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Social Communication Intervention Script for story book, *The Pigeon Finds a Hotdog*

***The Pigeon Finds a Hotdog* by Mo Willems, 2004, New York: Hyperion Books for Children.**

Sharing a Story to Facilitate Social and Emotional Learning

Many children with disabilities such as developmental language disorders, language-learning disorders, social communication disorders, or autism spectrum disorders have difficulty with aspects of social and emotional learning. These children often need explicit, repeated instruction designed to facilitate emotion understanding, conversational ability, and language comprehension and production skill. The following informal script is designed to help interventionists (caregivers and professionals) focus on and emphasize important concepts.

The following storybook has been selected because it has a well-defined story structure, clear language, rich emotion content, and engaging illustrations. A script is provided to guide interventionists as they share this book. Initially, concepts are listed that this book is particularly well suited to teach. These include social and emotional knowledge, interactional skills, vocabulary, and language structure.

Following the list of concepts, a series of prompts is provided for each story page. These prompts include questions, comments, and brief activities (e.g., making a facial expression in a mirror) designed to teach specific concepts. The interventionist may read the story text for each page and then present any of the prompts they feel would be most appropriate. The script is designed to be flexible and adjusted to each child's needs.

At the conclusion of the story script, a series of questions is provided to probe how well children understand and identify emotions that story characters experience. If desired, these questions can be used to evaluate how well children grasp the emotion content of the story.

Following story sharing, the interventionist may guide children to enact the story using simple props. This activity facilitates story comprehension by assisting children to understand the internal states and motivations of characters. Older children may prefer a readers' theater format or choose to provide additional text or dialog to the storybook by using attachable note paper.

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Concepts to stress

- 1. Emotions experienced:** excitement, happiness, joy, anger/annoyance, hope, guilt, confusion, frustration, relief
- 2. Anticipating an event and the emotions it elicits**
- 3. Anticipating the desires and needs of others**
- 4. Complex emotion words, annoyed (just a little mad), frustrated, guilty, hopeful**
- 5. Hinting (indirect request)**
- 6. Inferring the meaning of an indirect request**
- 7. Losing control—tantruming/fussing—precipitators/motivations**
- 8. Mixed emotions—happy/guilty**
- 9. Prosocial behavior: solving problems together, sharing, even when one doesn't want to.**
- 10. Structural: complete simple sentence forms, complex sentences with causal connections (but, if, so, because)**

Intro: Cover and Title Page—This is a story about Pigeon. In this story, Pigeon has something that he is really excited about, a hot dog. But then Duckling comes along. Let's see what Duckling wants and what happens. Let's think about how Pigeon and Duckling feel in this story.

Page 1 (Title Page)

(Read Title)

What's this? (Hot dog)

What do you think will happen?

Page 2

Read: "Oooh!..."

Look at Pigeon, how does he feel? (He feels surprised because he found a hotdog.)

Is it a good surprise or a bad surprise? (It is a good surprise.)

Page 3

Read: “Yummy!...”

How does Pigeon feel about the hotdog? (Pigeon is very excited to have a hot dog.)

How can you tell? (Look at Pigeon’s face. Look at his body.)

Have you ever felt really happy and excited because you got something you liked? Tell me about it. How did your face look? (Use mirror.)

Page 4-5

Read: “Aaaaahhh...”

What is Pigeon going to do (p. 4)? (Eat the hotdog.)

Why does he stop? (He sees a duckling.)

Why does Pigeon say, “May I help you?” What does he really mean? (What do you want? Or: What are you doing here?)

Look at Pigeon’s face here (p. 5). How does he feel? (Talk about the fact that he looks just a little mad or angry. Annoyed is a word that means just a little angry or bothered by something.)

Page 6-7

Read: “It that a hog dog?...”

What does Duckling ask?

Look at Pigeon’s face (p. 6). How does Pigeon feel? (Pigeon is annoyed—just a little mad—because duckling is interrupting him.)

What does Pigeon mean when he says, “Not a hot dog; **my** hot dog?” (Pigeon wants to eat the hotdog. He does not want to give the hotdog to Duckling.)

What do you think Duckling wants?

What does Pigeon think Duckling wants?

What do you think Pigeon will do?

Page 8-9

Read: "Aaaaahhh..."

What do you think that Pigeon wants to do? (He wants to eat the hot dog.)

What does duckling want?

How does Duckling feel? (He looks happy and hopeful.)

How does Pigeon feel (p. 9)? (Pigeon looks a little surprised or annoyed (a little mad.)

Why? (Try to elicit a complex construction.)

Page 10-11

Read: "I've never had..."

What does Duckling want to know?

How does Pigeon feel? (Pigeon looks a little puzzled or confused because he does not know what Duckling will say. Maybe Pigeon does not know what Duckling wants.)

What do you think Duckling really wants?

If you were Duckling, what would you say to Pigeon? (If the child says Duckling should ask for the hotdog, ask the child how Pigeon might feel about that. Try to elicit complex constructions.)

Page 12-13

Read: "Well, they are a..."

How does Pigeon feel about hotdogs?

What does “taste sensation” mean? (Define.)

What does Pigeon mean when he says “Each morsel is a joy! A celebration in a bun!”

Wow, how does Pigeon feel? (Very excited.) Can you make a face like Pigeon’s?
(Use mirror.)

How about Duckling? How do you think he feels?

Page 14

Read: “If you’ve never...”

What does Pigeon mean here? (He’s about to tell Duckling that he should try a hot dog.)

Look at Duckling’s face. How does he feel? (Duckling looks happy or hopeful.)

What does Duckling want? (Duckling wants the hotdog.)

Talk about the fact that Duckling hopes that Pigeon will share the hotdog.

Can you make a happy/hopeful face like Duckling’s? (Use mirror.)

Page 15

Read: “Wait...”

Look at Pigeon’s face here. What is Pigeon thinking? (Guide child to recognize that Pigeon thinks Duckling wants his hot dog.)

How does Pigeon feel? (Pigeon is annoyed because Duckling wants his hot dog.)

Page 16-17

Read: “This hot dog is mine...”

Hmmm.... How does Pigeon feel (p. 16)? Why? (Pigeon is annoyed—getting mad—because he thinks that Duckling wants his hot dog.)

How does Pigeon feel here (p. 17)? (He feels annoyed because he thinks that Duckling wants his hot dog.)

How does Duckling feel? (Duckling looks happy.)

What do you think that Duckling is thinking?

What does Duckling want?

Why doesn't Duckling just ask Pigeon for his hot dog? (Discuss the fact that Duckling is hiding his feelings so that Pigeon does not get mad.)

Do you think that Duckling is hinting that he wants the hot dog? Do you know what hinting is? Hinting is when you don't really ask for something, but you let the person know that you want it. (Give several examples: e.g., You have a cookie and your sister looks at you and says, "Wow, that looks REALLY good! Contrast a direct request with a hint.)

Page 18-19

Read: "Go ahead..."

Look at Pigeon's face (p. 18). How does he feel? (He looks annoyed.)

Why is Pigeon annoyed?

Why does Pigeon turn away from Duckling when he wants to take a bite of his hot dog? (Discuss the fact that Pigeon is not comfortable eating the hot dog while Duckling is watching him. It makes Pigeon feel a little guilty because he did not give his hot dog to Duckling. Define guilty—he is going to do something that is not nice.)

What does Duckling ask? (Does the hot dog taste like chicken?)

Do you think that Duckling is hinting that he wants the hot dog?

Page 20-21

Read: "Can you believe..."

Look at Pigeon (p. 20) How does Pigeon feel? (A little annoyed again. He is annoyed because Duckling wants his hotdog.)

How does Duckling feel? (He is hopeful that Pigeon will give him the hot dog.)

What does Pigeon say (p. 21)? What is he feeling? (He is feeling a little frustrated [define frustrated] because Duckling wants the hot dog.)

How does Duckling feel? (Duckling is still hopeful that Pigeon will give him the hot dog.)

Do you think that Pigeon wants to give his hot dog away? (No.) Why not? (Pigeon loves hot dogs and he wants to eat this hotdog all by himself.)

Page 22-23

Read: “It just tastes like...”

Look at Pigeon’s face here. How does Pigeon feel? (Very frustrated.)

Can you make a face like Pigeon’s? (Use mirror.)

Why does Pigeon feel so frustrated? (Pigeon is frustrated because Duckling keeps hinting for his hot dog.)

Why is Pigeon yelling at Duckling? (Pigeon is yelling because he is so frustrated!)

Have you ever felt frustrated? Tell me about it. (Share an example or two.)

How about Duckling? How does he feel? (Talk about the fact that Duckling is very calm.)

Page 24-25

Read: “So, it doesn’t taste...”

How does Pigeon feel now? (Angry/mad/frustrated. Talk about the fact that Pigeon is still frustrated because he thinks Duckling wants his hot dog.)

Look (p. 25), how does Pigeon feel here? (Frustrated.)

What does Duckling say? (He is curious—define.)

Why doesn’t Duckling just ask for the hot dog? (Duckling does not ask for the hot dog because he thinks that would make Pigeon mad. Then Pigeon might not give him the hot dog.)

Duckling is hinting because he wants the hot dog.

Page 26-27

Read: "That's it!"

How does Pigeon feel here? (Pigeon is very frustrated.)

Why is Pigeon so frustrated? (He wants to eat his hot dog, but Duckling keeps hinting that he wants the hot dog.)

I think that Pigeon wants to eat his hot dog, but he feels a little guilty that Duckling does not have a hot dog. Have you ever felt like this? (Give a personal example.)

If you were there, what would you say to Pigeon?

What would you say to Duckling?

What do you think will happen?

Page 28-29

Read each frame: "It's my hotdog..."

Wow, look at Pigeon!

How does Pigeon feel? (Pigeon is feeling very frustrated.)

(Look at each picture. Ask the child how Pigeon feels in each picture. Talk about the picture where he repeats all of Duckling's hints. Talk about the fact that Pigeon feels a lot of things—frustrated/annoyed/mad/guilty/sad—in the various pictures.)

Do you think that Pigeon thinks that giving Duckling the hot dog would be the right thing to do?

But does he want to do that?

How would Pigeon feel if he gave his hot dog to Duckling? (He might feel happy that he did a kind thing but sad/mad/frustrated that he did not get to eat his hot dog.)

What do you think Pigeon should do?

Page 30-31

Read: "I think..."

Look at Pigeon's face (1st picture). How does he feel? (Very mad and frustrated.)

Look at Duckling. How does he feel? (Happy/hopeful.)

What do you think Duckling's idea is?

Page 32-33

Read: "You know..."

What was Duckling's idea?

What did Pigeon do?

How does Pigeon feel? Why? (Pigeon feels happy because he shared his hot dog. He gave some to Duckling, and he kept some for himself.)

How does Duckling feel? (He feels happy because he has some hot dog.)

Do you think that Pigeon did a kind thing?

Was it hard for Pigeon to share? (Yes, it was hard for him to share because he really wanted to eat the hot dog.)

Summary:

(Use cloze procedures so child can help summarize.)

Pigeon is funny, isn't he? Pigeon really, really loves hot dogs. He really wanted to eat his hot dog. But Duckling kept hinting and hinting for the hot dog. Pigeon had a lot of feelings, all at once. He was annoyed at Duckling for bothering him when he wanted to eat his hot dog. He was mad and frustrated that Duckling kept hinting for the hot dog. And he felt guilty that he had a hot dog and Duckling did not have one. Then Duckling had an idea. Duckling asked Pigeon to share his hot dog. Pigeon shared his hot dog! Pigeon shared his hot dog even though he really wanted to eat the whole thing himself. I am proud of Pigeon for doing such a nice thing, even though it was hard for him!

Follow-up probes

Probe #1, p. 2, Look at Pigeon. How does he feel?

Why does he feel_____?

Ask both questions first, but if the emotion response is wrong, say:

OR, he might feel surprised. Pigeon is surprised because he found a hotdog.

Probe #2, p. 6, Look at Pigeon. How does he feel?

Why does he feel_____?

Ask both questions first, but if the emotion response is wrong, say:

OR, he might feel mad (annoyed). He might feel mad that Duckling wants his hotdog.

Probe #3, p. 13, Look at Pigeon. How does he feel?

Why does he feel_____?

Ask both questions first, but if the emotion response is wrong, say:

OR, he might feel happy. He might feel happy because he has a hotdog.

Probe # 4, p. 18, Look at Pigeon. How does he feel?

Why does he feel_____?

Ask both questions, but if the emotion response is wrong, say:

OR, he might feel mad (annoyed). He might feel mad because Duckling wants his hotdog.

Probe #5, p. 22, Look at Pigeon. How does he feel?

Why does he feel_____?

Ask both questions first, but if the emotion response is wrong, say:

OR, he might feel mad. He might feel mad because Duckling wants his hotdog.

Probe #6 p. 33 Look at Pigeon. How does he feel?

Why does he feel _____?

Ask both questions first, but if the emotion response is wrong, say:

OR, he might feel happy. Pigeon is happy because he shared his hot dog.

Dialog/enactment activity:

Look, I have a Pigeon like the one in the book. I have a Duckling and a hotdog too. Let's read the book again. You pretend like you are Pigeon. You be Pigeon, and tell me what you are thinking on every page, okay. Try to tell me how you feel about the hot dog. (Repeat with roles reversed.) Try to get the child to extend the story by elaborating on how Pigeon feels about the hot dog, how Duckling hints for the hot dog, and how Pigeon has mixed feelings. Talk about the fact that Pigeon shared even though he didn't want to.

If preferred, guide the child in a modified "readers' theater" where the child voices Pigeon or Duckling. As an alternative activity, on as many pages as possible, have the child say or dictate dialog or thoughts for Pigeon and Duckling. Emphasize what they are feeling and why. Create a thought bubble or a dialog bubble attached to the page with a sticky note. When finished, read the story again including the dialog bubbles. Adjust as needed for the individual child.