



CHARACTER BUILDING ACTIVITIES

YOUR JOB IS EASY

Story Description

When Jane, the farmer's wife, complains to her husband Sam about the crooked rows he has plowed, they decide to switch jobs for a day. Both Sam and Jane expect to have lots of free time after each finishes the other's "easy" job. But Sam and Jane encounter one calamity after another doing each other's chores. After having the hardest day of their lives, they meet each other and end up laughing at their misconceptions.

In this hilarious adventure, Carl Sommer teaches the importance of respect for others, responsibility, and forgiveness.



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 the time and space to be who they are
- Responsibility: being trustworthy to complete assignments and duties
- Forgiveness: choosing to overlook an offense and treat the offender as not guilty

Story Time Interaction

Read the story, **Your Job Is Easy**, and then write the three virtues on the board: respect for others, responsibility, and forgiveness. Define and discuss these virtues.

Activities

Objectives: To use the following activities to help reinforce the virtues of respect for others, responsibility, and forgiveness. To help students appreciate the work of others.



Taking Care of the Farm

Goal: To have students appreciate the work of farmers

Ask students to list some of the farmer's daily responsibilities:

Feed and water the animals-morning and evening

Milk the cows—morning and evening

Tend sick animals and newborns

Plow the field

Plant, water, and mulch the plants

Harvest the plants

Build or repair fences

Clean and repair the barn and other buildings

Clean and repair equipment, and much more

Taking care of a farm and the farmer's family requires a lot of work. If everyone does their job properly, the job gets done.

Becoming a Farmer—Planting Beans

Goal: To teach students that they must be responsible to fulfill their duties

Materials: Potting soil, styrofoam cups or small milk containers, bean seeds, plastic plate or bowl, and water can

Procedure: Provide each student with a paper plate, a container filled with soil, and a bean seed. Put student's names on the cups, puncture small holes in the bottom of the cup, and fill the cups with soil. Let the students plant three beans in each cup about 1/2 inch deep. Cover the beans with soil. Then place the plate under the cup, water, and put the cup into the sunlight. When beans begin to sprout, students are to monitor the growth of their plants and record progress (measurements, first leaves appearing, etc.).

Assign various students to water the plants. Make sure that they follow instructions on how much water they are to provide for the plants so plates do not flood over. When beans become six inches high, the students may take the plants home. Put the plants in a bag, and then staple the bag.

Questions:

1. What is required for beans to grow?

Bean plants must have water and sunshine.

2. What will happen if the bean plants do not receive enough water? Explain to students that not having enough rain is a common problem with farming. (Drought)

If the bean plants do not receive enough water they will die.

3. What will happen if the bean plants receive too much water? (Flood)

If the bean plants receive too much water they will die.

Farm Animals

Goal: To have the students appreciate and know what farm animals provide

Procedures: Have students list the various farm animals in a book and write down what they are used for:

Cows: milk, butter, cheese, leather

Cattle: beef, leather

Chickens: eggs, meat

Pigs: meat, leather

Horses: pleasure, sometimes to pull wagons (in the past they were used for plowing fields)

Sheep: wool, meat

Goats: milk, meat

Caring for Farm Animals

Goal: To have students appreciate that much work is required to care for farm animals

Procedures: Have the class list what is required to take care of farm animals. The two most important requirements are food and shelter.

Questions:

1. What kind of food do the various animals eat?

Cows, cattle, horses, sheep, and goats eat grass and grain.

Pigs eat all kinds of food.

Chickens eat grains and insects.

2. Which animals need shelter?

Depends on the weather. They all require shelter in extreme cold.

Chickens need protection from hawks and foxes.

Sheep need protection from wolves.

3. Can you think of one other very important item that all farm animals must have to live?

Water.

Farm Fruits and Vegetables

Goal: To make students aware of the fruits and vegetables that farmers grow

Procedures: Divide a paper in half. On one side of the paper have the students list all the fruits that they know, and on the other side of the paper list all the vegetables. When the students are finished, let them share the fruits and vegetables that they wrote about.

Assignment: All students are to go to a food store and make a list of ten kinds of vegetables and ten kinds of fruit they see. Ask them to also list vegetables and fruits that they have never eaten.

Problems: What are some of the problems farmers have with

growing vegetables and fruit?

Lack of water (drought), too much water (flooding), hail, freezing, insects, diseases, etc.

You can also discuss the different kinds of nuts that farmers grow.

Asking for Forgiveness

Goal: To show children they should ask for forgiveness when they do something wrong to someone

Procedures: Role play someone bumping into another student in the hall. Have two students present this role play.

Questions:

1. What should the student say to the person that he had bumped?

The student should say, "I am sorry."

2. You were given the job to water your neighbor's plants when they went away on a vacation, but you forgot. When the neighbors got home, the plants were wilted. What should you say?

"Please forgive me. I forgot to water the plants."

Class discussion: Why do some people have such a hard time saying, "I am sorry," and "Please forgive me"?

Many times it is because people are too proud to admit that they have done something wrong. Both Sam and Jane were quick to apologize and forgive. They even had the good humor to laugh at how foolish they were to think that each one had an easy job.

Team Race

Goal: To teach cooperation and responsibility

Procedure: Divide the class into two teams. Give each student a piece of wrapped candy. They are to stand in line behind each other. The front two players are given a spoon. At the sound of, "Go!" the two students place their candy into the plate, and then pick up the candy with the spoon only. The students race to the line with the candy in the spoon. If the candy drops, the student can pick up the candy only with the spoon. Note: At no time is a hand to touch the candy; the candy can only be handled with the spoon.

When the student reaches the other plate, the student puts the candy into the plate. Then the student rushes back and give the spoon to the next player. The next player does the same. The team that finishes first is the winner.

Switch Roles

Goal: To have children appreciate what their parents do for them

Procedure: Explain to the students that today we will be switching

roles. We want all the girls to think what they would have to do if they were the mother, and all the boys to think what they would have to do if they were the father.

Girls: The girls will write about: If I were my mother, these are the things I would have to do.

Boys: The boys will write about: If I were my father, these are the things I would have to do.

Have the students write down in class all the things that their parents have to do to support them. Have the students take their papers home and ask their parents what else they have to do for them.

Thank-You Cards for Parents

Goal: To teach children to say thank you to their parents for all that they do for them

Procedure: Have children draw and color a thank-you card for their parents. They should list all the things that they are thankful for. If they need more room, they can insert a letter in the card.

Tying It All Together

Taking care of a farm requires much teamwork. Learning to respect each other's jobs and doing the job assigned helps the work to get done. Taking care of a family also requires much work. Children should appreciate all the sacrifices their parents make for them.