



photo by Marta Rusek

The Knight and the Dragon

Overview

Read *The Knight and the Dragon*, by Tomie De Paola, to consider what it takes to solve problems so everyone is satisfied.



45 minutes



Preschool (ages 3-5)



Newcomer Friendly

Aims & Objectives

Reading this story and wondering together about it will provide an opportunity to introduce the concept of problem solving together.

Reading List

Sparkling Still provides tools for teachers of children ages 3-12. Included are sample lessons, a master lesson plan, ideas for building classroom community, an introduction to wondering questions and more.

Sparkling Still provides useful instructions on:

- Creating the circle and other components of your time together: pages 5-22
- Reading out loud with children: pages 16-17
- Wondering with children and adults: pages vii-xi and 6-7
- Individual Art Responses: page 7
- Art Supplies: pages 20-22

Credits: This lesson is based on material that was previously published in *Sparkling Still* (2012: QuakerPress) and is used with permission.

Materials & Setup

Book: *The Knight and the Dragon* by Tomie De Paola ([link to purchase: http://tinyurl.com/j7x5c5b](http://tinyurl.com/j7x5c5b))

Video: 4 minutes ([video link: http://tinyurl.com/zbshwop](http://tinyurl.com/zbshwop))

Summary of the Story

A knight and a dragon decide to have a fight. Neither one has ever had a fight before... they study ways to fight, but it ends in disaster. A princess comes to the rescue... with a solution that works for everyone!

Suggestions for reading for teacher spiritual preparation before exercise/lesson

Psalm 121 I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills....

1 Peter 3:11 (RSV)

Let him turn away from evil and do right; let him seek peace and pursue it.

Worship in Song, A Friends Hymnal

#299 Last Night I had the Strangest Dream

#300 Vine and Fig Tree

#304 A Song of Peace

Materials Needed for Activity Response

For Individual Art Response:

- drawing paper
- crayons, markers, or pastels
- other supplies

For Teacher-directed Activities:

#1. A scenario for the children to role-play needs to be formulated prior to asking the children to role play. For example, two children want to play together, but one wants to play with blocks and one wants to do puzzles. Help the children learn the following Steps to Problem Solving, prior to role-playing:

Steps to Problem Solving for Young Children, with a facilitator:

- Help them define the problem
- Support them in sharing their feelings
- Create ideas for solving the problem together
- All who own the problem agree on a solution to try
- Evaluate how the solution worked.

- #2. Multi-generational Activity: Plan and help organize a meeting BBQ for everyone. Need to agree upon a date, place, menu, supplies and who will help. Some pre-planning will be needed to be certain the meeting is in agreement with the idea of a BBQ.
- #3. Fire safety: Discuss rules and make “Agreements List” on chart paper.

Take Home Notes (one per family)

Note for children to take home after exercise/lesson or to email to parents during week prior to this lesson:

Today we read *The Knight and the Dragon*, by Tomie De Paola. We learned about problem solving in ways that work for everyone.

Instructions

Welcome the children to the circle. Be sure to introduce everyone, if visitors are present.

Invite children and adults to go around the circle sharing one or two plusses and minuses from their day or week. It helps to ask for 2 items only, either 2 of one or one of each. Children are comfortable with a limit, unless another person’s comment sparks another one for an individual child.

Sing a centering song, such as “God’s Love is a Light,” hymn #218, *Worship in Song, A Friends Hymnal*, and/or one of the songs previously suggested under Materials. In addition, or instead of, use breathing or other exercise to center the group. The simplest way is to breathe deeply three times. Adding lifting arms up and down with the breath or holding tummy during deep breaths can help.

Show the cover of the book, read the title and author’s name. Ask the children a question that invites them to wonder about the story.

“This story is about a knight who wants to fight a dragon.” Then, “Let’s see what happens.”

Read the story, holding the book so all can see. Depending on reader’s comfort level with the children, allow comments during the story, especially from younger children.

After reading the story, invite the children to wonder about the story with you.

Wondering Questions

I wonder if you have ever wanted to fight something?

I wonder what it feels like to fight?

I wonder what you liked in the story today?

After the children have finished wondering and are ready to go to the next activity, introduce the option for Individual Reflective Art Response or a Teacher-directed Activity.

Individual Reflective Art Response

Children choose from a collection of attractive art supplies and work individually for about 15 minutes to create something of importance to the child. It may or may not be a direct reflection on the story they just heard and wondered about.

Options for Teacher-directed Activities

#1. A scenario for the children to role-play. For example, two children want to play together, but one wants to play with blocks and one wants to do puzzles. Help the children learn the Steps to Problem Solving, before they role-play the scenario.

Steps to Problem Solving for Young Children, with a facilitator:

- Help them define the problem
- Support them in sharing their feelings
- Create ideas for solving the problem together
- All who own the problem agree on a solution to try
- Evaluate how the solution worked.

#2. Multi-generational Activity: Plan and help organize a meeting BBQ for everyone. Need to agree upon a date, place, menu, supplies and who will help.

#3. Fire safety: Discuss rules and make “Agreements List.”

“Agreements” are developed by people who wish to establish how they want to behave with one another. For fire safety, discuss basic safety issues, establish rules, and develop a document of “Agreements” upon which everyone can agree.

Closing

Provide a 5-minute warning before the children need to clean up. After clean up, gather the children in a circle and ask them to name one thing for which they are grateful. Sing songs while waiting for their parents to pick them up, or before joining the adults after the rise of Meeting for Worship.

If the children join their loved ones while Meeting for Worship is still in progress, before you lead them back to the meeting room, invite them to remember how they still themselves and some things about the morning that they may want to think about during the final moments of Meeting for Worship.

Hand out the Take Home Notes, if using, as parents pick up the children in the First Day School room, or after the rise of Meeting for Worship, if joining loved ones in worship.