

Excerpts from CRU for K-2 Teacher's Manual

The 100 page manual is part of a package that includes five beautifully illustrated animal story booklets, fifteen large discussion posters, and additional teaching aids.

Please visit CRU's Web Site for a color photo of some of the materials in this program.

<http://www.cruinstitute.org/training-materials/preK-2.html>

How to use this Program

The curriculum in this program gives teachers the opportunity to help young students develop understanding and respect for others. *CRU for K-2* stories were created to provide young students with information and understanding of life skills. These skills include learning how to problem-solve, using listening and communication skills, recognizing and expressing feelings, respecting differences, and dealing with bullying situations. Many of these skills are addressed in State Guidelines and Standards for Education. It is a program that is serious, yet presented in an innovative and creative manner. Here are suggestions on how to implement the program.

There are five stories in this curriculum package. Each is a story about a group of animals. However, each story teaches an element of the conflict resolution and anti-bullying curriculum. The stories are followed by a series of questions for the class. There are three large posters for each story that will help children understand and talk about the main points of the story.

The Teacher's Manual includes the stories and questions, Class Lessons, and Class Activities. The Class Lessons help the children better understand the message of each story. The Class Activities extend the children's learning by offering academic and creative responses to each story.

The program may be presented over several days or weeks. Here is how it works:

- (1) Stories:** Begin by reading the story, *Dogs and Problems* to the class and discuss the questions at the end of the story.
- (2) Posters:** Ask one child or a group of children to come to the front of the class and present the first poster. Discuss what was happening in this poster. Repeat this process for posters two and three.
- (3) Class Lessons:** Teach the Class Lesson section of the Teacher's Manual.
- (4) Class Activities:** Choose appropriate activities from the Class Activities section of the Teacher's Manual.

This process is repeated for each story in the order that they appear in the Teacher's Manual. You will find the curriculum challenging, interactive, and instructive.

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(Sample story)

Use Your Words

Being Your Own Problem Solver

Once upon a time there was a school. It was a really strange school because the only children in the school were cats. There were cats in kindergarten, cats in first grade, and cats in second grade. The teachers in the school were very large cats. Some people called them tiger cats.

Every noon after lunch all the cats in kindergarten, first grade, and second grade went out to play. It was a wonderful sight to see so many happy, furry creatures all playing and purring and having fun.

Then one day a very scary thing happened. Victor and Rasheed began to argue over a purple ball. Each of them wanted to play with the ball and neither would give in. Now Victor was a strong, blue-black cat with a large tail and shiny coat. Rasheed was as handsome as Victor only he had a yellow striped coat, green eyes, and especially long whiskers.

Many other cats crowded around as the two prepared to fight. Tameka yelled, "Use your claws and scratch! That's how you can get the ball."

Aaron chanted, "Hiss and make loud noises! You will surely win the ball that way."

Lilly called out, "Arch your back, and swat with your tail! Knock your enemy down and run away with the ball."

Victor and Rasheed prepared to fight. Victor's strong tail stood like a giant baseball bat, while Rasheed's whiskers pointed straight out. They arched their backs, their hair stood up, and they slowly circled the purple ball. All the cats were watching to see what would happen next. Many were yelling and calling for a fight, but some were frightened.

Just then a tiny gray cat, only in kindergarten, whispered something in a very small voice. He said, "Use your words."

“Wow,” said Kelley who was the president of the second grade class. “That little guy is right! You need to talk about the problem. If you don’t, what do you think might happen?”

The two cats stopped circling the purple ball. Each saw the Tiger Cats coming toward them looking very fearsome. They took a deep breath and thought about what would happen if they used their claws, hissed, and swatted each other. They decided to ‘use their words’ to solve the problem. Here’s what they did.

First Victor said, “I had the ball when you came and swatted it away from me.”

Then Rasheed said, “I didn’t swat it away. I snagged it with my whisker when I saw it rolling down the hill.”

“But I just put it down for a minute so I could tell Brandon something,” said Victor. “And I feel really angry,” he continued.

“Wait a minute,” said Rasheed. “I am really confused because I didn’t know you were using that ball. There must be a way to solve this problem. Maybe we could just play together with the purple ball.”

“That’s cool,” said Victor.

And that’s just what they did. Until the recess bell rang out, Victor and Rasheed swatted the ball together peacefully and playfully.

When recess was over, Victor, Rasheed, and Kelley asked the little gray cat, “Where did you learn to ‘Use your words?’”

Do you know what the little cat said? He told all three cats, “Our teacher, Ms. Snookelfritz, always tells us to ‘use our words’ when we are angry with someone, not our claws, or our hiss or our swat!”

“That’s really cool,” said the three older cats.

And so on that great day, the older cats learned an important lesson from the little gray cat. The fight never happened and many cats began to ‘use their words’ when they needed to solve a problem.

Questions for Class Discussion

These questions will help develop an interesting discussion. Children will begin by talking about the content and meaning of the story, and the discussion will progress to talking about how to solve your problems by ‘Being Your Own Mediator’.

- Why were Rasheed and Victor going to fight?
- What do you think might have happened to them if they had fought?
- What did Tameka, Aaron, and Lilly tell them to do?
- Why did they decide not to fight?
- How did the little gray cat learn to solve problems?
- Did the little gray cat’s idea work?
- What does ‘Use your words’ mean?
- What do you do when you have a problem or when you are angry with another person?
- Can you think of a time when you could have ‘used your words’ to solve a problem?
- Why is this story important for children?

Use Your Words

Class Lessons

(Sample)

Being Your Own Problem Solver

Training Guide

The Problem Solving Process is a life skill and can be used by everyone in their daily lives. This exercise will demonstrate how all people can use problem solving skills when they have a conflict with another person.

Teaching Points

- The Problem Solving process can be used in everyday life.
- You can be your own Problem Solver when you have a conflict or a disagreement with another person.
- By using the Problem Solving process, you can help the other person to change and be more cooperative.

Procedure

1. Say to the class, “We know that everybody has conflicts or disputes, even you. *“Can you think of ways that you could use Problem Solving skills when you have a conflict with another person?”*”
2. Write the children’s suggestions on the board.
3. Discuss the importance of cooperation. It is hard to keep trying to pick a fight if the person you are trying to fight with won't fight with you. So if you set your mind to cooperating and not making the fight worse, eventually the other person will probably cooperate with you.
4. Do a demonstration for the class of “Being your Own Problem Solver.” The Teacher is the person who is “Being their own Problem Solver” and a child volunteer is the other person in the dispute who does not know Problem Solving skills and (at first) does not want to cooperate.

Suggestions for the demonstration:

- a. You (the teacher) are angry with the child for talking while you are teaching the class.
- b. You are upset because you heard the child calling another child a name.
- c. You are concerned because the child has not returned the book you lent him or her.

5. Go through the problem solving process Step by step.

(See next page for the Process Outline)

Being Your Own Problem Solver

Part 1:

Ask for the problem

Restate the problem

Share what you think the problem is

Part 2:

Talk about the problem

Ask for feelings about problem

Share your feelings about the problem

Part 3:

Ask for solutions

Share your ideas for solutions

Restate the solution

6. Discuss with the class what you did in each part of the Problem Solving. If appropriate, write the process on the board.

Children Role-Play the Problem Solving Process:

1. Ask each child to choose a partner and try out The Problem Solving Process. Hand out the Process, if appropriate.
2. If you prefer, have two children come to the front of the class and demonstrate the Problem Solving Process. Choose as many pairs to demonstrate the process as you wish.

Let's talk about Victor and Rasheed:

- Why did the little gray cat tell Victor and Rasheed to “Use Your Words?”
- Is Using Your Words like the Problem Solving Process? How?
- How did The Problem Solving Process help Victor and Rasheed?
- What might have happened if they had not used the Problem Solving Process?

Use Your Words Class Activities (Sample)

Name _____

Use Your Words

Draw a picture or write your own ending for this story
