



CHARACTER BUILDING ACTIVITIES

THE UGLY CATERPILLAR

Story Description

Speckles the spider and Crumbs the cricket think Katy the caterpillar is much too ugly to be their friend. But Annie the ant doesn't agree, and she and Katy become best friends. As Katy the caterpillar begins her strange transformation into a beautiful butterfly, her friend Annie is shocked and amazed. Speckles and Crumbs finally learn the true meaning of beauty and friendship—and caterpillars.

In this inspiring and beautifully illustrated book, Carl Sommer teaches the importance of respect for others, kindness, friendship, and the true meaning of beauty.



Major Objective

To define and present the following virtues so they can be integrated into the life of each student:

- Respect for others: valuing other people's differences and similarities by giving them opportunities to be who they are
- Kindness: having a desire to do good to others
- Friendship: being a companion by listening, recognizing, and valuing others



Story Time Interaction

Read the story, **The Ugly Caterpillar**, and then write these three virtues on the board: respect for others, kindness, and friendship. Define and discuss these virtues naming the four main characters: Crumbs the cricket, Speckles the spider, Annie the ant, and Katy the caterpillar.

Activities

Objectives: To use the following activities to help reinforce the virtues of respect for others, kindness and friendship. To help students realize the importance their words and actions have on others.

Friendship

Goal: To show students how they can help themselves to be friendly

Discuss: Speak about Katy's feelings and how Annie was able to help her overcome her hurts. Talk about ways of being a friend:

- Listening to one another
- Helping one another solve problems
- Looking for something to give an honest compliment about
- Disagreeing without hurting each other
- Being dependable and trustworthy
- Giving room for your friends to be themselves
- Caring about the well-being of another person

Discuss how Crumbs and Speckles could have responded differently when Annie asked to join them. Emphasize the importance of respect for others who are different.

Current Events Assignment

Teacher: Prepare articles from newspapers, magazines, or web sites showing respect for others, kindness, and friendship.

Students: Collect articles from newspapers, magazines, or web sites showing respect for others, acts of kindness, or the benefits of friendship.

Class: Have students discuss their findings. Ask students: Why did you pick this article or picture?

Patchwork Paper Quilt

Goal: To point out that each person is special in his own way and that each has unique individual qualities that contribute to the entire class

Lesson: Speckles and Crumbs needed to understand that Katy was very special despite her appearance. They should have taken time to get acquainted, as Annie did, before they made up their minds about her.

Patchwork paper quilt: White paper or colored construction paper, scissors, glue, markers, glitter, etc.

Procedure: The class is going to make a unique patchwork quilt. Each student will make a patch for the quilt with its own design. Have students write their name on the patch and decorate it however they want. In order to get the proper amount of sheets for a quilt, some students will be permitted to make two patches.

Lesson: Just as all patches are different, so are the students. Discuss how each piece of this patchwork quilt is unique. Likewise, each student is unique and has special qualities to contribute to their class and families.

Life Cycle of a Butterfly

Goal: To teach the life cycle of a butterfly and to appreciate the wonders of nature

Lesson: Students will learn about the life of a butterfly. Use the book, *The Ugly Caterpillar*, to demonstrate the life cycle from an egg, caterpillar, chrysalis, and butterfly.

Discuss the difference between a *chrysalis* and a *cocoon*. A butterfly emerges from a chrysalis and a moth emerges from a cocoon.

Web: For additional information, type in on a web search engine: “life cycle of a butterfly.”

Optional: If caterpillars are available, collect some caterpillars and place them in a large jar with the same type of leaves they are eating. Let students make a chart and record their growth. Provide new leaves as needed.

Watch when the butterfly makes its chrysalis or the moth its cocoon. When the butterfly or moth emerges, let the students admire the butterfly or moth. Then let the butterfly or moth go free.

Craft Project: Butterfly–Four Life Cycle Stages

Science Project: Life Cycle of a Butterfly–egg, caterpillar, chrysalis, then butterfly

Materials :

- Construction paper – all colors
- Rice for eggs
- Bite size lasagna for caterpillar
- Pasta shells for chrysalis
- Pasta bow ties for butterfly
- Small leaves
- Small twigs
- Glue
- Paintbrushes to spread glue

Craft project:

- Fold a piece of paper into 4 equal parts.
- Upper left is stage one: egg
- Upper right is stage two: caterpillar
- Lower right is stage three: chrysalis
- Lower left is stage four: butterfly

Project: Explain to students that they will use the pasta to make their pictures of the life cycle figures. Students glue twigs and leaves on paper to represent proper environment. Then they glue rice for eggs, lasagna for caterpillar, pasta shell for chrysalis, and bow ties for butterfly.

Tying it together: It takes time for the caterpillar to become a beautiful butterfly, and it must complete each step. No stage can be skipped, so the caterpillar must do his part in each step and be patient! In the same way we must be patient with each other as we learn and grow.

What kind of butterfly is inside of you? Some of you may become an artist, writer, singer, manager, engineer, business owner, etc.

Drama Integration/Role-Play—New Kid

Goal: To help students treat others kindly

Lesson: Pick two girls and then two boys to do the acting. Have one act as a new classmate coming into class. Have one student role-play the wrong way to welcome someone. Then have the other student show the right way to make a newcomer feel welcome.

Points for discussion after the role-play:

- How would you feel if you were the one left out?
- How would you feel if you were heartily welcomed?
- How can we learn that each person is special and can provide a special uniqueness to the class.

Discuss ways to make someone feel welcome: greeting, speaking, showing things in the class, helping, choosing them to play a game, etc.

Health/Mental or Emotional: Have a Heart

Goal: To make children aware of how their words can impact another person's health

Lesson: Unkind, negative feelings can have a lasting impact upon the mind and the emotions. Likewise, a sincere compliment can have the opposite effect on someone's life.

Materials: large sheet of red paper folded in half. Cut out the shape of a heart.

Procedure: Students are to write their names on the red heart. The teacher now explains that this is the "class heart," and emphasizes how pretty the heart is. Students may sit in a circle.

Questions:

1. How do you think Katy the caterpillar felt when Speckles said, "You're just too ugly"?
2. How do you feel when someone says something mean to you?
3. What are some unkind words you have heard others speak? Let students share some personal experiences. As students share their experiences, the teacher crumbles part of the heart after each negative remark. Then ask, "How does our heart look now? How do you think the person's heart feels?"
4. What can make the heart better?

As encouraging statements are offered, begin to open the heart. But point out that even with compliments, the heart is not the same as it was. Discuss how to keep hearts from getting tattered and torn during the year. Then hang the class heart up as a continual reminder to students to be careful that their words don't hurt others.

Math Integration: Fractions

Goal: To show students how it feels when we are unfair to one another

Material: Prepare two cookies for each child

Procedure: This lesson is not for rewards or doing anything special—it's a lesson on fairness. Give each child in the class one cookie.

Questions:

1. How many cookies did I give out? (Example: class of 25 students)

25

Then choose five children, and give two of them a half of a cookie, and the other three children an additional cookie. (Can also use $1/4$ as an example.)

2. How much is $3 + 1/2 + 1/2$?

Four.

3. Now how many total cookies did I give to the class?

Write: $25 + 3 + 1/2 + 1/2 = 29$.

4. How does it feel that some got one cookie, others got $1\ 1/2$ cookies, and some two cookies? To be fair, I'm going to make sure that everyone has two cookies.

5. How does it feel that each one has two cookies?

Tying It All Together

Students should learn to appreciate each other, even if others are different. Isolating others because they look or speak differently hurts those left out. As a teacher, watch how students interact with one another. Reward acts of kindness, affirmation, or encouragement to share with class as examples of respect or kindness.