



SEEDS for Story Time

Promoting Social Emotional Development Through Books



The Most Magnificent Thing

By Ashley Spires

A charming picture book about a girl and her very best friend, a dog. The girl has a wonderful idea. She is going to make the most MAGNIFICENT thing! She knows just how it will look. She knows just how it will work. All she has to do is make it, and she makes things all the time. However, the girl tries and fails, repeatedly. She gets really, really mad and she quits. But after her dog convinces her to take a walk, she comes back to her project with renewed enthusiasm and manages to get it just right. (Ages 3-6)

Introducing this book to young children:



CLL2.4a

Before reading the story, guide a discussion about the pictures before reading the story. Introduce new vocabulary as appropriate. Show a few selected pages and ask, “What do you see here?” or “What do you think is happening here?” Introduce new vocabulary using the pictures as support. For example, “Here’s the girl working on her project. Look at her face. She looks mad and upset. She is “angry!”



SED2.3b

Ask the children how they know when someone is mad or frustrated. Would they smile or frown? Show some pictures of children showing different emotions (make sure some of the faces look angry or mad). Ask how they think the children in the pictures are feeling and why they think that (point out facial expressions). As you read the story, pause to look at the illustrations focusing on the girl’s facial expressions. Ask the children what they see that tells us she is mad. Children may notice her banging things together, stomping and kicking and her face turning red.



SED2.4b

Explain to the children that it is okay to feel mad. Even though we all feel mad sometimes, there are many ways to express feeling mad and to help the feeling go away. Remind the children how, at the end of the story, the dog suggested they go on a walk and “bit by bit the mad got pushed out of her head”. Ask the children to what they do to help a mad feeling go away and chart their responses. After getting ideas from the children, explain that you are going to teach them a new way to calm down when they feel mad. Teach the “Turtle Technique” (See the Tucker Turtle Takes Time to Tuck and Think in the “Scripted Stories for Social Situations” section of the CSEFEL website www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel). Post the turtle technique in your classroom and talk about it often so children will know what to do when they feel mad.

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Repeated readings of the same book provides opportunities for preschoolers to develop a sense of competence and confidence. Children learn to point at and label pictures, turn pages, discuss the story, and make predictions of what will happen next, while learning new words and relating the story to their own experiences. Read *The Most Magnificent Thing* for several days in a row and use some of the ideas, activities, and teaching opportunities listed below to enhance social and emotional skills.



GELDS Activity Spotlight

Art

Make your own most magnificent thing. Provide children with a variety of materials; small cups, craft sticks, straws, construction paper, foil, and tape. Talk with children about how the girl in the story planned her creation in her head, but once she made it that it didn't turn out like she thought. Encourage them to think about what they will make. This is a great time to model perseverance as you make your own creations. Talk about your plans and when something doesn't go as planned, show them are you are going to try something else. As they work, encourage their thinking by saying "I wonder what you'll do with that cup" or "I see that fell apart, I wonder what we could do to make it stay together." **CD-CP3.3a**

Sensory

Create a sensory center tub that the children can visit when they get angry or frustrated. Place old magazines and other materials for them to tear and shred into the tub. This helps the children relieve some of their frustrations. **SED2.4d**

Science

Provide old items for children to take apart such as a flashlight, record player, telephone, keyboard, or remote control in the science center. Provide small tools, such as screwdrivers and pliers, for disassembling. Encourage the children to explore and take apart the items. **APL3.4a**

Focus on Family

Families can provide a box of "junk," including bottle caps, cardboard tubes, buttons, paper clips, clothespins, and cotton balls, to glue to cardboard or paper in the art center. Talk about what the children have created using descriptive words and stories. **CD-CR2.4a**

Collect juice boxes, stuff with newspaper, and tape the ends. Place in an open area on a flat surface. These blocks stack higher than wooden blocks. When the tower falls, encourage your child to try again.

APL3.3d

