



CHARACTER BUILDING LESSONS

CARL SOMMER

YOUR JOB IS EASY

About the Book

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.



Main Virtues

**Respect for Others/Kindness/
Friendship**

Other Virtues

Appreciation, Cheerfulness, Peacefulness,
Respect for Work, and Tolerance



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Respect for Others

The problem began when Jane looked at the newly plowed fields and asked, “Sam, why do you plow the rows so crooked?”

“What difference does it make,” answered Sam, “if the rows are perfectly straight or a little crooked?”

“Well,” said Jane, “if you going to plow, you might as well do it right.”

“It’s not as easy as you think,” said Sam.

“Come on!” laughed Jane. “How hard can it be to plow a straight line?”

Jane doesn’t respect what Sam is doing; she thinks his job is easy. Sam doesn’t respect the work Jane is doing; he thinks her job is easy. We should respect and be thankful what others do for us.

Responsibility

Notice that both before and after the incident Sam and Jane were responsible parents. They each did their job well. The farm, animals, house, and children were well taken care of. The problem started when Jane criticized Sam’s work in plowing the field.

They finally learned their lesson, and did the work they knew best. They appreciated each other much more. We should become responsible for the things we do. Parents and teachers need to be responsible to train their children in the way they should go. One of the important things for parents and teachers to do is to model the behavior that they want their children to display. Modeling desired behavior is the most powerful teaching force that parents and teachers have.

Students’ Responsibility

Have students list things that they should be responsible for. Students should:

- Listen to teachers and parents
- Do assigned lessons
- Do homework
- Follow instructions
- Bring required materials to school
- Be clean and properly dressed
- Obey school rules
- Participate in class
- Refrain from talking in class
- Be present in school every day
- Do household chores
- Take care of their bodies

Planning Ahead

When Sam and Jane went to sleep that night, they had many happy thoughts about the next day. Because they thought their work would be so easy, they dreamed of all the fun things they would do with their spare time.

In planning your future, make plans for unexpected difficulties. Things don't always turn out the way you think they should.

Forgiveness

Sam and Jane laughed over what had happened. Then Sam gave Jane a hug and apologized. "I'm sorry for what I said. I've learned my lesson. I'll *never* again say that your job is easy."

Jane gave Sam a kiss and said, "I'm also sorry for what I said. The work you do *sure* isn't easy!"

When we do something wrong to someone, we need to apologize to that person. When someone apologizes, we need to forgive that individual.

Being Joyful

Jane happily went back to her job—which pleased the kids. Sam gladly went back to his job—which pleased the animals.

To be joyful in our work is something to be treasured.

A Life of Peace

Life went back to being peaceful and pleasant. And that pleased everyone!

Since Sam and Jane both went back gladly to their jobs, their life was pleasant and peaceful.

Learning to Be Thankful

We should be thankful for the things we have. Think of people in other places who would be more than grateful for the things we take for granted.

World's Problems

Have students make a list of some of the world's problems.

Broken homes
Lack of shelter
Loneliness
Persecution
No schools
Floods
Storms
Starvation

Wars
Diseases

Things to be Thankful For

Have students make a list of things to be thankful for.

Parents
Home
Brothers and sisters
Friends
Teachers
Place of worship
School
The country you live in
Health
Food

Questions

1. What did Jane ask Sam when she looked at the newly plowed fields?
Jane asked, "Sam, why do you plow the rows so crookedly?"

2. A. What did Sam and Jane think about each other's work?
Sam and Jane thought each other's job was easy.

B. Why did Sam and Jane think each other's job was easy?
*Sam and Jane didn't appreciate the kind of work each one was doing.
We need to learn to respect and appreciate each other's work.*

3. When they went to bed that night, what did they dream about?
Sam and Jane dreamed of all the fun things they would do with their spare time.

In your planning of your future, make sure you always plan for unexpected difficulties. Things don't always turn out the way you think they should.

4. What happened in the middle of the night?
In the middle of the night, Baby Timmy became hungry and began to cry.

5. What did Jane do when the baby began to cry?
Jane poked Sam in the ribs and called sweetly, "Sam!"

6. What kind of day did Jane say she would have as she got dressed that day?
Jane said, "This is going to be such an e-a-s-y day."

7. What was Jane's better idea about feeding the animals?

Jane's better idea was to use the tractor to feed the animals.

8. What did Sam say he would do in the afternoon because he had fed the baby in the middle of the night?

Sam said, "I'll just take a nap this afternoon."

9. As Sam was cracking the eggs for a special breakfast, what kind of day did he think it was going to be?

Sam said, "This is going to be such an easy day."

10. When Rover spotted Kitty, what did they both do?

Rover and Kitty dashed across the floor between Sam's legs.

11. What happened to the bowl of eggs when Rover and Kitty dashed between Sam's legs?

The bowl of eggs fell on the floor.

12. What happened to Sam's nose as he hurried to get the oatmeal?

Sam stepped into the eggs and banged his nose into the kitchen cabinet.

13. What did Sam do when Jane turned the water faucet on outside?

Sam turned the faucet on in the basement.

14. What happened to the oatmeal while Sam was in the basement waiting for the bucket to fill up with water?

The oatmeal was bubbling onto the stove.

15. What did the water in the basement do when Jane turned off the sprinkler system and the outside faucet?

The water in the basement came out full force.

16. What happened in the basement?

The basement became flooded.

17. What happened when Jane drove the tractor too fast over the rocky road?

The trailer hit a rock and overturned, spilling everything onto the road.

18. What happened to Jane as she tried to hold Mama Pig back?

Jane slipped, and Mama Pig dragged her through the mud on her face!

19. What did Jane say after she chased the baby pigs, carried them into the

pen, and fed all the animals?

Jane said, "Am I ever glad that's done! That was a lot of work."

20. What did Sam say when he saw the clothes that needed to be washed, dried, and ironed as he was busy scooping up pails of water from the flooded basement?

Sam said, "How will I ever get everything done?"

21. Sam had planned to prepare a special lunch for the children, but since he was so busy, what did he say he would feed them?

Sam said, "I'm going to feed you cold cereal and milk."

22. With all the animals happy and full, and things in the field beginning to settle down, what did Jane say as she walked over to the tractor?

Jane said, "Now I'll show Sam how to plow!"

23. What happened to Jane as she was looking back to make sure she was plowing a straight line?

Jane drove the tractor into a large mud puddle.

24. What happened to the tractor as the tires spun in the mud?

The tractor sank deeper into the mud.

25. What did Manny do when he saw the carrots?

Manny jumped up and followed Jane to the tractor.

26. What happened to Jane when she yelled, "Go, Manny! Go!"?

Jane was yanked off her feet and dragged through the mud on her face.

27. What did Jane say while she was spitting out mud?

Jane said, "That's it! I'm going home. I don't care if the field is crooked or straight! This is the hardest day of my life!"

28. What did Sam say as he was toiling in the basement?

Sam said, "This has been the hardest day of my life!"

29. Why are Sam and Jane having the hardest day of their lives?

Sam and Jane are having the hardest day of their lives because Sam has no experience as a homemaker, and Jane has no experience as a farmer.

30. After Sam and Jane had laughed over what had happened to them, what did:

A. Sam do and say?

Sam gave Jane a hug and apologized, "I'm sorry for what I said. I've learned my lesson. I'll never again say that your job is easy."

B. Jane do and say?

Jane gave Sam a kiss and said, "I'm also sorry for what I said. The work you do sure isn't easy!"

When we do something wrong to someone, we need to learn to apologize to that person.

31. What reaction did the kids have when Jane went back to her job?

The kids were pleased.

32. What reaction did the animals have when Sam went back to his job?

The animals were pleased.

33. What happened when Jane and Sam went back to their regular jobs?

Life went back to being peaceful and pleasant. And that pleased everyone.