



CHARACTER BUILDING LESSONS

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SPIKE THE REBEL!

About the Book

Spike proudly boasted, "I'm Spike the rebel, the troublemaker!" He loved to see kids get into trouble. All the kids were afraid of him, except Mary. Mary warned him that one day he would get into big trouble because of his meanness. Spike continued to be mean at school, on the school bus, camping, and in the park. He thought that being tough and mean would make him happy. Instead, it made him unhappy and got him into all sorts of trouble.

Spike went over a dangerous waterfall with a stolen canoe and survived. One day while riding his bike, he hit one of his traps that he had placed on a bike trail. He broke his leg and bled badly. Debbie, a girl he laughed at for falling off her bike in one of his traps, came with her mother and saved him. Spike's life was transformed. He said to Debbie, "I thought being tough and mean would make me happy, but I've discovered I'm much, much happier having friends and helping others."



Main Virtues

**Tolerance/Friendship/
Cooperation**

Other Virtues

Caring, Citizenship, Compassion, Courtesy, Forgiveness, Humility, Justice, Kindness, Manners, Obedience to Parents, Proper Work Ethic, Respect for Environment, Respect for Law, Responsibility, Sportsmanship, Trustworthiness, and Truthfulness



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Kindness

When Debbie moved into the neighborhood, she politely introduced herself to the boy next door. “My name is Debbie. What’s yours?”

Spike, whose real name was Philip, stuck out his chest and growled, “I’m Spike the rebel, the troublemaker!”

“Okay,” whispered Debbie as she rode away on her bike.
Here’s the root of Spike’s problem; he’s a troublemaker.

Selfishness

Spike was mean. All the kids were afraid of him, except Mary. She had an older brother who would protect her. After Spike had chased a group of kids, he said to Mary, “I love to get kids into trouble.”

Mary pointed her finger in Spike’s face and said, “You’re mean!”
“The only one I care about is myself!” Spike snapped back.
Selfish people care only for themselves.

The Law of Sowing and Reaping

“You’d better watch out,” warned Mary. “One day you’ll get into big trouble acting like that.”

Spike rode away laughing, “Not me! I can always take care of myself.”

There is a law of sowing and reaping. If you do bad things, bad things will come back to you. If you do good, good things will come back to you.

Having Good Manners and Being Courteous

Spike’s parents loved him. But whenever they tried to teach him how to behave, he got mad. Spike always wanted to do things *his* way.

He never made his bed, he would not put his toys and clothes away, and he refused to do any work around the house. His parents constantly had to correct him for his bad manners:

- Don’t reach across the table for food.
- Say “Please” if you want something.
- Eat with your fork, not with your fingers.
- Cover your mouth when you cough.
- Say “Thank you” when you receive a gift.
- But Spike refused to listen.

Loving Others

The only one Spike cared about was himself. When he rode the school bus, he loved to tease the girls in front of him. He poked them and pulled their hair. When younger kids passed by him, he often stuck out his foot to trip them. When they fell, he laughed saying, “Don’t be so clumsy! Don’t you know how to walk?”

Often the bus driver had to report him for his bad behavior.

Spike was a bully. He didn’t love others, he cared only for himself. If he had fun, he didn’t care about anyone else.

Tattletaling/Helping Others

Spike was a tattletaler. It was not that he wanted to help his teacher or class; he wanted to see other kids get into trouble.

When classmates did something wrong, Spike would shoot up his hand and yell, “Teacher!”

Then Spike would gleefully tell the teacher what had happened.

What is a tattletaler? Tattletalers are interested in getting others into trouble; they are not interested in helping others. Tattletalers hide behind the excuse that they are helping others.

If someone is doing something dangerous, then that person should be reported. That is helping others. But to tell on someone just to get them into trouble, that is a tattletaler.

Telling the Truth

One day during playtime Spike stuck out his foot as a boy ran past him. The boy fell and hit his chin on the curb. Spike laughed and said, “Don’t you know how to run?”

When Mary saw what Spike had done, she looked him in the eye and asked, “Why are you so mean? I saw you trip him!”

“I didn’t trip him,” snapped Spike. “He doesn’t know how to run.”

“Yes, you did!” insisted Mary. “I warn you, Spike. One day all the mean things you’re doing will come back to haunt you.”

Spike was also a liar. Once you become known as a liar, no one can trust you.

Willingness to Work

Summertime came and Spike’s family packed their van to go camping. When it was time to unload the van and put up the tent, Spike disappeared into the woods. Spike hated to do any kind of work.

After making sure the van was unloaded and the tent was up, Spike appeared with a few twigs for the fire.

“Where have you been?” asked Dad.

“I’ve been searching for firewood,” he explained.

“Spike,” said Dad, “there’s firewood everywhere. You didn’t have to spend that much time searching.”

“Yes, I did,” insisted Spike. “It was hard finding wood where I looked.”

A person never learning how to work will never become successful.

Kindness to Animals

Billy took an empty can and placed it on a rock. “Let’s see who can hit the can the most,” said Billy.

Billy handed the BB gun to Spike so he could go first. They shot the BB gun a few times. Then Spike saw a bird in the tree. He quickly turned around and shot at the bird. But he missed.

“Don’t shoot at birds!” yelled Billy.

“What are you complaining about?” said Spike. “I didn’t hit the bird.”
We should be kind to animals. The wicked treat animals crudely.

Stealing

The next day Spike took a walk through the woods. When he saw a canoe, he looked to see if anyone was around. “Good!” he exclaimed. “I’m taking this canoe for a ride.”

Spike pushed the canoe into the water and began paddling down the river. Spike stole the canoe.

Safety and Foolishness

As he paddled down the river, he saw a cable with a sign hanging across the river warning him not to go farther.

“The river can’t be that bad,” thought Spike. “I’m strong. I certainly can paddle this little canoe back. I’ll just go a little farther.”

Spike lifted the cable and coasted down the river. Then he saw another sign, “STOP! Dangerous Waterfall!”

“I can handle this,” he boasted.

Spike was foolish for not obeying the warning. We should take care of our bodies and not do foolish things that hurt us.

Loving Our Enemies

Debbie and Mary happened to be riding home on their bikes when they heard a faint sound coming from the woods. “Stop!” said Mary. “I think I hear someone.”

They stood and listened. “It’s someone yelling for help,” said Debbie.

Mary frowned and sighed, “I know who that is. That’s Spike. I can always tell his mean voice.”

“We’ve got to help him,” insisted Debbie.

Mary sneered and said, “I wouldn’t help that guy. He’s a cruel big bully! Besides, you know how he laughed at you when you fell and got hurt.”

“I know he’s a cruel big bully,” argued Debbie. “But we’ve got to help him. He sounds like he’s really hurt and in deep trouble.”

Debbie was mistreated by Spike, but she was still willing to show kindness to him.

Willingness to Forgive

Spike cried out and begged, “Please, Debbie, come and help me!”

When Debbie saw Spike, she ran to him and said, “My mother is coming to help you.”

“Thank you for coming,” whispered Spike as tears flowed down his cheeks. “I’m so sorry for being so mean to you. Please forgive me.”

“I forgive you,” said Debbie as she patted his head.

Even though Spike was mean to Debbie, she was willing to forgive him

when he asked for forgiveness.

Questions

1. How did Spike reply when Debbie said, “My name is Debbie. What’s yours?”

Spike stuck out his chest and growled, “I’m Spike the rebel, the troublemaker!”

Here’s the root of Spike’s problem; he’s a troublemaker.

2. Why was Mary not afraid of Spike?

Mary had an older brother who would protect her.

3. What did Mary do and say to Spike?

Mary pointed her finger in Spike’s face and said, “You’re mean!”

4. What did Spike say to Mary?

Spike said, “The only one I care about is myself!”

5. A. What was Mary reply when Spike said, “The only one I care about is myself!”

“You’d better watch out,” warned Mary. “One day you’ll get into big trouble acting like that.”

B. Explain the law of sowing and reaping.

If you do bad things, bad things will come back to you. If you do good, good things will come back to you.

6. How did Spike react when his parents tried to teach him?

Spike got mad; he always wanted to do things his way.

Wise are those children who always obey their parents.

7. A. What were some of Spike’s bad manners?

1. He never made his bed.

2. He would not put his toys and clothes away.

3. He refused to do any work around the house.

4. He would reach across the table for food.

5. He would not say “Please” if he wanted something.

6. He ate with his fingers.

7. He would not cover his mouth when he coughed.

8. He would not say “Thank you” when he received a gift.

B. Explain why these are improper.

8. Why didn't Spike want to get a haircut?

Spike felt his long hair made him look tough and mean.

9. What did Spike love to do when he rode the school bus?

Spike loved to tease the girls in front of him by poking them and pulling their hair. When younger kids passed by him, he often stuck out his foot to trip them. When they fell, he laughed saying, "Don't be so clumsy! Don't you know how to walk?"

10. What did the bus driver have to do?

The bus driver often had to report him for his bad behavior.

11. What did Spike do when his classmates did something wrong?

Spike would shoot up his hand and yell, "Teacher!" Then he would gleefully tell the teacher what had happened.

12. Why did Spike want to tell the teacher his classmates did something wrong?

Spike was a tattletaler. He wanted to see kids get into trouble. It was not that he wanted to help his teacher or classmates.

13. What is a tattletaler?

Tattletalers are interested in getting others into trouble; they are not interested in helping others. Tattletalers hide behind the excuse that they are helping others.

If someone is doing something dangerous, then that person should be reported. That is helping others. But to tell on someone just to get them into trouble, that is a tattletaler.

14. What did Mary say to Spike when he said he didn't trip the boy that ran past him?

Mary said to Spike, "I warn you, Spike. One day all the mean things you're doing will come back to haunt you."

Spike was also a liar. Once you become known as a liar, no one can trust you.

15. What did Spike do when his family went camping and it was time to unload the van and put up the tent?

Spike disappeared into the woods.

16. Why did Spike disappear into the woods?

Spike disappeared into the woods because he hated to do any kind of work. Spike was also lazy.

A person never learning how to work will never become successful.

17. What did Spike do when he was shooting the BB gun and he saw a bird in the tree?

Spike quickly turned around and shot at the bird.

We should be kind to animals.

18. What did Spike do when he saw a canoe in the woods?

Spike took the canoe for a ride.

Spike stole the canoe.

19. What did Spike say when he saw a cable with a sign warning him not to go any farther with his canoe?

Spike said when he saw the cable, "The river can't be that bad. I'm strong. I certainly can paddle this little canoe back. I'll just go a short distance."

Spike was foolish for not obeying the warning.

20. What did Spike yell as the river became narrower and the canoe went faster and faster?

When the river became narrower and the canoe went faster and faster, Spike yelled, "This is fun!"

Sometimes the biggest tragedies happen when we're having the most fun.

21. What did Spike boast as he walked back to his campsite after surviving going over the waterfall?

While walking back to his campsite, Spike boasted, "Nothing can stop me! I went over the waterfall and nothing happened. I'm not afraid of anything!"

Some people learn from their tragedies, and some don't. Spike needed another tragedy before he would change. If Spike had obeyed the warning sign, he never would have gone over the waterfall.

22. A. What did Spike do with the BB gun?

Spike took the BB gun and killed an eagle so he could get eagle feathers.

B. Why was it wrong for Mike to shoot at the eagle and also the other bird?

It is wrong just to kill birds for fun. Besides, eagles are protected birds.

23. What did Spike do when a notice came around from the park ranger stating that an eagle was shot with a BB gun?

When a notice came around, Spike went to his dad and said, "The family at the next campsite has a BB gun."

24. When Spike came home from camping, what did he think would make

him happy?

When Spike came home from camping, he thought being tough and mean would make him happy.

Happiness does not come by being tough and mean. Happiness comes by being kind to others. Try it, and you'll discover this wonderful truth.

25. What was one of Spike's tricks that he did in the park?

One of Spike's tricks was to set traps on the park bike trails.

26. What did Spike do when Debbie's bike hit the hole he made, and she tumbled over the handle bars and hit her head hard on the ground?

When Spike saw Debbie fall, he came out from behind the tree laughing and saying, "Don't you know how to ride your bike, Debbie?"

27. What happened to Spike as he was riding down one more trail before he went home?

As Spike rode down the hill, he hit a rock that he had covered with leaves. He went flying through the air and his leg hit a broken branch. When he hit the ground, he heard a bone snap in his leg.

28. What did Mary say to Debbie when she heard Spike's voice calling for help?

When Mary heard Spike calling for help, she said, "I wouldn't help that guy. He's a cruel big bully! Besides, you know how he laughed at you when you fell and got hurt."

29. What did Debbie say to Mary when she heard Spike's voice calling for help?

When Debbie heard Spike calling for help, she said, "I know he's a cruel big bully, but we've got to help him. He sounds like he's really hurt and in deep trouble."

Debbie was mistreated by Spike, but she was still willing to show kindness to him.

30. What did Spike think about as he lay weak from the bleeding and the pain from his broken leg?

As Spike lay there, he began to think of all the mean things he did to others.

31. What did Spike vow he would now do?

Spike vowed, "I'll never be mean again. I'm making everything right."

32. What was the word that Spike said for the first time on his own?

The word that Spike said for the first time on his own was, "Please."

33. What did Spike groan when he heard Debbie say, “I’m coming. It’s me, Debbie”?

When Spike heard it was Debbie, he groaned, “Oh no! I’ve been so mean to her. When she sees me she’ll turn around and leave, just like I did to her.”

Spike was greatly mistaken. In spite of Spike’s meanness to her, Debbie still was willing to show kindness.

34. What did Spike say to Debbie when he saw her?

When Spike saw Debbie he said, “Thank you for coming. I’m so sorry for being so mean to you. Please forgive me.”

35. What did Debbie say when Spike asked for forgiveness?

When Spike asked for forgiveness, Debbie said, “I forgive you.”

Even though Spike was mean to Debbie, she was willing to forgive him when he asked for forgiveness.

36. What did Spike say to Debbie when she saw him in the hospital?

When Spike saw Debbie in the hospital, he said, “Thank you, Debbie for saving my life. Never again will I be mean. I’m going to be just like you and help others.”

37. Why do you think Spike had such a radical change of heart?

Various answers: Spike’s serious accident caused him to change.

The kindness of Debbie even though Spike was mean to her.

The doctor saying if it wasn’t for Debbie he wouldn’t have survived.

38. What did Spike say about his name change?

Spike said to Debbie, “To show that I’ve changed, please don’t call me Spike anymore; just call me Philip.”

39. When Philip’s leg got better, what did he say he would do?

When Philip’s leg got better, he said “I’m filling every trap I’ve ever made.

And if I see any stones or branches on bike trails that are unsafe, I’ll remove them also, even though I didn’t put them there.”

40. What did Philip and Debbie begin doing?

Philip and Debbie began helping poor kids in the neighborhood.

41. What did Philip say to Debbie about being tough and mean?

Philip said to Debbie, “I thought being tough and mean would make me happy, but I’ve discovered I’m much, much happier having friends and helping others.”

Spike the Rebel!

Spike or Philip Test

Have students take the “Spike or Philip Test.”

Go to www.AdvancePublishing.com and click on the book *Spike the Rebel*.

There is a free copy to download and print.