

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

SOCIAL SKILLS LESSON PLAN

CASEL COMPETENCY: SOCIAL AWARENESS

SOCIAL SKILL: PERSPECTIVE TAKING

Created by: Robyn Orr

BOOK INFORMATION

Book title: My Friend is Sad

Author: Mo Willems

Publisher and date of publication: Hyperion Books for Children, 2007

ISBN: 1-4231-0297-5

Number of pages: 57

Reading level: 1-2

Interest level: K-3

BOOK SYNOPSIS

Piggy notices that Gerald is sad and tries to make him feel better. Piggy dresses as a cowboy, and for a moment Gerald is happy and then he is sad again. Piggy keeps trying with different costumes and Gerald is happy for a moment and then sad again. Finally, Piggy says that he wants Gerald to be happy and Gerald says he is now because Piggy is there. Gerald explains that he was sad and saw all these amazing things, like a cowboy, but Piggy was not there to see them. Piggy tries to explain but Gerald does not listen. Finally Piggy reminds him that he is there now and Gerald is happy and hugs Piggy. Gerald says he needs his friends and Piggy says he needs new glasses.

This book could be used to help students understand that just being around will help others feel better.

LESSON OBJECTIVE

The goal of this lesson is for students to understand that they do not need to try to cheer up others. Sometimes others simply want you by their side.

LESSON MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

K-2 materials

- Play dough for each student

3-6 materials:

- A piece of paper for each students
- Markers, crayons, colored pencils
- A pencil for each student

KEY VOCABULARY AND CONCEPTS

Empathy: The ability to understand and share the feelings of another

PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Show the cover of the book. Ask students what they would do if their friend were sad. Explain that this book is all about trying to help others feel better.

READ THE BOOK

POST READING DISCUSSION

Why did Piggy try to cheer up Gerald? What was Gerald sad about? How do you know he was lonely? Explain that sometimes what people need from us when they are sad is just to be with them?

What made Gerald finally happy? Explain that even though Gerald loved all of the things Piggy dressed as, Piggy ultimately loved one thing more. What was that?

Gerald needed empathy through this. He needed Piggy to just understand his feelings, not try to change them.

POST READING ACTIVITY

K-2: Ask students to think of a time where they knew somebody was sad. Ask them to create the scene using play dough. It should include a person who is sad and themselves. They should have the play dough character express that they are sad and the other character stay with them and say that they are there for them. Have students practice this a few times as you walk around the room to see if they are doing it right. Help students who need more support.

3-6: Ask students to make a comic strip of 3 to 6 boxes through folding the paper in half and then into third. Have them draw out a scene of a time where someone they know was sad. Have them show the correct way of simply being with the person when they are sad.

CLOSURE

Sometimes the best way to empathize with others is to spend time with them. We do not need to do anything fancy except help them know they are not alone. Throughout the week, when you

notice a classmate, friend, or sibling is sad, try just spending time with them without trying to fix the problem. They may just want you by their side.

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"I need my friends."

- Gerald the elephant