



# CHARACTER BUILDING LESSONS

CARL SOMMER

## I AM A LION!

### About the Book



To grow up to be big, little lions have to learn survival skills, but the cub Sangu didn't want to listen to Papa and Mama's lessons—he just wants to play. Getting lost while escaping a charging rhino, Sangu learned how unprepared he really was to be out on his own. Befriended by some kind gazelles, Sangu didn't have the slightest idea as to what a lion should be. Sangu finally learned some valuable lessons—the hard way.

In a powerful story with superb illustrations, Carl Sommer teaches children to be assertive, to value learning, to respect their parents, and to respect themselves for who they are.

### Main Virtues

#### Self-Esteem/Respect for Parents/Assertiveness

#### Other Virtues

Appreciation, Caring, Citizenship, Compassion, Courage, Friendship, Generosity, Kindness, Obedience to Parents, Perseverance, Positive Mental Attitude, Self-Reliance, and Tolerance



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## **Complaining**

Whenever Papa would try to teach Sangu how to hunt, he would always complain, “My friends don’t have to work so hard. Why do I have to?”

Whenever Mama tried to teach Sangu how to use the sky as a map so he would not get lost, Sangu was never interested. He would always complain, “My friends don’t have to learn this boring stuff. Why do I have to?”

When it came to learning, Sangu always complained. There are consequences when one complains about things that they should do.

## **Getting Wisdom**

Sangu would never listen to his papa and mama. He wanted only to play. Sangu did not desire wisdom. Smart people want to learn.

## **The Law of Sowing and Reaping**

When Sangu discovered he was lost, he groaned, “Oh, how I wish I had listened to Mama when she tried to teach me how to use the sky as a map. Now I can’t find my way home.”

Then he sat down on a rock and cried. Sangu didn’t listen to his parents, so now he reaps what he has sowed.

## **Kindness**

When a young gazelle saw Sangu crying, he suggested, “Why don’t we go and try to help him?”

The kind gazelles invited Sangu to join them.

## **Self-Esteem—Accepting Oneself**

A young gazelle asked Sangu, “Why do you look so funny? Your feet are big, but your legs are short. Your body is small, but your tail is long.”

Sangu hung his head in shame. He was embarrassed. “That’s because I’m a lion,” he whispered.

“Well then,” one of the gazelles snickered, “lions sure are funny looking.” Then they all began to laugh at Sangu.

“I can’t help it,” groaned Sangu. He bowed his head and walked away.

He was sad because he looked so funny and different. We should never be ashamed of the way we were born.

## **Judging Others**

As Sangu looked up at the moon and stars, he thought about Papa. Sangu said, “And where’s Papa? Papa must know how foolish I am. That’s why he never came looking for me. He probably forgot about me!”

Sangu judged his father. But Sangu was totally wrong. His father and mother were spending every waking moment looking everywhere for him.

## **Respecting Parents**

Sangu wondered why he was always doing the wrong things and why he

was so funny looking.

Mama said to Sangu, “Gazelles don’t know anything about lions. But we do. That’s why you should listen to us.”

Sangu’s problem was that he was listening to others instead of his parents.

## **Learning Not to be Ashamed of Who You Are**

Papa said with a loud and strong voice, “Sangu, you are a lion! Don’t ever be ashamed of who you are!”

This time Sangu listened. He raised his head, stuck out his chest, and took a deep breath. Then he let out a loud roar that thundered throughout the mountains, “I AM A LION!!!!!”

Some people are ashamed of the color of their skin or how they look. We should never be ashamed of the way we were born.

## **Assertiveness—I AM NOT ASHAMED**

When you are finished reading this story, tell the children to say with a loud voice:

I AM NOT ASHAMED OF WHO I AM!

I AM NOT ASHAMED OF THE COLOR OF MY SKIN!

I AM NOT ASHAMED OF MY RACE!

I AM NOT ASHAMED OF WHERE I LIVE!

I AM NOT ASHAMED OF THE WAY I LOOK!

I AM NOT ASHAMED OF MY PARENTS!

## **Questions**

1. What did Sangu always complain about when Papa wanted to teach him how to hunt?

*Sangu would always complain, “My friends don’t have to work so hard. Why do I have to?”*

2. What did Sangu always complain about when his mom tried to teach him how to use the sky as a map so he would not get lost?

*Sangu would always complain, “My friends don’t have to learn this boring stuff. Why do I have to?”*

3. Why did Sangu always complain when it came to learning?

*Sangu complained because learning was work. Sangu was also lazy; he wanted only to play.*

When it came to learning, Sangu always complained.

4. What would Mama say to Sangu when he complained about learning?

*Mama would say, “You are a lion. You need to pay attention so you can*

*learn to be a leader; instead of acting like your friends.”*

Sangu would never listen to his papa and mama. He wanted only to play. Sangu did not desire wisdom.

5. Why is it important to listen to teachers and parents?

*It is important to listen to teachers and parents because they want to teach us things to help us become successful.*

The wise seek wisdom, but fools despise instruction.

6. What did Mama cry out to Sangu when the rhino attacked her?

*Mama cried out, “Run Sangu! Run!”*

7. What did Sangu wish he had done when he discovered he was lost?

*Sangu wished, “Oh, how I wish I had listened to Mama when she tried to teach me how to use the sky as a map. Now I can’t find my way home!”*

Then Sangu sat down on a rock and cried. Sangu didn’t listen to his parents, so now he reaps what he has sowed.

8. Explain the law of sowing and reaping.

*The law of sowing and reaping states that what you do is what get.*

If you work and plant corn, you will reap corn. If you are lazy and plan on sowing corn, but you do not plant any, no corn will grow.

9. What did the kind gazelles say to Sangu?

*The kind gazelles said, “You can stay with us.”*

10. Why were the gazelles kind to Sangu?

*The gazelles were kind to Sangu because they felt sorry for him.*

The gazelles were kind to Sangu. We should be kind to others.

11. What did Sangu want to do with the snake?

*Sangu wanted to eat the snake.*

12. What did the biggest gazelle shout to Sangu when he wanted to eat that snake?

*The gazelle shouted, “Don’t eat that snake! It will make you terribly sick!”*

13. What did the gazelle insist that Sangu should eat so he would be strong and healthy?

*The gazelle insisted, “Eat grass!”*

14. What new place did Sangu go to when he was playing hide and seek?

*Sangu climbed up a giant tree.*

15. What did an older gazelle demand when he saw Sangu up in a tree?

*The gazelle demanded, “Sangu! Get down from there right now! It’s dangerous to climb trees. You could fall! Don’t ever again be so foolish!”*

16. What did a young gazelle say to Sangu about him looking so funny?  
*The young gazelle said, "Your feet are big, but your legs are short. Your body is small, but your tail is long."*

17. What did Sangu groan when all the gazelles laughed at him for looking so funny?  
*Sangu groaned, "I can't help it."*

18. What did Sangu do after he groaned, "I can't help it"?  
*Sangu bowed his head and walked away.*

Sangu was sad because he looked so funny and different. We should never be ashamed of the way we look.

19. Why is Sangu so sad?  
*Sangu is sad because he thinks he looks so funny and different.*

20. How should Sangu have responded when the gazelles made fun of him?  
*Sangu should have told them that is the way lions look.*

He should never have been sad because of the way he looked.

21. What did the gazelles yell at Sangu when he started to run toward the jackals in order to protect his friends?  
*The gazelles yelled, "Stop! Run away as fast as you can!"*

22. How did Sangu feel when the gazelles told him the jackals could have eaten him?  
*Sangu was so scared that he shook all over.*

23. That night as Sangu looked up at the moon and stars, what did he think about his:

A. Mama?

*Sangu said, "Mama must be dead."*

B. Papa?

*Sangu said, "And where's Papa? Papa must know how foolish I am. That's why he never came looking for me. He probably forgot about me."*

24. Why is Sangu so discouraged about his parents?

*Sangu is discouraged because he is falsely judging his parents.*

We need to be careful about judging others. Sangu judged his father. But Sangu was totally wrong. His father and mother spent every waking moment looking everywhere for him.

25. As Papa and Mama Lion were searching for Sangu, what did Mama often say to Papa?

*Mama often said to Papa, "Sangu could have found his way home by now, if only he had been as eager to learn as he was to play."*

26. When Sangu became happy, what did he do that caused the gazelles to

jump for fright?

*Sangu let out a great big “Roarrrrrrr!”*

27. What did the gazelles say to Sangu for roaring?

*The gazelles yelled, “Don’t ever do that again! That sounds terrible! You never hear us making sounds like that!”*

28. What did Papa and Mama Lion do when they heard the faint sound of a roar that echoed through the jungle?

*With lightning speed Papa and Mama Lion raced toward the sound of the roar.*

29. What was Sangu doing that shocked Papa and Mama Lion?

*Sangu was eating grass.*

30. What did the gazelles do when Papa Lion let out a loud, “Roarrrrrrrrr”?

*The gazelles dashed away as fast as they could.*

31. What did Sangu do when Papa Lion let out a loud, “Roarrrrrrrrr”?

*Sangu froze.*

32. What did Sangu do when he turned around and saw that it was his father?

*Sangu yelled, “Papa!” and ran as fast as he could to his father.*

33. What did Papa do when Sangu ran to his father,

*Papa grabbed Sangu and hugged him tight.*

34. What did Mama do when she got to Sangu?

*Mama hugged Sangu and kissed him.*

35. Sangu asked, “Why am I always doing the wrong things, and why am I so funny looking? My legs are short, but my feet are big. My body is small, but my tail is...” What did Papa say as he looked straight into Sangu’s eyes?

*Papa said, “Sangu, you’re not a gazelle! You’re a lion!”*

36. What did Papa tell Sangu about friends?

*Papa said, “You’ve just been hanging around with different friends. You can’t let others who don’t know you tell you who you are.”*

37. What did Mama tell Sangu about friends?

*Mama said, “Gazelles don’t know anything about lions. But we do. That’s why you should listen to us.”*

38. What was Sangu’s basic problem, and why did he have so much difficulty?

*Sangu’s basic problem was that he was listening to others instead of his*

*parents.*

39. What did Papa tell Sangu about:

A. Eating?

*Papa said, "Lions don't eat grass. We hunt."*

B. Climbing?

*Papa said, "Lions aren't afraid of height. We climb."*

C. Enemies?

*Papa said, "Lions don't run away from their enemies. We face them."*

40. What did Sangu do after Papa Lion told him, "You are a lion! Don't ever be ashamed of who you are!"

*Sangu moved next to Papa and Mama. He raised his head, stuck out his chest, and took a deep breath. Then he let out a loud roar that thundered throughout the mountains, "I AM A LION!!!!!"*

Some people are ashamed of the color of their skin or how they look. We should never be ashamed of the way we were born.