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Hello, nina!



Year 3. Growing Together – Teacher Guide

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IN PROGRESS

Key Points

- Falling out and making up.
- The poisonous nature of bearing grudges.
- How relationships can be strengthened by saying sorry and starting again.

Objectives

Knowing

To recognise that upsets begin with small acts of thoughtlessness.

Accepting

To accept that responsibility often belongs to both parties.

Doing

To look out for times to say sorry and to forgive.

Chapter lesson notes

Being generous with our apologies

Making up after falling out costs something from both parties. It calls on each person to recognise what went wrong between them from the other's point of view. This includes accepting that there can be a difference between the doer's intent and the act's effect on somebody else. Realising these things calls for imagination as well as humility, and is something which all of us can find difficult.

Owning up to something of which we are ashamed is always embarrassing. But there is a further point which children need to learn and that is to take responsibility for actions whose consequences are out of proportion to anything they intended. This is particularly so of teasing where what is a bit of fun for one person can be deeply hurtful to another. Boys and girls typically have different temperaments when it comes to teasing but children of either sex can take it badly.

Bearing a grudge and wanting revenge is like swallowing poison and expecting the other person to die. In the worst cases, a defensive and unhappy child can start to adopt his or her own patterns of bullying behaviour. One way to prevent this is to help children realise how much responsibility they bear for their own happiness. It's normal to react angrily to a provocation, but it's up to us whether we cling on to bad feelings or decide to let them go.

We all do things we regret and often there is some measure of fault on both sides. Saying sorry diffuses the situation, and when one person apologises the other is more likely to join in. Being the first to apologise does not mean that we are the most at fault.

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Chapter 15: Keeping to the rules

"Bring me a feather pillow," the wise man said. She was surprised but did what she was told.

"Now," said the wise man, "open the pillow and shake the feathers out of the window." It was a windy day and the feathers went everywhere.

After a few minutes, the wise man went on, "Now, I want you to find every one of the feathers and put them back into the pillow."

"That's impossible," said the woman, almost in tears. "I can't possibly find them all now."

"Yes," said the wise man, "and that is what happens when you gossip. Words fly from one person's mouth to another, just like these feathers flew in the wind. And once you have said them, you can never take them back."

You can accompany the last part of the story by putting up a **picture of feathers** on the IWB. Invite the children to draw a picture of the story. If you have an old feather pillow or cushion, give them some feathers to stick onto their pictures.

3. Modern-day gossip and feather catchers: computer

Ask the children if they can think how gossip is spread nowadays. We still talk to people by word of mouth, but we also use technology. Put up this picture called **Feathers in the Wind** on the IWB:

Gossip has always been there, but now we can use the airways to spread it faster and further than ever before. We don't only spread stories: we can spread unkind names and photographs. Anything which shows somebody else in a bad light is potential material. And it isn't just what we say behind people's backs which hurts, but what we say to them direct. Insults delivered either in person or online can destroy a person's self-esteem.

Talk to the children about how they can learn to be "feather catchers", stopping unkind stories from spreading. They can learn to stand up for somebody who is being maligned and say something nice about them instead. It is also good to ask people's permission before sharing any photos of them online. Even when the pictures are flattering, it is a useful habit to get into.

4. The Lyrebird – nature film

Cyberspace introduces a further aspect to gossip mongering: the potential to appear anonymously or assume another identity.

Show the children **BBC's David Attenborough clip of the Australian lyrebird** (2.54 min), a remarkable bird which deceives others by mimicking other birds and noises, including the click of a camera, a car alarm and even a chainsaw. Make a pun of the word on the IWB: is it lyre-bird or liar-bird??

Draw out from the children that the duped are using only one of their senses, their hearing. Usually, we human beings use a mixture of our senses to communicate with others but when we communicate using machines we are a bit like the other birds in the forest and lose much of our functionality. Text messages tell us a minimal amount about the user so that it is easy to impersonate somebody else. We can detect more from a phone call, especially if we recognise the voice, and more still from a video call but we still don't have the full context that a live meeting with somebody gives us.

Remind the children of online "stranger danger" and advise them never to communicate with people they don't know without their parents' knowledge.

5. Write a letter of apology (Downloadable activity)

Show the children an example of how to write a formal letter of apology on the IWB, including the address, date and appropriate sign-off.

Then, using the downloadable activity, ask them to imagine that they have kicked a ball through their neighbour's window and are writing to say sorry. What difference does it make to follow up the in-person apology with a letter? Or perhaps the neighbour wasn't at home when they tried to call.

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Reflection

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IN PROGRESS

Reflection

Remind the children of the key points of the story: that being angry is one thing but dwelling on it and bearing a grudge is another, that it often leads to unhealthy gossiping involving others, and in the worst cases can lead to acts of retaliation so that the victim can become a bully. Ask them to talk about how saying sorry clears the air and builds up community.

Encourage the children to think about why it is hurtful when people gossip about us, and how we engage in gossip if we choose to pass on unnecessary things about others. Show them how the potential to sting is all the greater in cyberspace but that, used well, technology also gives us useful tools to connect: e.g. speaking with relatives and friends at a distance, sending birthday messages, cheering somebody up who is ill. Ask them their ideas.

Family links

Ask the children to tell their parents the story of the village gossip and to watch the **film clip of the lyre bird**. Encourage them to talk together about the dangers of contacting people they don't know on the internet and what house rules the children should respect. They can also bring up the suggestion that they always ask people before sharing photos of them online.

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