules.)

After reading the story, *Tied Up in Knots*, write these three virtues on the board: cooperation, tolerance, and respect. Define and discuss these virtues.

1. When were Benny and Sally the happiest?

When they were sharing.

2. When were the mules Bossy and Stiffy the happiest?

When they were sharing.

Activities

Objectives: To use the following activities to help reinforce the virtues of cooperation, tolerance, and respect. To help students to learn that sharing does bring happiness.

Role Play

Goal: To teach that sharing brings happiness

Materials: Depending on the grade level, pick a game where sharing or teamwork is important to succeed, such as basketball, soccer, building with blocks, playing house with toys, etc.

Role play: Pick an activity and ask for volunteers. Pick students and let them act as those who refuse to share. Then let the same students act out the lesson of sharing together.

Lesson: Ask students: Which method brings more happiness: sharing or not sharing? Why does sharing bring happiness?

Proper Manners

Goal: To teach students to have proper manners

Role play: Divide the class into two long rows. Tell the students to bring a pen with them. Have the students face each other. Have one row ask the other row, "May I borrow your pen?" The row of students should give their pen to the other row of students. What should the proper response be? The proper response is, "Thank you." One may include the name of the person, "Thank you, Mary." or "Thank you, Mary, for the pen." Now let the other row ask for a pen. (They are to make believe they are receiving the other person's pen.) Ask the students what they should say.

Let the students go to their seats.

Questions:

1. What should you do if you yawn?
Cover your mouth.
2. What should you do if the salt you want is at the other end of the table?
Ask someone at the table, "Please, pass the salt."
3. What should you say if you accidentally bumped someone?
"Excuse me."
4. What should you say if you receive a gift from someone?
"Thank you."

Three-Legged Race

Goal: To teach students the importance of cooperation

Lesson: One of the most important factors for winning the three-legged race is to have both students fully cooperate with each other.

Preparation: This game can be played a number of ways. For all games, students are to have two legs tied together.

Running game: All students are on a line. They are to race to a line at the other end. They can also race back. The first one crossing the line is the winner.

Running game and pickup: Each student is given a spoon, paper plate, and a piece of candy. The object is to both pick up their candy and carry the candy with the spoon. Hands cannot touch the candy. If the candy falls, the candy must be picked up with the spoon only. The first to cross the finish line is the winner.

Tying It All Together

The first step in getting along with others is to respect and to be willing to communicate with each other. Encouraging students to look for positive qualities in each other is a step in that direction. Working on projects that require teamwork reinforces the importance of sharing.