

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

SOCIAL SKILLS LESSON PLAN

CASEL COMPETENCY: RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

SOCIAL SKILL: WORKING TOGETHER

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BOOK INFORMATION

Book Title: *Anansi the Spider: A Tale from the Ashanti*

Author: Gerald McDermott

Publisher: Henry Holt and Company

Year: June 2009

ISBN Number: 0805003118

Number of Pages: 48

Interest Level: Kindergarten- 3rd grade, but appropriate for all ages

BOOK SYNOPSIS

Anansi the Spider is one of the great folk heroes of the world. He is a rogue, a mischief-maker, and a wise, lovable creature that triumphs over larger foes. In this traditional Ashanti tale, Anansi sets out on a long, difficult journey. Threatened by Fish and Falcon, he is saved from terrible fates by all of his sons. But, which of his sons should Anansi reward? Calling upon Nyame, the God of All Things, Anansi solves his predicament in a touching and highly resourceful fashion.

LESSON OBJECTIVE

Illustrate the importance of working together to achieve goals. Additionally team effort does result in one winner.

LESSON MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

For the post-reading activity, pick one of the activities listed below.

Activity #1: Ropes for 4-Way Tug of War or Obstacle Course (outside activity)

Activity #2: For each student, prepare a small sandwich bag of either spaghetti (uncooked) or marshmallows (a variety of small and large marshmallows).

Make sure you have about half of the bags with marshmallows and the other half with uncooked spaghetti.

Activity #3: video clips: Review the "Power of Union is Strength" video clips and pick one or two to use with your students:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jop2l5u2F3U&index=2&list=RDDvVEeoKrm48>

KEY VOCABULARY AND CONCEPTS

Folktale: a story created and handed down over time by common people

Ghana: a country in Western Africa

PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Read the prologue with the students and describe the definition of folktales. Ask the students if they can name any American folk tales. Explain that this folktale comes from Ghana, which is a West African country. If time permits review the material that describes Ghana on

<http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/explore/countries/ghana/>

Let the students know that this story about the spider Anansi is a folktale that teaches an important lesson.

Ask the students if they can figure out the important lesson from this story.

POST READING DISCUSSION

Ask the following questions:

- What lesson does this folktale teach?
- Why couldn't one individual spider save Anansi?
- What would have happened if one member of the family had not participated?
- Are there any comparisons between these spiders and a football team or other sports team?

Help the students understand that working together in a group helps us face challenging situations that one person could not handle on their own. Groups who combine their strengths are stronger than an individual.

POST READING ACTIVITY

Select one of the following activities that best meets the needs and abilities of your students.

Outdoor Activities:

4-Way Tug of War: Set-up a multi-directional game by tying ropes in such a way that three or four teams tug at once. Some teams might choose to work together to eliminate the other groups before going head-to-head. This Internet site has more details about this type of activity: <http://www.wilderdom.com/games/descriptions/MultiWayTugOfWar.html>

Obstacle Course: Set up a simple obstacle course that students can navigate safely as a team. This team building exercise requires that different members of the group play different roles and take responsibility for each other. In this game the group imagines they are on a deserted island where they have to work together to reach a pick-up point where they will meet their rescuers. However, different members of the group have different limitations. One person may be blind; another may be unable to use her hands; a third may not be able to move certain limbs. The goal of the game is for the entire group to get to the rescue point together. Choose the student's limitations according to their ability to complete the task.

Indoor Activities:

Building Together:

Give uncooked spaghetti to half of the students. Give large and small marshmallows to the other half of students. With each person working independently, ask the students to build a house, a space ship, or a work of art with their materials. Initially, have the students work independently (each student has only spaghetti or only marshmallows). After a few minutes, encourage groups to combine resources and work together in small groups of 3 or 4 students. See what the groups are able to create when students have **both** marshmallows and spaghetti to build their creations.

An activity using short video clips:

This YouTube link has a mix of short videos on teamwork (animated Disney films and other videos students enjoy). In advance, review these and pick one or two your group would enjoy.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jop215u2F3U&index=2&list=RDDvVEeoKrm48>

After watching a short video clip, play the game, “**Stand if you are talented in this way...**”

Ask classmates to stand if the description matches their talents or strengths (then sit down).

Ask for classmates to stand and be recognized: “Everyone stand who is....”

Describe talents and characteristics that help build a strong team. Examples include artistic; strong; a good listener; a true friend; honest; kind; thoughtful; tall; short; musical—a good singer; patient; sticks up for someone who is being bullied; brave; hard working; invites others to join in the fun; trustworthy; has a green thumb—a good gardener; fun; good sense of humor; athletic; strong; etc.

Afterwards ask if students learned something new about someone in the classroom. Talk about when these skills or characteristics might come in handy.

CLOSURE

Hang up the poster in the classroom and discuss the Ken Blanchard quote: “None of us is as smart as all of us.”

Practice the social skill steps:

SOCIAL SKILL: Working Together

1. Look and listen.
2. Show your interest.
3. Use kind words.
4. No arguing, whining, or pouting.
5. Do your part.



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is as smart as
all of us.

Ken Blanchard

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