

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

SOCIAL SKILLS LESSON PLAN

SOCIAL SKILL: HELPING OTHERS & VOLUNTEERING
CASEL COMPETENCY: SOCIAL AWARENESS

BOOK INFORMATION

Book Title: *The Three Questions*
Author: John J. Muth (based on a story by Leo Tolstoy)
Publisher: Scholastic Press
Year: 2002
ISBN Number: 0439199964
Number of Pages: 32 pages
Reading Level: Kindergarten - 6th grade

BOOK SYNOPSIS

When is the best time to do things? Who is the most important one? What is the right thing to do? Nikolai knows that he wants to be the best person he can be, but he is often unsure if he is doing the right thing. So he goes to ask Leo, the wise turtle. When he arrives, the turtle is struggling to dig in his garden, and Nikolai rushes to help him. As he finishes the work, a violent storm rolls in. Nikolai runs for Leo's cottage, but on his way, he hears cries for help from an injured panda. Nikolai brings her in from the cold, and then rushes back outside to rescue her baby. In the end he learns the answers to his three questions.

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To teach children the importance of volunteering, serving others, and recognizing ways to do so.

LESSON MATERIALS AND ADVANCED PREPARATION

Indoor Game

No materials or preparation needed.

Outdoor Game

Materials: two flags
Preparation: None needed.

KEY VOCABULARY AND CONCEPTS

Volunteer - to freely offer to help with an activity or task

Altruism - unselfish interest in the welfare of others

Timeliness - the quality of being early or doing what you are responsible for at the right time

PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Explain to the students that volunteering is a good way to give service to others. Explain that oftentimes we can volunteer through organizations like the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, clubs, or church groups, but that we can also be volunteers by helping an individual person. We can become a volunteer whenever we see someone in need or something that needs to be done. Encourage the students to pay attention to the story and to think about creative ways they might volunteer to make their school and community a better place.

READ THE BOOK

POST READING DISCUSSION

Ask the following questions:

- Why was Nikolai unsure if he was doing the right thing?
- How did Leo help the turtle?
- How did Leo help the panda?
- How did Leo find the answers to his three questions?
- What were the answers to his questions?
- How do we know when we are doing the right things?
- What are ways you can serve your fellow classmates and family members?

POST READING ACTIVITY

Watch this video clip from the movie *Up* with your class:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=flyiGMNGQyA>

If You Like Me (As A Friend) Won't You Please, Please Smile?

Everyone is seated in a circle with a volunteer standing in the middle. The volunteer sits in front of the seated person of his or her choice, looks them in the eyes, and says, "If you like me, won't you please, please smile?" The seated person responds by saying, "You know I like you, but I just can't smile." This must be said without smiling. If the person does smile, he or she becomes the person in the middle.

Capture the Flag

Although there is no record of the first childhood game of Capture the Flag, the concept of the game has its origins on the battlefield. For centuries armies would fly their flags during battle to indicate they were still engaged in the fight. When a flag was captured or lowered by an opponent, it indicated there was no one left to raise the flag and signaled defeat.

The rules for engagement are usually decided by the players, but they follow similar guidelines. Once the boundaries for the two territories are set, the players also determine the two areas designated as jails for captured opponents. Children who venture into their opponent's territory can be caught or tagged and placed in jail where they must remain until one of their teammates can break through enemy lines and rescue them.

With the boundaries determined, the teams are given the signal to hide their flags in their territories. The flags must be visible, although they can be placed as inconspicuously as possible. Each team will usually determine which players will attack the opponent's flag and who will defend their own flag. Guards must stay a reasonable distance from the flag until an opponent nears their flag. Scouting rules state the guards must stay farther than 50 feet from the flag until an enemy invades that space.

With the goal of capturing the opponent's flag, attackers cross into enemy territory. Once the boundary line has been crossed, players can be caught by being tagged. They are then taken to jail where they must remain until one of their teammates can reach them without being caught themselves. Once they have tagged one of their jailed teammates, they are both given free passage back to their own territory and the rescued player can then rejoin the game.

The game is over when one team successfully retrieves the opponent's flag and carries it to their own territory without being caught. If a set time limit has been given to play the game, the team with the most prisoners is deemed the winner if the flag has not been captured.

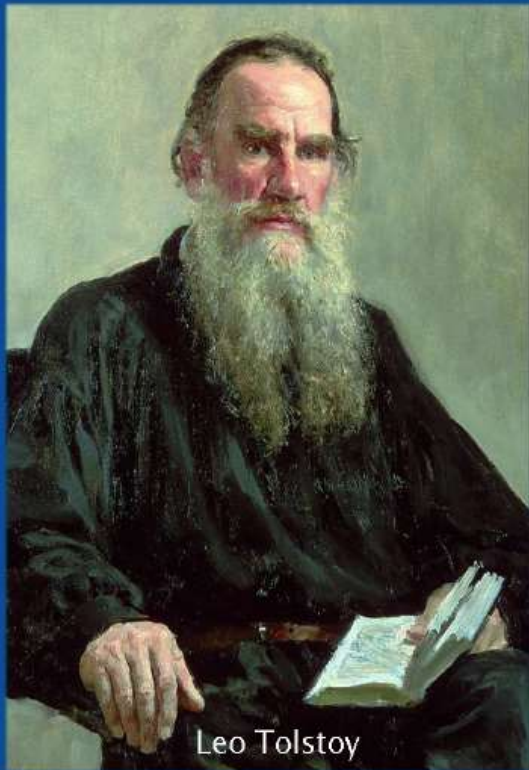
In order to encourage serving others and volunteering, make saving someone from jail worth 10 points and capturing the flag 50 points.

CLOSURE

Hang the poster provided at the end of this lesson plan in the classroom. Review the social skill steps below with the class.

Steps for Volunteering

1. Watch for chances to help.
2. Look at the person.
3. Use a pleasant voice.
4. Ask the person if you can help.
5. Ask or say what you could do.



Leo Tolstoy

3 QUESTIONS

1. What is the most important time to do anything?

[Now]

2. Who is the most important person to refer to?

[The person with you]

3. What is the most important job to do?

[To do good to the person with you]