DOCTOR SEUSS

For First-day Schools

Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stories Listed Alphabetically</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stories Listed Thematically</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource List</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography of Dr. Seuss Books</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lessons (in Alphabetical Order)</td>
<td>7-48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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INTRODUCTION

For many years the stories of Dr. Seuss have provided children and parents with an entertaining way to look at important issues. The popularity and availability of these books make them an effective teaching tool. Most of these books are still in print and available at most bookstores; they are also generally available in libraries.

This curriculum provides an organized way of presenting some of these issues within a First-Day School setting for elementary school age children. Younger and older children can also make use of many of the stories, and there are questions and activities to choose from at a variety of ability levels.

Included are 18 lessons, each based on a separate Dr. Seuss story. Each lesson includes:

1. A brief summary of the story
2. Issues raised
3. Questions
4. Activities
5. Resource list of related Bible or Quaker stories and songs.

Many activities require craft supplies. Have basic materials - crayons, glue, scissors, paper - on hand; read lessons carefully, ahead of time, to be sure you have time to purchase or collect any additional materials needed.

There are some resource books used in several lessons that would be helpful to have on hand. These are listed on page 5. For additional help call the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Religious Education office, at (215) 241-7008.

The following are good sources for Quaker books:


Friends General Conference, 1216 Arch St., 2B, Philadelphia, PA, 19107; (215) 561-1700, or 1-800-966-4556 – call for a catalog.

Quaker Hill Bookstore, 101 Quaker Hill Drive, Richmond, IN, 47374; (800)-537-8838 - will special order books.
# Alphabetical List of Stories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bartholomew and the Oobleck</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Big Brag (in <em>Yertle the Turtle and Other Stories</em>)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Butter Battle Book*</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gertrude McFuzz (in <em>Yertle the Turtle and Other Stories</em>)</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horton Hatches the Egg*</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horton Hears a Who*</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How the Grinch Stole Christmas*</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Can Lick 30 Tigers Today</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The King's Stilts</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Lorax*</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Sneetches*</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thidwick the Big Hearted Moose</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too Many Daves (in <em>The Sneetches and Other Stories</em>)</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Was I Scared Of? (in <em>The Sneetches and Other Stories</em>)</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yertle the Turtle</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Zax (in <em>The Sneetches and Other Stories</em>)</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Appropriate for older children as well as little ones.
THEMATIC LIST OF STORIES

CARE FOR ONE ANOTHER IN COMMUNITY
  • Being Sorry - Bartholomew and the Oobleck
  • Care for One Another - The King's Stilts
  • Caring for Others; Knowing Our Limits - Thidwick the Big Hearted Moose
  • Understanding Differences, Fear - What Was I Scared Of? (in The Sneetches and Other Stories)

STEWARDSHIP OF THE ENVIRONMENT
  • The Lorax

EQUALITY
  • Equality, That of God in Everyone - The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins
  • Freedom and Equality - Yertle the Turtle
  • Judging by Appearances - The Sneetches

FAITH
  • Faith and Caring - Horton Hatches the Egg
  • Inner Voice - Horton Hears a Who

PEACE
  • Conflict Resolution - The Zax (in The Sneetches and Other Stories)
  • Understanding Differences - The Butter Battle Book

SIMPLICITY
  • How The Grinch Stole Christmas

INTEGRITY
  • Actions Speak Louder Than Words - The Big Brag (in Yertle the Turtle and Other Stories)
  • Honesty - I Can Lick 30 Tigers Today
  • Telling the Truth - And To Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street
  • Being Yourself - Gertrude McFuzz (in Yertle the Turtle and Other Stories)
  • Individual Uniqueness - Too Many Daves (in The Sneetches and Other Stories)
RESOURCE LIST

Bibles - *Children's Illustrated Bible or the Good News Version*, best for children.

*George Fox: the Man Who Wouldn't*, Sophia Lyon Fahs, Friends General Conference, 1994. May be borrowed from PYM Library, or purchased from FGC.

*A Manual on Nonviolence and Children*, compiled by Stephanie Judson (includes a section on cooperative games). May be borrowed from PYM Library.


**Related Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Curricula:**


*Obadiah: Four Lessons for First-Day Schools*, Merril Dutton, PYM Religious Education Committee, 1987, 1996. May be borrowed from PYM Library, or purchased from FGC.

*Speak to the Earth and It Shall Teach Thee*, Committee on Children and Young People at Yearly Meeting, 1989, 1991. May be borrowed from PYM Library or purchased from FGC.

**Available from commercial bookstores:**


BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SEUSS BOOKS

And To Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street, Dr. Seuss, Vanguard Press, 1937.

Bartholomew and the Oobleck, Dr. Seuss, Random House, 1949.


The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins, Dr. Seuss, Vanguard Press, 1938.

Horton Hatches the Egg, Dr. Seuss; Random House, 1940.

Horton Hears a Who, Dr. Seuss; Random House, 1954.

How The Grinch Stole Christmas, Dr. Seuss; Random House, 1985.

I Can Lick 30 Tigers Today, Dr. Seuss; Random House, 1980.

The King’s Stilts, Dr. Seuss; Random House, 1939.

The Lorax, Dr. Seuss; Random House, 1971.

The Sneetches and Other Stories, Dr. Seuss; Random House, 1961.
  • The Sneetches
  • The Zax
  • Too Many Daves
  • What Was I Scared Of?

Thidwick the Big Hearted Moose, Dr. Seuss; Random House, 1980.

Yertle the Turtle and Other Stories, Dr. Seuss; Random House, 1958.
  • Yertle the Turtle
  • Gertrude McFuzz
  • The Big Brag
And To Think That I Saw it on Mulberry

Summary:

Mario has an incredible imagination. He would rather make things up than relate the simple truth. Every day his father asks Mario what he has seen on his way home from school. All the way home Mario's mind has been fantasizing but when he meets his father at the door he can only relate the simple truth.

Issue:

Telling the truth

Questions:

◇ Why does Mario tell the plain truth when he gets home?
◇ What makes us want to tell a story that can't be beat?
◇ How can we use a good imagination?
◇ How does it feel to tell the truth, to lie?
◇ What is the difference between making a minnow into a whale and an outright lie?

Activities:

1. Draw a simple picture. Then draw the same subject and make it fantastic.
2. Write a simple story and then rewrite it with lots of embellishment.
3. Make an advertisement. First state in a simple way what the product will do for the consumer. Then think up an exaggerated version. Act the advertisements out for the class.
4. Using clay or Playdough™ make fantastic beasts and real animals. Be sure to have brightly colored clay since color is an easy way to make things fantastic. If you use regular clay, paint or glaze the animals after they dry.
5. Game: Set up a simple relay game. Divide the class into two teams. Each team member hops (or skips or jumps) to one end of the room, touches the wall and runs back. He or she touches the hand of the next child in line. The first team to have all its runners run wins. Play once, then tell one team to cheat. Runners do not do the prescribed action or do not touch the wall or the next child's hand, etc. Play a third time and ask the other team to cheat and the first one to follow the rules. Follow up with these questions:
   a) What happens when one team cheats?
   b) How does it feel to cheat, to see the other team cheat?
   c) Are you ever tempted to cheat? Why?
   d) What should you do if someone is cheating?

Related Stories and Bible Verses:


Bible:
Matthew 5:33-37, "Swear not at all ... but let your speech be yea, yea; nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil."
John 8:12-32, "And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free."
Bartholomew and the Oobleck

Summary:
A mighty king commands "something different" to fall from the sky and gets nasty, green, sticky stuff called Oobleck. Bartholomew convinces the king that the simple words "I'm sorry" can put it right - and it does.

Issue:
Being sorry

Questions:
◇ Why do you think the king wanted something new?
◇ Do you sometimes want something new because you're tired of the old?
◇ Are there times when this is okay? Why? Not okay? Why?
◇ What can happen when we don't think ahead about the consequences of changing things? What happened in the story?
◇ How can you right a wrong that is your fault?
◇ Is it easy to say "I'm sorry"? What gets in our way in saying those words?

Activities:
1. Make green Playdough™
   1 c. flour
   1/2 c. salt
   1 c. water
   1 T. oil
   1 tsp. cream of tartar
   Green food coloring

   Stir together and cook in saucepan over medium heat until it pulls together and forms a ball.

After the children have made designs with the play dough, ask them to start over again and make a new design. How did they feel about ruining their first design? How do they feel about their second design? Was one design better than the other? Or was each one special in its own way?

2. Draw a picture - make it a large one on shelf paper. Let each child illustrate a part of the story. Use torn green tissue paper squares, slightly crumpled and glued on to represent the Oobleck.

3. Have each child draw a cartoon showing an action and then the consequence. You might want to give them some suggestions, such as playground bully or friends arguing.

4. Human Pretzel Game - Two people leave the room. The others hold hands in a circle and twist themselves over and under and through each other without dropping hands. The two people waiting outside come back in and are challenged to untangle the group. The Pretzel cooperates as the "untanglers" figure out who goes where. (Taken from For the Fun of It! by Marta Harrison, PYM, 1975).

Related Stories and Bible Verses:

Sometimes I'm Good Sometimes I'm Bad, Elspeth Campbell Murphy, Cook, 1981.
"King Midas" - in most Greek Mythology collections.
Bible:
John 12:44-50, "For I did not come to judge the world but to save the world."

Songs:
"Lord of the Dance", #15, Worship in Song, A Friends Hymnal, FGC.
"Amazing Grace", #85, Worship in Song, A Friends Hymnal, FGC
The Big Brag

Summary:
A rabbit and a bear get into a bragging match that reaches an absurd level. A worm comes along and out-brags them both by pointing out what fools they have been by just arguing.

Issue:
Being oneself; not having to brag or exaggerate.

Questions:
◇ Why did the rabbit and the bear begin to brag?
◇ Did they really smell and hear the things they said they did?
◇ Why do you think some people brag?
◇ What can you say to a friend who feels the need to brag?
◇ Do you ever brag? Why?
◇ What would make you feel you did not need to brag?
◇ How can you avoid being taken in by a braggart? Can you recognize one when you hear one? Are there identifiable characteristics or do you have to look further?
◇ Is bragging the same as lying?

Activities:
1. Act out the story:
   a. Use finger-in-the-holes puppets to act out the "Brag". Cut out a rabbit, making finger holes for child to put two fingers in to represent ears. Do same for bear and leave holes for arms. The worm can have holes for antennae.
   b. Use a hold-up mask made out of a paper plate for each character for small children. Draw and cut out a face for rabbit, bear, and worm. Use long rabbit ears, fuzzy bear ears, or pipe cleaner antennae for interest. Tape to a ruler or popsicle stick for child to hold in front of his/her face.
2. After discussing the questions, read "The Tortoise and the Hare: An Aesop Fable", by Janet Stevens. Have the children take turns acting out the story as the hare and the tortoise.
3. With the children in a circle, have them "brag" about how they can make the best rhythm clapping their hands. After each child has had a turn "bragging", join all together to play the cooperative game "Rhythm Clap". With eyes closed, everyone begins to clap or beat any rhythm they choose. At first, it will sound disjointed and chaotic, but gradually people try to change in order to create a fine, rhythmical experience. It can end at any time by people opening their eyes or by slowing down the rhythm. "Rhythm Clap" is taken from For the Fun of It by Marta Harrison (PYM 1975).

Related Stories and Bible Verses:

Bible:

Song: "Simple Gifts", #271, Worship in Song, A Friends Hymnal, FGC.
The Butter Battle Book

Summary:

This story is about two imaginary groups of beings, the "Yooks" and the "Zooks". The young are carefully instructed with regard to the "badness" of each others' differing customs for the buttering of bread. A wall is erected between the two groups that continues to grow. There is a nurturing of mistrust which eventually erupts into minor acts of violence. Militarism develops. The book ends with a situation analogous to our own nuclear weapons dilemma.

Issues:

Conflict resolution and appreciating differences

Questions:

◇ What is Grandfather Yook like?
◇ What is the wall for?
◇ What does Grandfather Yook say to his grandson at the wall?
◇ How are Yooks and Zooks different?
◇ Is this difference important?
◇ What do the Yooks and Zooks do about their differences?
◇ What is the result?
◇ Do the two groups end up happy? Do they decide anything? Do they solve the problem they are having with each other?
◇ How could Yooks and Zooks work together?
◇ What would the Yooks and Zooks have if they put their butterside-up and butter side-
down bread together? (You guessed it—a sandwich!)
◇ Do you know someone who is "different?"
◇ How are they different?
◇ Does the difference make you afraid?
◇ How can we grow through differences?
◇ What if there were no differences among people?
◇ What if everyone on earth was exactly like you? How would that be?

Activities:

1. Brainstorming and role-playing:
   Give each child a piece of paper. If your group has children who don't write yet, you can organize small groups with one writer in each.
   Describe this situation: You and your family have just moved far away from your old home. It is your first day at a new school, and the school year has already begun. You are the "new kid." It is recess, and on the playground, another kid has just taken an annoying POKE at you. Your hat falls off. Some other kids see this and laugh.

   a) What Can You Do? Have the children list as many possibilities as they can, without regard for whether they are good or bad. Encourage real spontaneity. The children should write down anything that comes to mind.

   b) Test the Things on the List by Acting Them Out. Someone can be the "new kid", another can be the recess teacher-in-charge, others can be schoolmates, the principal, etc. After each skit, ask the children if the action being
tested got them something they wanted. Continue until everything on the lists has been evaluated -- by the children themselves. (This exercise does not consume much time.)

2. Make “box theaters” showing scenes of friendliness and cooperation. Descriptions and diagrams follow.

3. Sue's Game: Everyone takes a paper and pencil and fills in the blanks in these sentences: “If I were a color, I'd be __________”; “If I were an animal, I'd be __________”; “If I were a fabric, I'd be __________”, and “If I were an athlete, I'd be __________”. What other sentences can you think of? The group leader then collects the papers and reads them anonymously, having the children guess who wrote what (taken from For the Fun of It! by Marta Harrison, PYM, 1975).

While discussing who wrote what paper, guide the children towards examining the differences that make us all unique.

Related Stories and Bible Verses:


Bible:
John 15:10-27 - Love One Another
Mark 12:29-34 - "Thou shalt love thy neighbor ..."
Luke 10:27-37 - Good Samaritan

Songs:
"I've Got Peace Like a River", #246, Worship in Song, A Friends Hymnal, FGC.
A Box Theatre:

String attached here and attached to the back of box to hold up top.

Sky and distant background applied with poster paint or acrylic.

Figures and trees made of cereal box cardboard. Poster or acrylic painted and taped in place.

"Curtains" over side

Draw an orchestra pit, or an audience.

Cover the body of the box, behind the curtain flaps, with wall Paper scraps, or paint.

Making the Curtains:

Cut larger strips for box flaps to allow for pleating effect.
The Five Hundred Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins

Summary:

In the kingdom where Bartholomew lives all the people are expected to remove their hats before the king. One day a strange things happens to Bartholomew. As the king rides by Bartholomew goes to remove his hat, but for each hat he removes, another one springs up in its place. In this book magic intervenes to teach Bartholomew, the king, and the people that all should be treated equally.

Issue:
Equality – There’s that of God in everyone.

Questions:
◇ Why couldn’t Bartholomew take off his hat?
◇ Is King Derwin more important than Bartholomew?
◇ Why was Bartholomew able to bare his head when the king made an offer of gold in exchange for his hat?
◇ How do you feel when you must “remove your hat” or make someone else feel more important than you?

Activities:
1. Make Hats:
   a. Simple hats
   b. Broad-brimmed hats:
   Cut out hat fronts of appropriate size for your children from black cardboard.

   Cut out a strip of cardboard to fit each child’s head size. Staple in a circle and then staple to the back of the hat front.

Bonnets:
Cut slits in 18” x 12” pieces of black or gray construction paper:

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<thead>
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<th>18”</th>
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<td>12”</td>
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Fold the two outside panels over the center panel and staple in place (see diagram). Staple ribbons for ties to the front corners.

b. Wrapping paper hat:
Cut two 20-inch circles from gift wrap paper. Glue them together back-to-back (so the pattern shows on both sides). Smooth circle with your hands to make them stick together well. Put the hat on your head while it is still damp from the glue. While looking at yourself in a mirror, mold the center of the circle to fit the shape of the head. Leave the edges of the circle to stick out around as a brim. To form the crown of the hat, tie a piece of yarn around the hat at the point where the brim begins. Trim the edges of the brim with scissors, if necessary.

c. Paper captain’s hat:
Materials: Large sheets of colored construction paper or drawing paper; stapler

(1) Fold a large sheet of paper in half along the short side or width (Fig. a)
(2) Keep the folded part on top and draw a line down the center of the paper (Fig. a)

(3) Fold the two top corners, marked in the illustration with a letter x, over to the middle line on the paper (Figs. b and c)

(4) Fold one of the bottom ends of the paper, marked with a letter z, over the two folded corners (Fig. d)

(5) Turn the paper over, and do the same with the other bottom end (Figs. e and f)

(6) Staple both ends of the hat (see illustration).

(7) Decorate the hats with paper feathers or designs drawn with crayon or colored felt-tipped markers.

2. Games (where everyone is equally important):

a. Lap Ball: Everyone sits on the floor in a circle (7 to 15 people can fit). Legs are extended in front and all feet are in the center. (If an old tire were placed in the center, more people could play.) Hands support the body by being placed behind it on the floor. Heels are not to be lifted and the hands must stay behind the back, though they can move. The object is to keep the ball off the ground while passing it quickly from lap to lap. If it gets stuck around the ankles, people can think up a creative way to get it moving again. The fun increases when two balls are being passed simultaneously in different directions. The cooperative aspect of the game is evident when two people are working together to keep the ball from falling between them on the floor.

b. Musical Laps (Sandra Cangiano at Abington Friends School faculty workshop): This is a cooperative version of Musical Chairs. The whole group forms a circle, all facing in one direction, close together, each with hands on the waist of the person in front of you. When the music starts, everyone begins to walk forward. When the music stops, everyone sits down in the lap of the person to the rear. If the whole group succeeds in sitting in laps without anyone falling to the floor, the group wins. If people fall down, gravity wins. (from A Manual on Nonviolence and Children, by Stephanie Judson, et al.).

Related Stories and Bible Verses:

*King and Quaker, Dialogue between Charles II and William Penn,* by Parson Mason L. Weems. Describes how Penn felt about how to treat the Indians. Part of Miniature Quaker Library: Order from Friends General Conference.

*George Fox: The Man Who Wouldn’t,* by Sophia Fahs - Chapter 1 - about not tipping hat. Order from Friends General Conference.

*Bible:*


*Songs:*

“This is My Father’s World”, #29, *Worship in Song, A Friends Hymnal,* FGC.
Gertrude McFuzz

Summary:
A bird with a very plain tail is envious of one with a fancy tail. She eats a special pill and makes her tail fancy. She eats more and more and her tail becomes so large she can't fly, whereupon her friends must pull all the feathers out (OUCH!) and she learns her lesson.

Issues:
Being true to yourself; not envying others

Questions:
◇ Do you ever wish for something someone else has? How does it make you feel? How can you make yourself feel better?
◇ How are you special just as you are?
◇ What are some ways that we can see, feel and/or hear that of God in ourselves? in others? (Example: love, sharing, etc.)
◇ Have you ever been envious of some one's appearance, possessions, or abilities? What are some ways of dealing positively with each of these?
◇ What can you do to help a friend with this problem?
◇ Have you ever wanted to be someone else? Do you know what it means that "the grass is always greener on the other side of the fence"?
◇ What are ways you can affirm yourself? Others?

Activities:
1. Make "special" buttons of paper, etc., to wear. Each should have the child's name and "I am special". They could be decorated with feathers. (For colorful ones, buy a feather duster and pull it apart.)

2. Making Birds
   a. Using stiff paper or oaktag, draw a bird body, wings, and tail with slots as shown (adapted from Making Things Ann Wiseman, page 59). Cut out and deco rate. Use a bright feather from a pulled-apart feather duster to give some fluff to the tails. Hang bird from a thread. For really young children, just glue feathers to a single dimension bird shape they can decorate. Hang from a string.

   b. Balancing Bird (adapted from Making Things, Book II, Ann Wiseman). Cut a crescent moon or bird shape from heavy cardboard or light wood. (See illustration). Poke a hole near bottom for a bent paper clip hook. Hang keys or other weights on hook until the shape balances on your finger. Decorate like a bird.
3. Make a chart of affirmative things we can say to our friends when we think they need a lift.
4. Make a private list of things to say to ourselves.
5. Discuss how clothes with visible labels are like the fancy feathers wished for by Gertrude.
6. Pin a paper to the back of each person. Everyone writes positive thing on the person’s back. When finished each receives his/her list of positives.
7. Draw a collage of people, places and things that make you feel special.

Related Stories and Bible Verses:

_Thee, Hannah!,_ Marguerite De Angeli, Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1940.

_Bible:
_Luke 15:11-32, Prodigal Son
Matthew 6:25-33, "Therefore, take no thought saying ... shall we be clothed?"

_Songs:

"All God's Critters", #306, _Worship in Song, A Friends Hymnal_, FGC.
“I Would Be True”, # 261, _Worship in Song, A Friends Hymnal_, FGC.
Horton Hatches the Egg

Summary

Horton is an elephant who agrees to watch over a mother bird's egg so she can take a vacation. He is teased by his friends and threatened by hunters. He is moved from his home to a circus. Through it all he is faithful one hundred percent.

Issue:

Faith

Questions:

◇ What is it that we like so much about Horton?
◇ How did you feel about Mayzie?
◇ Can you think of someone who reminds you of Horton?
◇ Can you think of ways that you are like Horton?
◇ Think of a time when you were faithful (some time spent defining this word as a group might be useful) to an ideal or a person. How did it feel?
◇ How does it feel when we let our selves or someone else down?
◇ Have you ever had the responsibility of caring for someone or something? How did you feel about that?
◇ What is hard about being faithful 100%?
◇ How can one be faithful to a friend who is in trouble?
◇ What can you do if a friend does something "wrong" and you know about it? (Creating examples of situations that might arise and role playing various responses can be a helpful activity.)
◇ Have you ever felt caught between conflicting values (for instance where your peers encourage you to do something your parents would not approve of; or someone you know does not live up to ideals that are important to you)? How did this make you feel? How did you respond to the situation? Note: This type of question can be very personal and the answers need to be held in confidence by the listeners.
◇ What qualities do you think are important in caring well for others?

Activities:

1. Take care of an egg during First-Day School: It might be a good idea to use hard-boiled eggs for this activity. Participants can suggest things that they think their egg will need, for example, a warm nest or carrying basket. Have materials ready to make these things [cardboard, cotton, felt, Styrofoam, old egg cartons, etc.] If there is time you might build an obstacle course with chairs and suggest the children go over, under and around them while carrying their egg.

2. Play a cooperative game: At least eight people form a tight circle by standing shoulder to shoulder. Then all turn to the
right, grasp the waist of the person in front of them, and take one step to the center to tighten the circle. Players then try to sit on the knees of the person behind them, trying to avoid the thighs. Now that everyone is "sitting" on everyone else try to perform a variety of actions suggested by the players. Some examples are: clap hands, hold arms out to the side and flap them, take three steps forward or backward.

3. Share and discuss stories of Quakers and other famous individuals who remained faithful to their ideals in spite of the risks involved. Finding stories about young people may be especially helpful. Related activities might be acting out the stories, making a mural to depict the story, or making a collage; or even a collage that you glue to cardboard, cover with Mod-Podge (available at craft stores), dry and cut into a puzzle. The curriculum, Quakers Answer the Call from PYM's Religious Education Concerns Group has good ideas on sharing the lives of well-known Quakers.

4. After you have talked about individuals who have had their faith tested, it might be interesting to re-open the questions about times we felt tested to do the "right thing" or correct a mistake. A related question is how to handle fear during such times. The story of Moses meeting Pharaoh is a good one to use in this discussion. Another activity is to learn some prayers that others have found helpful. Try writing original ones, too.

5. Making a birds-nest snack is fun for the younger children. Warning: this is a very messy, but fun project. This recipe serves 4 to 8. Melt 1 cup of peanut butter with 2 tablespoons of margarine until it reaches a smooth consistency. Stir in two cups of Chow Mein noodles and drop by spoonfuls onto waxed paper. Make a dent in the middle with the back of the spoon and fill with candy eggs or raisins.

Related Stories and Bible Verses:

Let Your Light So Shine, Committee on Children and Young People at Yearly Meeting, 1986. (Especially the section "By Their Fruits Ye Shall Know Them").

Thee Hannah!, M. De Angeli, Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1940 (both available from the PYM Library).

Bible:
Luke 8:4-18, Parable of the Sower

Songs:

"When I Needed a Neighbor", #293, Worship in Song, A Friends Hymnal, FGC.

"This Little Light of Mine", # 266, Worship in Song, A Friends Hymnal, FGC.

"I Would Be True", # 261, Worship in Song, A Friends Hymnal, FGC.
Horton Hears a Who

Summary:

Horton hears the voices of the tiny Whos calling for help. They live on a dustball and they could be destroyed because no one besides Horton sees or hears them. The other animals threaten Horton and his dustball. They don’t believe there are any Whos. Luckily Horton is faithful to what he hears. With Horton’s help and cooperation amongst the Whos, the tiny dustball community saves itself.

Issue:

Listening to our inner voice

Questions:

◊ Why does Horton care about the Whos?
◊ Does it matter that he cannot see them?
◊ Is everything you care about visible and audible?
◊ In what way does Horton’s behavior remind you of behavior Quakers aspire to?
◊ Can you think of a time that you've acted on an inner prompting to do something even in the face of adversity?

Activities:

1. Rainstorm Game: One person acts as the “conductor” of the storm and stands in the center of the circle. As with an orchestra, the conductor brings each person into the storm (symphony) in turn. Standing in front of one person, the conductor starts rubbing her or his own hands together. The person imitates the motion. The conductor turns around slowly in place until everyone is rubbing hands together. Then, coming around to the first person again, and while everyone is still rubbing hands, he or she starts snapping fingers. This motion also goes all the way around, with each person continuing the first motion until getting a new direction from the conductor. The game goes on with hands slapping thighs and finally with both slapping of thighs and stamping of feet - the crescendo of the storm. As with a thundershower, the volume decreases as the conductor goes through the above steps in reverse order until the last person rubbing hands is silent.

2. Make a list of everyone or thing that helps you in this life, and a list of ways that you contribute to this world. Can you illustrate this?

3. Think of examples in nature that show how everything is important. Example: birds spread seeds, worms aerate soil, bees make honey.

4. Worship Share about experiences in Meeting for Worship when we listened to our inner voice. With smaller children, you might do a relaxation/centering exercise and then discuss how they feel. A simple exercise: ask children to listen
to noises outside the room, inside the room and then within themselves.

Related Stories and Bible Verses:

“Stephen Listens to God” in My Book of Friends, by Joyce Holden (available from PYM Library).

The Lion and the Mouse and Other Aesop’s Fables, by Doris Orgel and Bert Kitchen (illustrator), DK Publishing, 2000.

From the Center Out, by PYM, RE Concerns Group, 1999, Chapter 2 (available from PYM Library, FGC).

Bible:
Matthew 25: 34-40, “Truly I say to you as you did it to the least of these brethren you did it to me."
1 Kings 19: 3-15 - Elijah on Mt. Sinai.
The Book of Jonah (Old Testament) – Story of Jonah and the Whale.

Songs:

“Magic Penny”, #221, Worship in Song, A Friends Hymnal, FGC.
“Standing in the Need of Prayer”, #167, Worship in Song, A Friends Hymnal, FGC.
How the Grinch Stole Christmas

Summary:

The story takes place Christmas Eve when the Grinch, who hates Christmas, decides to stop Christmas from coming. He steals all the toys, trees, trappings, and food for Christmas but finds, to his dismay, that he hasn't stopped Christmas from coming because Christmas doesn't come from a store.

Issue:

Simplicity, gift-giving

Note - Suggestions for presenting the story in First-Day School or at home: Read the story up to the point at which the Grinch, ready to dump the Christmas paraphernalia, stops to hear the noise of the Whos down in Who-ville crying. Ask the children to give their versions of the possible endings to the story before reading the conclusion.

Questions:

◇ Early Quakers did not celebrate Christmas. Do you know why? (Friends thought that one day was as holy as another and didn't feel that Christmas should be singled out.)

◇ Why do Christians generally celebrate Christmas and why do we celebrate on December 25th?

◇ How would you explain to someone who had never heard of Christmas what we do and why we do it?

◇ What are the ingredients of Christmas?

◇ If Christmas doesn't come from a store, where does it come from?

◇ If you were asked to celebrate Christmas in its most simple form, what would you plan? What would give Christmas more meaning for you; what would you add or subtract from the festivities?

◇ Think back to all the answers to the previous questions. How do you think gifts of war toys fit in with your ideas? What toys and gifts are the best to receive? What gifts give you the most joy to give others?

Activities:

1. On Christmas Day, go to Meeting for Worship or have Meeting for Worship at home.
2. Take a star walk on Christmas Eve or Christmas night. Plan ahead with a friend who lives at a distance to look for the North Star and think of each other at the same hour.
3. Trim an outside tree for the birds and animals: Thread popcorn and cranberries on string to garland the tree. Stuff pine cones with peanut butter and birdseed to hang on tree.
4. Take a family or class walk in the woods to see how nature waits for the rebirth of spring.
5. Make ornaments from natural dried leaves, grasses, seed casings, acorns, nuts, etc., and hang on an indoor tree. Hot glue is the best way to hold natural ornaments together. An adult should supervise the glue closely.
6. Have a family or class Bible reading of the Christmas story.
7. Act out the Christmas story in simple form, including singing lullabies to the baby Jesus.
8. Have a Christmas Sharing Party in which the children bring favorite Christmas stories or stories of family Christmas traditions to share.
9. Plan an informal carol sing at Meeting or at someone’s home.
10. Brainstorm ways to make Christmas special with less emphasis on the material elements; i.e., what do people remember from past Christmases? What is remembered often holds the greater meaning.
11. Make simple gifts to share. For example, pomanders made out of oranges stuck with cloves, book marks made out of felt or paper.

Related Stories and Bible Verses:


_Bible:_
Matthew 2, Visit of the Magi.

_Songs:_

"Away in the Manger", #65, _Worship in Song, A Friends Hymnal_, FGC
"Simple Gifts", #271, _Worship in Song, A Friends Hymnal_, FGC
"The Friendly Beasts" ("Jesus Our Brother"), #78, _Worship in Song, A Friends Hymnal_, FGC
I Can Lick 30 Tigers Today

Summary:
A young protagonist declares he can lick 30 tigers and 30 tigers appear. As he examines the tigers there seem to be reasons for not licking them. Some look too little, and some too hungry and so on until there is only one tiger left to consider; but that will have to wait until after lunch.

Issue:
Truth-Telling

Questions:
◇ What do you think is happening in this story?
◇ Have you ever felt good enough to say something like "I can lick 30 tigers today"? Would you really mean that or would you just be trying to find a way to express how you feel?
◇ What is a lie? Can anyone think of an example of a lie?
◇ Sometimes we say you can get "caught in a lie". What do you think that means?
◇ If this story had happened to you, what do you think you would have done?

Activities:
1. This story is a lot of fun to act out. A variation on the theme is to put on a puppet show. There are many kinds of puppets. Younger children might enjoy making sock, finger, or paper bag puppets, while older children can make more complicated ones.

2. Another way to depict the story is with a large mural or a homemade movie theater.

"Movie Screen" directions:

Materials Needed:
a) Grocery Box.
b) Two three-fourths-inch dowels (taller than box so they may be turned by hand on each side). Shelf paper.
c) Covering material for the box.

Method:
a) Cut square section from front of box; remove back.
b) Cut holes on each side of box, top and bottom, for dowels. (Dowels should fit very tightly in the holes).
c) Cut shelf paper a few inches wider than viewing hole.

After story has been painted or pasted on paper, attach each end on a dowel.

d) Cover the box either with paint or paper.

3. Conduct a survey: Ask other children and adults if they were ever caught in a lie and what happened. This could be tape recorded, or pictures of the incidents could be drawn. The children could brainstorm other questions for their survey related to truth-telling and lying.
4. Play the game, "Rumor": one person makes up a sentence (the greater the nonsense the more interesting the outcome) and whispers it to someone else. After it has been whispered to everyone, the last person repeats what he/she has been told out loud. Usually the sentence has changed dramatically since it was first thought up. Discuss checking on the truth of things we hear about other people before we act.

5. Read and discuss The Adventures of Obadiah by Brinton Turkle. Some of the activities in the curriculum on Obadiah by Merrill Dutton, available from Friends General Conference, will be helpful.

6. Read pages 164 to 170 of The Phantom Tollbooth by Norton Juster (or listen to the tape) on unfortunate conclusions. After you have read the excerpt older children can brainstorm ways to make a game called "Jumping to Conclusions".

7. Tigers are also an interesting topic. [Before exploring the following topics it will be necessary to find out something about the real life behavior of tigers; most encyclopedias will be able to provide some information. One particularly important point is that only weak or injured tigers attack people and cattle; normal tigers much prefer their usual game.]
   a. Activities from Speak to the Earth and It Shall Teach Thee, the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting curriculum, could be helpful in exploring this topic. Order from FGC.
   b. Tigers in literature could be explored. The children could spend some time finding descriptions of tigers in Bartlett's Familiar Quotations. Rudyard Kipling is another good source for children to explore.

Related Stories and Bible Verses:

The Cat Who Went to Heaven, E. Coatsworth, pp. 52-54. Collier Books, 1972

Bible:
Luke 12:1-12, "Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light."

Songs:
"The George Fox Song", #272, Worship in Song, A Friends Hymnal, FGC.
"Simple Gifts", #271, Worship in Song, A Friends Hymnal, FGC.
The King's Stilts

Summary:
When King Birtram worked, he really worked. Not only did he have ordinary King's work to do, but he also had to care for the mighty Dike Trees that protected the people from the sea. After someone stole the King's stilts, the King sank into a deep depression at his loss and the Kingdom was nearly lost to the sea. Eric, the page boy, recovers the stilts and saves the Kingdom.

Issue:
Caring for one another.

Questions:

◇ What things make you sad?
◇ What things help you to feel better when you are sad?
◇ Have you ever tried to help someone who was sad? What happened?
◇ Have you ever known anyone who was as sad as King Birtram?
◇ How did you feel about the King playing with stilts?
◇ What did you think about Lord Droon? If you were Eric, what would you have done?
◇ Do you think play is as important as work? Why, or why not?
◇ What do you think of the problem of the Nizzards? Do you think there is anything like that in the real world?

Activities:

1. This story presents a good chance to explain one of the roles of the Overseers of the Meeting. Perhaps an Overseer can come talk to the children about the ways they try to support people, and some of the things that really seem to help.

2. Have the children explore their own feelings and needs. Unfinished sentences will help children share their feelings:

   If I were sick, I'd like someone to ...

   If I felt sad or depressed, I'd like someone to ...

   If someone close to me died, I'd like someone to ...

   When I feel afraid (or angry, disappointed, unfairly treated, lonely, excited, cranky, bored, tired, happy, proud) I'd like someone to ...

3. There are many ways people have found to help them ease the pain of sorrow. Spend time in First-day class exploring the following ways of coping:

   Art: Often a way to express our feelings. Clay is especially good, as are tempera paints, newsprint and large brushes.

   Music: Children can talk about the changes they have noticed in themselves when they hear music of different types (if no one can think of anything, ask them if they notice the background music in movies or on the T.V.). Bring in different types of music; without talking have the children listen to at least three different
selections and draw a different picture while listening to each one. Spend some time talking about how they felt when they listened to the music. Have any of them ever had the experience of feeling one way (sad, perhaps) and hearing a song that changed their mood? Are there other sounds that they like to listen to?

**Writing:** Even children who cannot write can record their feelings on tape. Making a carrying case out of felt allows them to keep their special tape handy. Older children might enjoy writing in a journal or exploring poetry as a form of expression.

One simple poetry format is the *cinquain:* This verse form from France has five lines. Beginning with one word, the first four lines increase from one to four words; then the last line repeats the one-word from. Other requirements for each line are as follows:

- **Line 1 - Title** (a noun; one word)
- **Line 2 - Describes the title** (two words)
- **Line 3 - Action words or a phrase about the title** (three words)
- **Line 4 - Describes a feeling about the title** (four words)
- **Line 5 - A word that means the same as the title** (one word). (It is possible to double the number of words in each line)

**An example:**

God
All knowing
Caring for us
Comforted by his presence
Love

**Journals:**

(1) **Sewn Journal**

a. Cut two pieces of cardboard for cover. Choose a size slightly larger than the pages you plan to use.

b. Cut fabric covering 2" larger than covers.

c. Glue covers to backing leaving at least ¼" between covers.

d. Cut out the four corners.

e. Fold edges in, mitre corners and glue (Sobo™ glue works best).

f. Cut binding strip of fabric or cloth tape 2" longer than cover width. Glue into place.

g. Make pages using a piece of colored paper for flyleaf. Fold pages in half and sew through center.

h. Glue the flyleaf pages to front and back cover.

(2) **Homemade Notebook**:
Materials: paper, cardboard, fabric scraps, yarn, paper punch, scissors, glue, magic markers

a. Punch two holes in left side of paper.

b. Cut cardboard slightly larger than the paper for front and back of the book; cover with fabric (glue on) or decorate with magic marker; punch holes.

c. Use yarn to tie book together.

(3) **Prayer:** A good resource for a discussion about prayer is *The World In Tune* by Elizabeth Gray Vining. She gives examples of prayers and some theological commentary. Writing our own prayers or memorizing some that
are already written can be useful in times of need. Using Guided Imagery in First-day School can be a very effective way of sharing the depth prayer can offer to us.

4. **Greeting Cards**: Children could make greeting cards to give to someone special and/or to give to the Overseers to use whenever needed for a member.

5. **Stilt Making**: Use number 7 size industrial food cans or large coffee cans. Punch a hole on each side of the can on the end where the lid is still intact. This can be done (by the teacher or older children) by hammering a large nail into the can. Insert one end of a jump rope or similar size rope in each hole and tie a knot in each end so that the rope will not pull back through the holes. The loop of the rope should be about hip high. To prevent wear on the rope wrap heavy tape where it passes through the hole. Put the plastic lid back on the open end of the can or tape the can edges so the floor will not be scratched. Each child will need two cans.

Related Stories and Bible Verses:


**Bible**:
Luke 15:1-10, Lost Sheep

**Songs**:

"Give Me Oil in My Lamp", #156, *Worship in Song, A Friends Hymnal*, FGC.

6. Discussing the role of the Dike Trees, Patrol Cats and the Nizzards can open up the concept of inter-dependence in ecosystems.
The Lorax

Summary:

The "Once-ler" tells a little boy the story of the Lorax, who warns everyone that destroying the Truffula Trees will lead to disaster. The trees are used to make "thneeds", which all people need. Eventually all the trees die and the animals move away; only the "Once-ler" is left. He gives the little boy a truffula seed so he can plant a new tree.

Issue:
Taking Care of Our Environment

Questions:

◊ What finally happens?
◊ As the story nears its end, who is left?
◊ UNLESS... what???

Activities:

1. Looking through some magazines, have the children find some "thneeds" that real people buy (examples: Hair dye, cigarettes, disposable plastic plates and cups, disposable diapers, aerosol spray cans). Discuss how useless, dangerous, and/or a waste of natural resources these products are and what we could do about it.

2. Weather permitting, have the class take a "field trip" outside the Meetinghouse grounds or neighborhood to examine the health of the environment around them. Is there anything the children can do to help improve the environment (such as clean up litter, add some mulch or seeds to a garden, rake some leaves)? You may want to peruse the area prior to class and possibly have some materials available for that class time. Another option is to let the children decide what they can do to improve Meetinghouse grounds and plan with them what to bring for their service project.

3. Engage in an open discussion concerning our environment. What does the word mean to children? How aware are they of the environment around them (their home, their school, their Meeting)?
What are some ways that Friends are working to protect our Earth?

4. Craft: Have the children create realistic or imaginary environments. They can make some newspapers back into trees. Have available clay, natural objects such as twigs and rocks, colored paper, etc. Environments can be made in shoe boxes or on pieces of wood.

5. Make fork flowers:
   a. Cut an eight-inch piece of yarn and thread it between the two center tines of a four-tine dinner fork as shown.

   b. While holding the eight-inch yarn piece in place, weave a long piece of yarn (five-foot length, or so) in and out of the fork tines as shown.

   c. Continue this weaving process until nearly the whole fork is covered with yarn. The weaving should be about as tight as knitting. If the yarn is too loose, the flower will fall apart. If it is too tight, it will be difficult to remove from the fork.

   d. Bring up the two ends of the short piece of yarn and tie them in a half square knot between the ends of the center fork tines as shown.

   e. (Children will need help with this step.) Tighten your knot while pushing the "flower" off the fork. When the flower is completely off the fork, pull the short yarn ends very tight and complete the square knot. The process should look something like this:

   f. Cut off the long ends of the long piece of yarn, that is, the piece that forms the body of the flower. Be sure you are not cutting the ends that you tied earlier. You will end up with a flower with a double "stem" that can be used to attach it to a larger piece of craftwork.

   Use your fork flowers as part of the environment you created in #4, above. They can also be attached to barrettes and used as decorations for birthday and Christmas presents.

Related Stories and Bible Verses:

*Speak to the Earth and It Shall Teach Thee*, PYM, RE Curriculum (available from PYM Library).

*Genesis 1:26-31 & 2:5-9* – Creation story.

*Songs:*

"A Place in the Choir", #306, *Worship in Song, A Friends Hymnal*, FGC.
The Sneetches

Summary:

The Star-Belly Sneetches consider themselves superior to the Plain-Belly Sneetches. As a result, when Mr. McBean comes to town with a machine which puts on stars, the Plain-Belly Sneetches flock to him. Of course, the Star-Belly Sneetches immediately have their stars taken off and proclaim the superiority of Plain-Bellies. After several go-rounds, the Sneetches finally realize that "Sneetches are Sneetches and no kind of Sneetch is the best on the beaches."

Issues:

Equality, Judging by Appearances, Integrity, Knowing Who We Are

Questions:

◇ How would you feel if you were a Plain-Bell Sneetch?
◇ Would you have chosen to get a star? Why or why not?
◇ Why do the "Sneetches" get so excited about having or not having stars?
◇ Are there things you wish you had (special sneakers, a certain car)?
◇ What is a "status symbol"? Name a few.
◇ Are there important differences among people? Name some.
◇ Have you ever met anyone like McBean? Describe him/her.
◇ Do you understand the phrase "Playing both ends against the middle"?
◇ Name some things/qualities which you think make you special.

Activities:

1. Act out the story. This will include making stars and a "Star-on, Star-off Machine". Use a large box which people can crawl in and out of. You could write a simple script or ad lib dialogue. This is a good intergenerational activity, since the littlest ones can affix stars or make endless trips through the machine. If you have access to a VCR, the cartoon of this story can be borrowed and shown to your group.

2. With older children, make up lists of the "stars" they wear or don't wear, such as fair-isle sweaters, leg warmers, long/short hair, jeans with a special label. Lead the discussion toward larger areas of discrimination: sex, wealth, race, intelligence.

3. Design and make name tags or pictures for everyone which say "My Name is __________. I am special because..." This can be done in words and/or pictures. People can make their own or make them for others and then share the results.

4. Using pictures from magazines, make collages of status symbols. Then name some non-material things which make us special, such as happiness, laughter, joy, and try to make collages out of colored paper which express these qualities.
Related Stories and Bible Verses:

Bible:
Luke 19:1-10; story of Zacchaeus

Songs:

"The George Fox Song", #272, *Worship in Song, A Friends Hymnal*, FGC.
**Summary**

Thidwick's life was quite simple, strolling along with his "Bunch" looking for moose moss to munch. One day he saw a Bingle Bug who asked for a ride. Thidwick invited the bug to be his guest on his antlers. Thidwick ends up carrying 500 pounds of guests on his horns! The guests make greater and greater demands, costing Thidwick his friends, food, and almost his life. Finally Thidwick leaves his old antlers and his guests, and heads for safety to continue his life (and grow new antlers).

**Issue:**
Caring for others; knowing our limits

**Questions:**

◊ How do you feel about Thidwick and what happened to him?
◊ Are there rules of polite behavior for guests too? What are those rules?
◊ Can you think of a time someone was not polite to you, either as a host or a guest? How did you feel and what did you do?
◊ What things could Thidwick have done to be polite, but not be taken advantage of?
◊ How do you think Thidwick will feel the next time someone asks for a favor or for help? What do you think he will do?
◊ Have you ever turned someone down because you had a bad experience with someone else? How do you feel about that now?

◊ Do you think someone has ever turned you down because of a bad experience in the past? How did you feel?
◊ Is it possible to help people without being taken advantage of? Is it worth the risk?

**Activities:**

1. Create a Thidwick flannel board: give each child a different figure and a chance to decorate it. Present the story allowing each child to come up and place their figure on the board at the appropriate moment in the story. The teacher might want to have Thidwick so the children's parts are fairly even. For very young children the flannel figures could be cut ahead of time, ready for decoration.
2. Have a party for someone (your class, parents, the Meeting, another class, a local nursing home, etc.) Create a theme for your party and brainstorm food and decorations appropriate to it. Are different types of manners expected at different types of gatherings? How can this party benefit others? Write several possible graces. Sing songs of thanks.
3. In what ways do other cultures welcome guests? It might be interesting to explore ways guests are welcomed and cared for in the Bible as well.
4. Invent and role play situations that involve saying "No". Be sure to leave time to set up and discuss the role plays.
5. Write a tongue-in-cheek book of manners based on the theme "Do unto
others as you would have them do unto you."

6. Make moose decorations out of clothespins (similar to the reindeer ones available at Christmas time). Color or paint three straight clothespins, of the kind with two flat sides, brown, then glue together following the diagram. Decorate using felt, yarn, and "eyes" available at craft or sewing stores.

7. Find out about Moose behavior in the "real" world. Bring in pictures of moose.

Related Stories and Bible Verses:

*The Friendly Story Caravan*, Anna Pettit Broomell, (Pendle Hill, 1981). There are a number of good stories here. Available from FGC.


Bible:


Songs


"Magic Penny", #221, *Worship in Song, A Friends Hymnal*, FGC.
Too Many

Summary:

A very short story about Mrs. McCave who has 23 sons and names them all Dave. As a result, when she calls "Dave", she always ends up with all 23. Of course, she wishes she'd given each one a different name. While the story focuses on names, discussion can lead to what makes each of us unique.

Issue: Individual Uniqueness

Questions:

♢ Why is Mrs. McCave having problems?
♢ What would our class be like if we all had the same name?
♢ Have you ever been mixed up with someone else who has the same name? or mistaken for someone who looks like you? How did it feel?
♢ Does your name make you special? What else makes you different or special?

Activities:

1. Silly Names - after reading the list of possible name changes for the twenty-three Daves, brainstorm your own list of silly names. Children could name themselves or each other. Names could be based on a characteristic or could be just for fun.

2. Name Designs - have children make a design with the letters of their names. They can write their names on a large piece of paper and color in designs in the blank spaces or cut or tear out the letters of their names and arrange them in a collage.

3. Personal Coat of Arms

For each person have a precut coat of arms divided into four or six spaces. In each space participants are to draw responses to the following questions (choose as many as you need or add your own):

a) What is something you are good at? b) Which of your physical characteristics do you like best? c) depict three words you would like to have associated with yourself. d) What makes you different from others? e) What do you like best about yourself? f) what makes you happy? g) What makes you sad? h) What have you done recently of which you are proud? Be sure to display these coats of arms and explain that they are meant to illustrate each person's uniqueness.

4. Silhouettes

Fasten a large piece of white paper to the wall. Have the child stand or sit in front of a light such as from a slide projector or a floor lamp. Adjust the distance between the light, the child and the paper on the wall until the profile image is the size you want it on the paper. Another child or teacher traces the shadow. Have each child cut out the tracing, with help if necessary. Paste this on a darker piece of paper. Have children write on the paper the answers to questions such as "I like myself because ______", "I am special because I can ____". An alternative - do Body Cutouts of children - trace each
other on large pieces of paper. They can then color in their clothes and hair.

5. "I Am Special" Charts -- Each child makes a list of 10 things which make him/her special and puts it on his/her shirt. Then everyone walks around and reads everyone else's shirt. To close, gather in a circle and discuss what the children found out about each other.

Related Stories and Bible Verses:


Bible:
Matthew 18:12-14, "The Parable of the Lost Sheep"

Songs:

"I Am an Acorn", #242, Worship in Song, A Friends Hymnal, FGC.
"What Was I Scared Of?"

Summary:

In this story the "I" keeps encountering a free-floating pair of green pants. "I" is very frightened by these chance meetings. But 'I' discovers that the pants are as afraid of him as he is of them. In the end "I" and the pants are friends.

Issue: Understanding Differences; Fear

Questions:
◊ Why do you think "I" is afraid?
◊ Why are the pants afraid?
◊ How does "I" overcome his fear?
◊ What are you afraid of? Is there anything you can do about these fears?
◊ Have you feared something or someone and then learned not to be afraid? How did that happen?
◊ What helps you when you are afraid?

Activities:

1. Green Pants -- cut green pants out of construction paper for each child. Have the children write down a fear on one side of the pants. Gather in a group and share the fears. Brainstorm ways to overcome the fears. Then on the other side of the pants write one way to overcome the fear.

2. Drama -- Act this story out. Provide a large pair of pants for the child who plays the pants. Then develop other skits in which the green pants become other things the children fear.

3. Drawings -- Draw something you're afraid of. Share the pictures in pairs. Brainstorm ways to overcome fear.

4. Talk about nightmares -- Use clay to create "nightmare" figures; then transform the figures into "daydream" figures.

Related Stories and Bible Verses:


Bible:
Mark 9:33-37, "Who Shall Be the Greatest?"

Songs:

"When I Needed a Neighbor", #293, Worship in Song, A Friends Hymnal, FGC.
"He's Got the Whole World In His Hands" (see below):

He's Got the Whole World in His Hands
(Anonymous. Public Domain)

C
He's got the whole world in His hands.
G7
He's got the whole world in His hands.
C
He's got the whole world in His hands.
G7
He's got the whole world in His hands.

He's got the wind and the rain...
He's got you and me brother (sister)...
He's got the little bitty baby...

(Make up your own verses):

He's got all our fears in His hands...
Yertle the Turtle

Summary:

Yertle, King of the Turtles, decides that his stone throne is not high enough, and so he commands all the turtles to pile up on another to lift him higher and higher. Eventually a little turtle at the bottom of the pile has had enough and Yertle meets his downfall.

Issues:

Freedom, Equality

Questions:

✧ Why, when we have so much (as the turtles did) do we think we need more?
✧ Is there a difference between wanting something better for ourselves and just wanting more to have more? How can we know the difference?
✧ Why do you think so many turtles obeyed Yertle? Do people obey without questioning? Why? How can people disobey nonviolently?
✧ How would you have if you were the turtle, Mack?
✧ What would you have if you were Mack?
✧ What are things you can do if you are feeling that someone is treating you like Yertle was treating the other turtles?
✧ Did you ever act like Yertle? Why?
✧ Did you ever wish you could act like Yertle? Why?

Activities:

1. Make turtles and have a race. Cut out a cardboard turtle and decorate (about a 5-6" circle is a good size.) Make a string hole near the top and thread a ten-foot length of string through the hole. Tie one end to a table leg and hold the other taut. In the taut position the turtle will stand; release, and he falls forward. By alternating pull-flop, pull-flop, he will go to the table leg. Flip him over and bring him home. (From Ann Wiseman's Making Things)

2. Create a large mural (a roll of brown paper, for example) of Yertle on top of the turtles; then Mack crawling away from under the pile of turtles; then Yertle on the ground side by side with the other turtles. Possibly the children could share this with the rest of Meeting, and discuss how they feel about it.

3. Ask the children to talk about their feelings. Ask what needs they have to be free, to be themselves. Leading questions could be:

✧ What can you do that makes you happy?
✧ What choices can you make about what you say and do?
◇ Is there someone that you can talk to and feel free to say whatever you want?
◇ Is there a way that you can change your world to be better for you?

Possibly smaller children might want to use art to express their feelings. You could give them the freedom to choose from a few different media, e.g., clay, crayons or paints (having all available).

Related Stories and Bible Verses:


Bible:
John 8:28-36, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

Songs:

"Lucretia Mott Song", #281, Worship in Song, A Friends Hymnal, FGC.
"My Thoughts Are Free", #277, Worship in Song, A Friends Hymnal, FGC.
The Zax

Summary:

The Zaxes, going opposite directions, bump into each other. Each refuses to move aside for the other; as a result they stand in one place arguing while the world around them changes and grows.

Issue:

Conflict Resolution

Questions:

◊ Why won't either Zax move?
◊ Whom does their stubbornness affect?
◊ Does the "whole world stand still" while the Zaxes argue?
◊ Is either Zax right? Does it matter?
◊ What alternative to their argument do the Zaxes have?
◊ Have you ever had a fight like this one? What did you do?

Activities:

1. Act this story out as written. You don't need a script; this is a perfect situation for ad-libbing. Give everyone a chance to be a Zax. Next, have the children in pairs come up with alternative endings and act those out.

2. Role Play: Have the children in pairs or small groups make up situations in which two or more people behave stubbornly. Lead into this by encouraging the children to remember times when they have behaved like Zaxes. Remind them of arguments over who gets to ride in the front seat or who gets the last piece of cake. After each small group has performed its role play, as a large group brainstorm ways the situations could be resolved. Lead to some generalizations such as: listening to another's point of view, not shouting, flexibility, third party intervention.

3. On a large (3' x 6') piece of brown wrapping paper, sketch the two Zaxes. Then ask the children to build the world growing around them. You can use tempera paint to paint on house, roads, etc., or you can cut the additions out of construction paper and paste them on the brown paper.

Related Stories and Bible Verses:

*Journal of George Fox* (page 263): "Walk cheerfully ... answering that of God in everyone..."

Bible:

Matthew 7:7-12; Golden Rule

Songs:

"George Fox Song", 272, *Worship in Song, A Friends Hymnal*, FGC.
"Down by the Riverside", #295, *Worship in Song, A Friends Hymnal*, FGC.