



Character-Infused After-School Lessons

Twin Decisions

<p>Grade Levels: 4-6</p> <p>Character Focus: Respect</p> <p>Academic Content Area: English-Language Arts</p> <p>Lesson Duration: Story and discussion takes between 25-30 minutes, depending on student maturity level. Each extended activity takes approximately 30-45 minutes.</p> <p>Author Comments/Notes: The scenario for this lesson can be adapted when the group consists of more boys than girls.</p>	<p>Materials needed: Scenario (below), pencil, paper or notebook, dictionaries, markers or crayons. Optional: Scissors, Vocabulary Log, People Profiles, Character Trading Cards Worksheets, Perspective Taking: Role Play Guidelines</p> <p>Implementation Strategies Used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Problem-solving discussion ✓ Character-related written reflection ✓ Perspective-taking ✓ Role-playing
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Lesson Summary

Twin sisters who share a room want to paint their bedroom. One wants to paint it green; the other, yellow. They must resolve their differences.

Academic-Character Objectives

1. Students will respectfully listen to the scenario and to each other's opinions, as measured by teacher observation of their behavior.
2. Students will identify ways to resolve the story's dilemma through positive behavior, e.g., respect and compromise, as measured by discussion of the story lessons; finding, comparing, and contrasting similar situations in their own lives; writing or drawing their reflection.
3. Students will identify new vocabulary for their journals and write sentences using the words.

Into (*Motivation, anticipatory set, setting the standard*)

1. Ask students if they have to share a room with a sister, brother, or someone else. Ask them if they have a problem with sharing a room, e.g., what time the lights go out at night or when one wants to play a CD while the other is trying to study for a test.
2. Explain the meaning of compromise. Say, “Today we are going to hear a story about respect and compromise that involves a story of twins who have to come up with a solution to their problem.” Provide the following scenario:

Sylvia and Marie share a bedroom. Their mother said they could paint the room. Sylvia likes green, but Marie likes yellow. They go to the paint store and bicker over which color to buy. Their mother decides not to buy any paint until they can be courteous and respectful of each other and come up with a solution for their dilemma. What decisions can the girls make to solve their problems? (For boys, use Sam and Mario or other boys’ names.)

3. Introduce vocabulary: *bicker, courteous, solution, dilemma, and decision*

Through (*Lesson continues*)

4. Discuss the story and its lessons. Use as many questions as time permits.
 - What is the problem Sylvia and Marie have?
 - What happened at the paint store? What was their mother’s reaction?
 - What might Sylvia and Marie have done before they went shopping to avoid the problem?
 - What would you do if you wanted to get your room painted right away, but could not agree on a color?
 - Describe a similar situation you have experienced where you could not agree on something.
 - What is the importance of the character trait of courtesy at school and at home?
 - What is the importance of compromise?
 - How would you suggest Sylvia and Marie plan together so they can agree and make a decision on what color to paint their room? Why would you suggest this?
 - Do you have any ideas about how else they can compromise? (e.g., having a bedspread or drapes one color; the paint, another color).
 - What questions would you ask the girls if you were their mother and you wanted to help them make a decision? Why would you ask these questions?

Beyond (*Application, Extensions, and Assessment*)

- Review the scenario and the lessons learned from the discussion. Discuss how compromise gives each person something they want. Check for evidence of student understanding.
- Vocabulary and Dictionary Use: Look up vocabulary definitions in the dictionary. Add to the Vocabulary Log.

- Journal Prompts:
 1. Describe the way you would handle the situation if you and your sister, or you and your brother disagreed on how to decorate your room.
 2. If you were Sylvia or Marie, what would you suggest to solve problem? Why?
 3. Do you think the mother was right in not buying any paint the first time the family went to the paint store? Why or why not?

- Role Play: (See Perspective-Taking: Role-Play Guidelines)
 1. Have students play Sylvia, Marie, and the mother. Ask them to act out the scene in the paint store when the girls could not make a decision.
 2. The scene is at home. Have Sylvia and Maria discuss their dilemma with each other. As an alternative, have the mother participate in the discussion.

- People of Character: See People Profiles Worksheet

- Trading Card Activity: See Character Trading Card Worksheet

- Decorate a room with a partner:
 1. Supply home decorating magazines and paint chips requested from a paint store.
 2. Provide students with paper, scissors, glue, and crayons
 3. Ask the two students to make decisions together to “decorate a room,” e.g., beds, bedding, drapes, a desk. If there is no magazine picture, the student should draw the item.

- Design a pattern for a matching bedspread and drapes.
 1. Provide students with paper.
 2. Ask them to design a pattern for a bedspread, drapes, and throw pillows for their room. The design should represent something they really like, e.g. stripes, checks, flowers, cars, trains, and animals.
 3. Have students share their design with the class.

Written by Roberta Pantle

Vocabulary Log

Name _____

Date _____

Story _____

Directions: First, list new words from the story. Then, list the page number on which the word appeared. Then write the dictionary definition. Finally, write a sentence using the word.

Word	Page Number	Define the word and use it in a sentence.
1.		_____
2.		_____
3.		_____
4.		_____
5.		_____
6.		_____
7.		_____
8.		_____

People Profiles

Name _____

Date _____

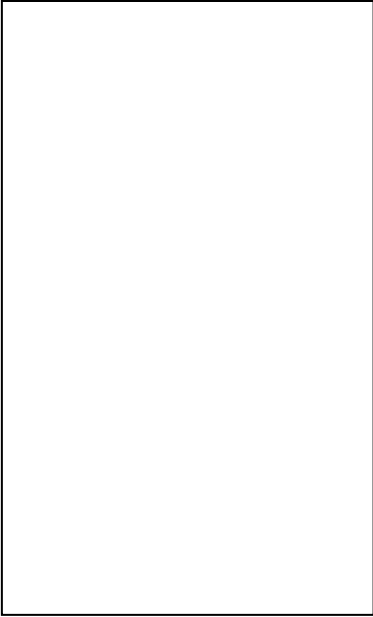
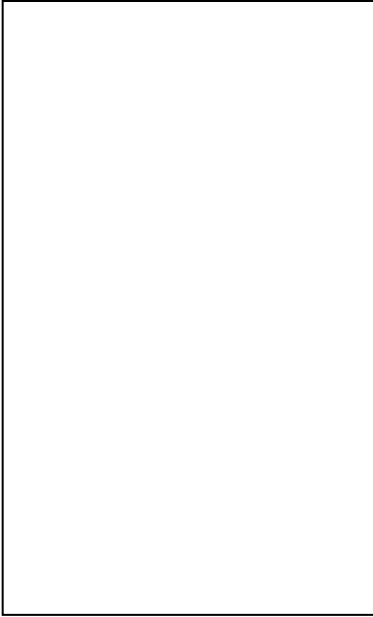
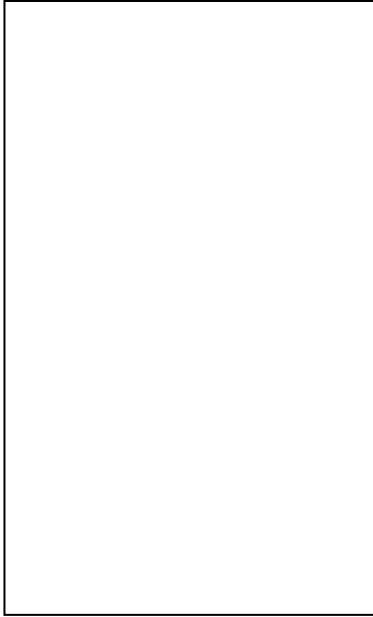
Story _____

Character name from the story	Which character trait best describes this person?	Example of positive character
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

List characters from the story in the first column. In the second column, choose a trait that best describes the character in the story. In the third column, give an example from the story describing how the character showed this trait.



Character Trading Cards

<hr/> <i>Name of Story</i> <hr/>	<hr/> <i>Name of Story</i> <hr/>	<hr/> <i>Name of Story</i> <hr/>
<i>Character in Story</i> 	<i>Character in Story</i> 	<i>Character in Story</i> 
<hr/> <i>Character Trait</i> <hr/>	<hr/> <i>Character Trait</i> <hr/>	<hr/> <i>Character Trait</i> <hr/>

Directions

1. *Front of card:* Draw a colorful picture of the character from the story. Then list the character trait that best describes this person. Example: respect
2. *Back of card:* Write an example of how this person portrays the character trait.

A Tip

Cards can be cut up, laminated, organized in binder sleeves and used as trading cards.



Perspective Taking: Role-Play Guidelines

“Perspective taking or role taking—the cognitive ability to discern another person’s point of view or emotional state—is a key ingredient of empathy, a sensitivity to the plight of others” (Beland 2003).

Because empathy sets the standard for our relationship with others it is a core skill in developing ethical values and bringing them to life. Empathy inspires one to act with care and justice. Perspective taking includes the cognitive ability to:

- Recognize others’ feelings through physical, verbal, and behavioral cues
- Infer how others may be feeling by imagining oneself in their shoes (Beland 2003, p 10)
- Identify facial expressions and situational cues associated with different emotions
- Recognize different emotions within themselves
- Listen to others when they express their thoughts and feelings
- Practice taking the roles of others in the same or different situations
- Look for similarities between themselves and others.

The strategies to provide these opportunities are wide ranging and differ with the age and developmental stages of students. They include but are not limited to:

- Using literary characters and character analysis to have students put themselves in the character’s situation
- Reflecting on their own thoughts and feelings through journaling and pair share
- Using visual art to interpret thoughts and feelings
- Cooperative or collaborative learning activities where students practice the behaviors of respect and responsibility
- Using authentic problem-solving activities where students have to look at different perspectives, interviewing others to identify similarities
- Moral dilemma discussions
- Class meetings
- Role play (some versions of role play are called simulation).

Using brief role play in the classroom supports the development of the behaviors associated with empathy, respect, responsibility, and integrity. Role play develops perspective taking and appeals to the kinesthetic learner as well. Linked to perspective taking, role play helps students understand social behavior, their roles in social interaction, and ways to solve problems more effectively. (Joyce & Calhoun 1996).

Role play situations can be generated from content area studies such as role playing a literary character, an historical person or event, as well as authentic issues of students. While there are many variations of the components of a role play the following is a basic guide.

Elements of a Role Play

1. Set the context and the situation or scene.

Keep in mind the students needs, interests, and developmental level.

Use situations that are authentic for the students; ask students for suggestions.

It can be a problem, a conflict, or an open-ended situation.

For younger students, identify or predict any language that may be needed.

To encourage role taking, ask students to remember how they felt and what they thought in a similar situation.

Start with simple situations and then move to more complex situations.

2. Identify roles.

Consider the abilities and personalities of the students.

Roles can be developed and suggestions made or roles can be open ended and allowed to evolve.

3. Identify audience focus.

To encourage active listening among the audience, a question or prompt may be given to the observers.

Students can discuss, talk about, or write responses.

Norms of behavior for the audience may be reviewed.

3. Follow up.

After the role play, ask key questions of the role players as well as the audience that tap into the cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects of the role play. To develop perspective taking use questions such as:

Did you feel the same as ____? Why or why not?

What questions do you have for ____ about what happened?

What would you have done or said differently?

What would you have done or said the same?

What were you thinking or feeling about when you _____?

How do you know that ____ was feeling _____?

4. Debrief the students.

Review the different roles, the audience reaction, and remind children this is a role play.

Finally, the role of the teacher in role play is one of “traffic controller” helping the flow of traffic and avoiding bottlenecks, but not telling individuals which way to go (Jones 1982 cited in Thompkins, p.5).