

SOCIO-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

How is “Socio-Emotional Development” seen in *George Shrinks*?

Nearly every *George Shrinks* episode touches on characters’ social and emotional development (either directly or subtly). George, himself, is portrayed as a humanist. He loves being a kid, helping his friends and family—and living life to “the absolute fullest.” He is a strong model for emotional intelligence and demonstrates for young audiences, self-acceptance, determination and perseverance in overcoming obstacles and challenges.

Why is “Socio-Emotional Development” important?

Educators agree that getting children to learn specific academic content (i.e., math and science) is of paramount importance to their development, but so too is learning to deal flexibly with personal and interpersonal challenges that getting older brings. Research also shows that motivation and regulation of emotions early on can be associated with greater academic success in later years (since the focus can be placed on learning and exploring instead of dealing with emotional extremes and outbursts).

Social and emotional competence go hand-in-hand for young children as they learn and grow from their expanding web of relationships and interactions. To support their socio-emotional development, kids need access to people and situations that model: effective behavior, healthy expressing of emotions, and positive social interactions. To experience these concepts first-hand, children need scenarios in which they can think about and experiment with their own ways of dealing with everyday life challenges.

The following activities provide opportunities for children to practice making their own choices and decisions. Note that learning areas and themes can be strengthened by first taping and showing the associated *George Shrinks* episode (listed at the top of each page), reading and discussing any associated story or book – and then conducting the hands-on activity or lesson with children. Be sure to tie together the common themes of the show, book and activity with plenty of discussion and analysis!

THREE-INCHES TALL

Looking at the world from a different perspective.

Learning Area: Fluent & Flexible Thinking, Defining and Solving a Problem

Episode: "George Unshrinks" Synopsis: George is fed up with being 3 inches tall and wants to be "regular sized." After dreaming that his family has changed into different "extreme" heights, George comes to appreciate his own size and abilities.

Objectives:

Children will:

- * Discuss the role size plays in being able to do certain things.
- * Talk about the challenges they might face if they were only three inches tall.
- * Draw and dictate how they would accommodate their new size and solve at least three problems which teacher presents.

Grades: K-2

McRel Standard(s): Life Skills - Thinking and Reasoning Standards:

- 3.1 - Describes and compares things in terms of number, shape, texture, size, weight, color, motion, sound and behavior.
- 5.1 - Identifies simple problems and possible solutions.

Core Curriculum Area(s): Language Arts, Math

Materials Needed: a three-inch book mark for measuring, colored crayons or markers, Shrinks to scale handout (illustration of George Shrinks to scale on pg. ?)

Think & Do Activity Description:

1. Explain to the class that a smart little boy on TV, George Shrinks, is only three inches tall! Using the bookmark, ask children to imagine how different the world might look and be if each of them were only three inches. Ask them to find something in the classroom they think is three inches tall. (Or refer to the lesson "Just the Size of George" on pg (?).
2. Ask children if they have ever been told that they are too small to do something. What are some things they can't do now because they are too small? Ask them to imagine what it might be like to be just three inches tall. What fun things could they do at that height that they can't do at the size they are now? What challenges may they have to face?
3. Give children a book composed of 3 or 4 copies of the handout sheet . Ask them to come up with creative ideas for three of the following questions: 1. What would be the hardest thing about being three inches tall? 2.) What would you eat? 3.) Where would you sleep? 4.) How would you travel? 5.) What games would you want to play?
4. In their books, children should draw pictures and dictate some of the different things they would do if they were the size of George Shrinks.

Suggested Reading

"Doctor De Soto" by William Steig
 "George Shrinks" by William Joyce

Home Connections

At home, children may use old shoe boxes to create bedrooms where George Shrinks could sleep!

Teacher Tips

Be sure to provide children with opportunities to imagine and to measure what it would be like to be three inches tall.

REPRODUCIBLE PAGE
THREE INCHES TALL

Hey, look at me. Can't you see? Today, three inches tall is all I can be!



_____ 3"

_____ 2"

_____ 1"

FEELING SAFE

Planning and knowing what to do when separated from a caregiver.

Learning Area: Brainstorming, Fluent and Flexible Thinking, Life Skills, Feelings

Episode: "Return To Sender" Synopsis: While George is putting together a package for his pen pal in Africa, Aunt Eunice accidentally closes the box and tapes it up while George is inside. She unknowingly sends George to Africa!

Objectives:

Children will:

- * Discuss what to do if they are ever separated from a caregiver.
- * Learn their addresses and phone numbers.
- * Draw pictures of how to take care of themselves if separated from a caregiver.

Grades: K-2

McRel Standard(s): Geography standard 2.1, Knows the location of school, home, neighborhood, community, state and country.

Core Curriculum Area(s): Language Arts

Materials Needed: list of children’s addresses and phone numbers (for the teacher’s eyes only), chart paper, marker, a “Feeling Safe” handout, crayons

Think & Do Activity Preparation:

1. Create a classroom chart titled, “I Know My Phone Number and Address”—with each child’s name and a space next to it (for a completion check-mark).
2. Make sure that your list of children’s addresses and phone numbers is up-to-date.

Think & Do Activity Description:

1. Talk with children about an episode of *George Shrinks* in which he accidentally gets separated from his family. And even though George’s situation is make believe, there might be a time when getting separated from a caregiver could happen to them. Ask what students might do to feel safe if this happened.
2. Discuss the importance of knowing their first and last names, their phone numbers and addresses.
3. Introduce the I Know My Phone Number and Address chart. Explain that as each of them is able to tell you their phone number and address, they will have a check-mark placed next to their name. (Support and encourage the last children without “checks” until they are successful.)

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Suggested Reading

Home Connections

Teacher Tips

“Officer Buckle and Gloria” by Peggy Rathman,
 “There’s an Alligator Under My Bed” by Mercer Mayer,
 “Doctor De Soto” by William Stelig,
 “Swimmy” by Leo Lionni, “Stellaluna” by Janell Cannon

Explain to parents that their child is currently doing an activity on safety. Encourage them to help their daughter or son learn their address and phone number.

Think & Do Activity Description: Cont'd

4. On the handouts, have children draw a picture of a way to take care of themselves if they were to get separated from an adult. Hang these drawings near the chart.
5. Call attention to the chart daily until it is complete. When all chart check-boxes are filled-in, have a simple, "feeling safe" classroom celebration!

REPRODUCIBLE PAGE
FEELING SAFE

I Know My Phone Number

check here

I Know My Address

check here

How I can take care of myself if I get lost.

Things to make me safe if I get lost.

RETURN TO SENDER

Learning about post offices and creating one in the classroom.

Learning Area: Creative Expression, Communication

Episode: "Return To Sender" Synopsis: While George is putting together a package for his pen pal in Africa, Aunt Eunice accidentally closes the box with George still inside! She unknowingly sends George on a trip to Africa.

Objectives:

Children will:

- * Learn about the post office and how it operates.
- * Set up a post office in the dramatic play area.
- * Write letters to each other at the Writing Center.

Grades: K-2

McRel Standard(s): Language Arts Standards:

- 1.1, Prewriting: Uses pre-writing strategies to plan written work.
- 1.4, Evaluates own and others' writing.

Core Curriculum Area(s): Language Arts, Social Studies

Materials Needed: books about the post office, shoe boxes or cardboard cartons, 4"x6" plain index cards, colored markers, stamps, items for the Letter Writing Center: [paper, envelopes, pencils, crayons, markers, and "play stamps"], misc. dramatic play "post office" props

Think & Do Activity Preparation:

1. Bring in letters, cards and packages that are addressed correctly.
2. Set up a Letter Writing Center in the classroom that is supplied with the items listed above. Write each child's name on a 5x8 index card and have these cards available for children to use.

Think & Do Activity Description:

1. Present the cards, letters, and packages you have brought to school. Begin a discussion about mail by explaining that when properly addressed and stamped, mail can be delivered almost anywhere in the world!
2. Ask the class: "Have you ever received mail? What was it? Who was it from? Have you ever sent something in the mail? Who did you send it to? How did the mail get to the person?"
3. Read "The Post Office Book, Mail and How it Works" (or a similar book on post offices).
4. Follow with discussion about setting up a post office in the classroom. Generate a list of things that will be needed to create the post office (envelopes, cards, paper, stamps, money, money box, mail bags, stamp pad and stamp marked "paid", mail carrier bag and hat, individual mail box compartments, etc.).

#5-7 Continued on next page

Suggested Reading

Home Connections

Teacher Tips

"The Post Office Book, Mail and How it Works" by Gail Gibbons
 "The Gardener" by Sarah Stewart
 "How it Happens at the Post Office" by Dawn Frederick and Robert L. Wolfe

Encourage children to write letters to their parents – and parents to write and address a short note to their child at least once a week while the post office is set up in the class.

Encourage children to participate in all aspects of the post office -- including setting up the dramatic play area, preparing stamps, writing letters and delivering mail.

Think & Do Activity Description: Cont'd

5. Encourage children to be active participants in the construction of the post office.
6. Encourage children to write and/or draw letters at the Letter Writing Center.
7. Select a mail carrier each day to make deliveries during dramatic playtime.

A POSTCARD TO MY FRIEND

Learning about letters, the post office and sending a postcard to a friend.

Learning Area: Communication, Creative Expression

Episode: "Return To Sender" Synopsis: While George is putting together a package for his pen pal in Africa, Aunt Eunice accidentally closes the box and tapes it up with George still inside. She unknowingly mails George to Africa!

Objectives:

Children will:

- * Build upon their knowledge of the post office and how it functions.
- * Design and send a postcard to a fellow classmate.

Grades: K-2

McRel Standard(s): Language Arts - Writing-Standard 1, Uses the general strategies and skills of the writing process.

Core Curriculum Area(s): Social Studies, Language Arts

Materials Needed: book about the post office, classroom address list, 4X6 or 5X8 index cards, pencils, colored markers, stamps, parent/guardian note

Think & Do Activity Preparation:

1. Write a note to parents/guardians asking permission to include their home address in a classroom address list (for internal class use, only – not to be displayed).
2. Gather and bring in a few pieces of mail (invitation, postcard, letter, greeting card, package, etc.).

Think & Do Activity Description:

1. Show children the different types of mail. Ask them how they think a letter coming from far away gets to their house. List key things that are needed on an envelope.
2. Follow with discussion about the post office. Ask: "Has anyone ever received something in the mail? What was it and who was it from? Who has sent something in the mail? Has anyone ever been to the post office?"
3. Review and discuss the book, "The Gardener" (or another book on writing letters or the post office).
4. Tell children that they will be making a (real or pretend) trip to a mailbox. In preparation for this, they each will be designing a postcard and sending it to a friend in the classroom. Explain that they must keep the name of their friend a secret so it will be a surprise.
5. Showing some real postcards, describe them for children as having a photo or picture on one side—and a message and the address on the other.

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Suggested Reading

"The Gardener" by Sarah Stewart
"The Jolly Postman" by Janet & Allan Ahlberg

Home Connections

Teacher Tips

If possible, arrange for children to visit a nearby post office to get a "behind the scenes" look at postal activity!

Think & Do Activity Description: Cont'd

6. Set up a Postcard Writing Center. Instruct children to write, draw or decorate their card on one side only (just as they saw in the examples that you shared). As each child completes his or her card, an adult will help with the name and address.
7. When all cards are complete, encourage children to purchase (or pretend to purchase) stamps from the teacher. If real stamps are used, take a walking trip with the class to the nearest mailbox and post the letters. If children pretend to purchase stamps, then allow them to “deliver” their own mail to the appropriate classmate’s cubby.



A FRIEND IS A PRESENT YOU GIVE YOURSELF*

Exploring ways to make new friends.

Learning Area: Friendship, Empathy

Episode: "Close Encounters of the Bird Kind" Synopsis: Becky is new to the neighborhood. George helps her save a family of baby birds—and in so doing, George and Becky become good friends.

Objectives:

Children will:

- * Discuss what it means to be a friend.
- * Brainstorm and list different ways of making new friends.
- * Role-play ways of making new friends.

Grades: K-2

McRel Standard(s): Life Skills - Working With Others-Standard
 4.1, Displays friendliness with others.

Core Curriculum Area(s): Language Arts, Social Studies

Materials Needed: dramatic play area

Think & Do Activity Description:

1. Discuss "friendship." Ask the children: "What does it mean to be a friend? Can you be friends with more than one person? Do friends always have to be together?"
2. Ask if children remember a time when they wanted a friend. Was it when they moved to a new neighborhood or went to a new school? Another time?
3. Other questions to ask include: How did it feel not knowing if you would have a friend? Can you remember how you made your first friend? Do we need friends? Why/Why not?
4. Have the children talk about:
 - a) If you want someone to be your friend, what could you say or do?
 - b) What are some friendly questions you might ask?
 - c) What are some ways to let someone know you would like to be his or her friend?
5. Take turns role-playing: Model a role-playing situation where you take one of the parts in making a new friend. Set up different situations wherein children can take turns acting out ways of making a new friend.

Suggested Reading

"Will I Have A New Friend?" by Miriam Cohen
 "George And Martha" by James Marshall
 "Frog and Toad are Friends" by Arnold Lobel

Home Connections

Parents can help children in this area by sharing a time when they felt shy or ill at ease about making a new friend. They may describe a special childhood friend -- and how they got to know each other.

Teacher Tips

Your willingness to share a time when you felt ill at ease about making a new friend makes it safer and easier for children to participate.

* Robert Louis Stevenson

FRIENDSHIP SALAD

Making and eating fruit salad together.

Learning Area: Friendship, Teamwork, Analysis

Episode: "Speed Shrinks" Synopsis: In a car race, George and Becky realize that friendship, kindness, teamwork and fair play are more important than winning.

Objectives:

Children will:

- * Listen and discuss the story, "The Very Hungry Caterpillar."
- * Talk about the importance of friendship and teamwork.
- * Contribute one piece of fruit each to make a fruit salad.
- * Graph the different fruits – then make and share a fruit salad.

Grades: K-2

McRel Standard(s): Life Skills – Working With Others- Standard 1, Contributes to the overall effort of a group.
 Math – Standard 6.1, Understands that observations about objects or events can be organized and displayed in simple graphs.

Core Curriculum Area(s): Social Studies, Math

Materials Needed: floor graphing materials, Salad Center with: [fruit, cutting boards, paper, or plastic plates, cutting knives, large bowl, paper cups or paper bowls, plastic spoons], note to parents/guardians

Think & Do Activity Preparation:

1. Write a note to parents/guardians requesting that children bring in a piece of fruit from home (if possible) for this activity.
2. Prepare the outline for a floor graph.
3. Set up a Salad Center on the second day of this activity with the items listed above.

Think & Do Activity Description:

1. Read "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" and have children recall the names of all the different fruits mentioned
2. Refer to the activity, "A Friend Is a Present You Give Yourself" Review what it means to be a friend, then ask: "What are some of the things friends enjoy doing together?" (playing, talking, sports, eating, etc.)
3. Next, discuss "teamwork." What things are easier and more fun when everyone joins in?
4. Explain that today students will work as a team and celebrate friendship by making and enjoying a Friendship Salad together. Ask each child to contribute to the salad by bringing in one piece of fruit of any kind. Allow two days for the fruit to be brought in. (Be sure to have extra fruit available in the classroom for anyone unable to bring a piece from home.)

#5-7 Continued on next page

Suggested Reading

Home Connections

Teacher Tips

"Frederick" by Leo Lionni, "George and Martha" by James Marshall, "Frog and Toad are Friends" by Arnold Lobel

Be sure to ask parents to select, purchase and wash the fruit items before children bring them to class.

Think & Do Activity Description: Cont'd

5. On the first day that fruit is brought in, graph it on a large floor graph. Compare and contrast the number of different fruits. (Which are there more of - green apples or red apples? How many more bananas do we have than oranges?...) Work on the graph again on day two.
6. Wash the fruit and bring it to the Salad Center. Have children wash their hands. Demonstrate how to safely cut the fruit. Allow each child to have a turn cutting a piece. As a child finishes, he or she should find someone else to take his or her place. (Have children watch you cut it if they are too young to handle a cutting instrument.)
7. When the salad is complete, serve it with spoons in paper cups or small bowls—and enjoy!

HELPING A FRIEND FEEL BETTER

Thinking of ways to cheer a friend or neighbor who is ill.

Learning Area: Empathy, Caring

Episode: “Snowman’s Land” Synopsis: When Becky is sick in bed, George decides to build a snowman outside her window to cheer her up.

Objectives:

Children will:

- * Brainstorm ways to cheer up friends, classmates, or others who are sick.
- * Perform a caring act for a classmate who is ill.
- * Perform a caring act for a local children’s hospital.

Grades: K-2

McRel Standard(s): Life Skills – Working With Others-Standard 4.5, Displays empathy with others..

Core Curriculum Area(s): Social Studies, Language Arts

Materials Needed: chart paper and markers, misc. materials to do something nice for a classmate—and to make a hospital donation

Think & Do Activity Description:

1. Ask the children to think of things they could do for a sick friend or classmate that would not cost any money. Challenge them to come up with a list of 10 things!
2. Follow-up by doing something for a classmate who is out for a long illness (if applicable).
3. On a broader scale: Is there a Children’s Hospital in your community? Or does the hospital in your community have a special section for children? If so, as a class think of some things that might bring happiness to the children who are ill. Suggestions include:
 - * To check with the hospital to see if donations are accepted—and if they have specific suggestions of things the children might enjoy.
 - * Having children make cards, letters, drawings, and/or storybooks.
 - * Collecting used books or children’s videos that the students would like to share at the end of the school year.
 - * Packaging used crayons in sealed, plastic bags and decorating them with stickers.

Suggested Reading

“Frog and Toad are Friends”
by Arnold Lobel

Home Connections

Parents may encourage their children to draw pictures or write cards to friends or family members who are ill.

Teacher Tips

1. Help children realize that the body is a wonderful machine which, if given time, rest, care, and medicine—often may fix itself! 2. Support the idea that as thoughtful classmates and neighbors, we might help other people feel better by doing nice things for them and showing them that we care.

EVERYBODY MAKES A MISTAKE

Learning to take responsibility for our mistakes.

Learning Area: Responsibility, Honesty, Dealing with Challenges and Adversity

Episode: "If it Ain't Broke" Synopsis: On Dad's birthday, Mom makes a special birthday sculpture. George and Jr. accidentally break it. But working together, they fix it and admit what happened.

Objectives:

Children will:

- * Discuss how it feels to make a mistake or hurt someone's feelings.
- * Generate ideas about how to let someone know when you are sorry.
- * Create and use "yes"- "no" talking signs.

Grades: K-2

McRel Standard(s): Language Arts - Listening and Speaking Standard. 8.1, Makes contributions in class discussions. 8.2, Asks and responds to questions. Health - Standard 4.1, Identifies and shares feelings in appropriate ways.

Core Curriculum Area(s): Social Studies, Language Arts

Materials Needed: index cards, precut 6 inch x 6 inch squares of red and green construction paper, tongue depressors, glue, markers, scissors, pencils, card-writing materials

Think & Do Activity Preparation:

1. Cut red and green construction paper into 6 inch x 6 inch pieces.
2. Create index cards with "YES" on one side and "NO" on the other for children to copy.

Think & Do Activity Description:

1. Discuss how accidents can happen and that everyone makes mistakes sometimes. Making mistakes and having accidents can make us feel "bad." But by taking responsibility and trying to make things better, we not only fix the problem; we also fix the bad feelings!
2. Help children make "Talking Signs" which can be used during discussions. Talking Signs help even shy children to enter discussions and share their thoughts and feelings.
3. Provide each child with two 6 inch x 6inch sheets of construction paper, one red and one green. Each sheet will have a 5inch circle marked on it. (Children may use stencils to make circles.) Have students cut out the circles and write "yes" on the green one, and "no" on the red one. Next, they should glue the circles onto tongue depressors, with "yes" on one side, and "no" on the other. The "Talking Sign" should look like a fan that can be flipped. Using Talking Signs during discussion allows children to share ideas and see that sometimes there is more than one way to answer a question (and both answers may be correct).

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Suggested Reading

"Just Because I Am, A Child's Book of Affirmation"
by Lauren Murphy Payne
"Stories Julian Tells" by Ann Cameron (chapter 1)
"Curious George" by H. A. Rey

Home Connections

Teacher Tips

Let parents know that it is helpful to have children help fix things that they may have broken. Some children benefit from talking, dictating or writing down their apologies.

Think & Do Activity Description: Cont'd

4. Questions to consider using with the Talking Stick: "Have you ever done something you didn't mean to do? Were you afraid you would get in trouble? Did you hide the accident?"
5. Sometimes saying "I'm sorry" is not very easy. Sometimes we can break things or hurt people's feelings. Fixing mistakes makes us feel better. Ask: "Can you tell us about a time when you made a mistake and told someone you were sorry? Can you tell us about a time you made a mistake and helped make it better?"
6. Make a Card Writing Center available for "I'm Sorry" notes.



CARING FOR PETS

Learning about responsible pet care.

Learning Area: Responsibility, Empathy

Episode: "Dog Sitting Miss Daisy" Synopsis: Becky's Mom asks George if he will take care of Becky's surprise birthday present—a puppy named Daisy.

Objectives:

Children will:

- * Discuss what kinds of pets they have or would like to have.
- * Discuss and learn about the needs of pets.
- * Paint large paintings of their pets (or desired pets).
- * Set up a veterinary hospital in the dramatic play area.

Grades: K-2

McRel Standard(s): Life Science - Standard 5.1, Knows the basic needs of plants and animals.

Core Curriculum Area(s): Social Studies, Life Science

Materials Needed: books about different kinds of pets, props for the dramatic play area: [medical equipment, clip boards, pens, stuffed animals from home], 18 x 24 painting paper, tempera paints and paint brushes.

Think & Do Activity Description:

1. Ask the children to raise their hands if they have a pet. Count and record the number. Ask children to raise their hands if they do not have pets. Record that number. Compare the numbers. Which is more; which is less? How many more or less?
2. Ask who would like to come up and act out the pet they have—or the pet they wish they could have. Tell them that they may only make movements with their bodies. They may not make sounds. Take turns and allow classmates to guess about animal identities.
3. Ask the children: "What does it mean to 'be responsible' when taking care of pets? What kinds of things do all pets need?" (Record children's responses.)
4. Provide opportunities for children to act-out examples of "being responsible for pets," or "not being responsible for pets." Allow children to guess what is being acted out and tell why it is an example of a responsible behavior or a non-responsible behavior.
5. Ask if anyone's pet has ever gotten ill or had to go to the veterinarian's office—"How did the veterinarian care for the pet? What jobs did the people in the office do so that the animal would be well taken care of? What did the office look like? "
6. Explain that the children will set up a veterinary office in the dramatic play area. Ask children what it will need to include. Then generate a list of required materials. Discuss what students can bring from home. Ask: "Who can bring in a stuffed animal for the veterinary office?" (Allow the children to take an active role in setting up the dramatic area.)
7. Invite children to paint their pet or the pet they wish they had at a Painting Center. Their paintings can be displayed in the dramatic play veterinary office.

Suggested Reading

Home Connections

Teacher Tips

"Harry, The Dirty Dog", by Gene Zion
 "Clifford, The Big Red Dog", By Norman Bridwell

Allow the veterinary office to remain set-up in the dramatic play area until interest in it has diminished.

THE KINDNESS QUILT

Looking out for and drawing various acts of kindness.

Learning Area: Friendship, Kindness, Empathy

Episode: "Speed Shrinks" Synopsis: In a car race, George and Becky learn that friendship, kindness, and fair play are more important than winning.

Objectives:

Children will:

- * Discuss what being a friend means and what being kind means.
- * Brainstorm and list different ways of being kind to each other.
- * Listen to the story, "The Many Colored Quilt."
- * Create a Kindness Quilt.

Grades: K-2

McRel Standard(s): Visual Arts standard 4.1, Knows that Visual Arts have both a history and a specific relationship to various cultures

Core Curriculum Area(s): Language Arts, History, Art

Materials Needed: "A Many Colored Quilt," chart paper, crayons or colored markers, 4" squares of drawing paper or colored construction paper

Think & Do Activity Preparation:

Set up a Quilt-Making Center in the classroom with colored markers and colored construction paper (cut into 4" squares).

Think & Do Activity Description:

1. Revisit the Activity: A Friend Is a Present You Give Yourself . Review what it means to be a friend. Then ask: "What does it mean to be kind? What are some examples of ways that you have been kind to a classmate? Can you think of some ways a classmate has been kind to you?"
2. Tell the children that for the next few days they will be on a "kindness hunt." They will be detectives on the lookout for kind acts. At work time they can visit the Center and draw a kind act that they saw a classmate do or one that they did themselves. Put the completed squares in a "kindness box." Encourage students to share a few of the squares daily during a class discussion.
3. For the next three days have a special meeting for children to share and talk about some of their "Kindness Squares."
4. In the meantime, read the book, "The Many Colored Quilt." Discuss quilt-making, its history and how quilts sometimes tell stories.
5. Ask the children if they would like to make a "Kindness Quilt" from all of their squares. Assemble the squares, allowing the quilt to continue to grow.

Suggested Reading

"Tar Beach" by Faith Ringgold
 "The Keeping Quilt" by Patricia Polacco
 "The Quilt Story" by Tony Johnston

Home Connections

Send a note home telling parents that you will be learning about quilts. Ask if anyone is a quilt maker or has a quilt that they would like to share.

Teacher Tips

If you have a quilt, bring it to the classroom to share with the children.

FINDING SAFE PLACES FOR NIGHTMARES

Learning self-soothing behavior and making a Dream Catcher craft.

Learning Area: Feelings/Fears, Creative Expression, Brainstorming

Episode: “Space Invaders” **Synopsis:** Scary movies and junk food cause George to have frightening dreams.

Objectives:

Children will:

- * Discuss bad dreams and ways to take care of themselves when they’re frightened.
- * List routines that help them feel relaxed before they go to sleep at night.
- * Create a Dream Catcher for their bedroom.

Grades: K-2

McRel Standard(s): Health – Standard 4.1, Identifies and shares feelings in appropriate ways. Language Arts - Listening and Speaking-Standard 8.1, Makes contributions.

Core Curriculum Area(s): Language Arts

Materials Needed: chart paper and markers, pencils, crayons, yarn or string, feathers, colored beads, embroidery hoops (or disposable, plastic plates with the center removed), puppet, teddy bear or doll

Think & Do Activity Description:

1. Discuss and brainstorm about things that might be a bit scary. Using a puppet, teddy bear or doll, begin to share about some of these things (going to a new school, nightmares, loud sounds, illness, etc.). Ask children to share about what makes them feel frightened. Acknowledge that everyone gets scared sometimes, and that’s OK. We just need to figure out what we can do when we feel this way.
2. Generate a list of ways students already deal with fears: talking to a caring adult, putting on the light, thinking about something else, snuggling with a teddy bear.
3. Introduce the concept of a Native American Dream Catcher (see picture on following page).
4. Explain that Dream Catchers are hung over the beds of young children as they sleep. They are delicate and lacy like a spider web; open enough for good dreams to be caught and bad dreams to fall (and be kept) away.
5. Materials needed for Dream Catcher: a circular shaped frame (such as an embroidery hoop). Another option is to cut away the center of thin plastic plates, leaving the outside edge to form a circular frame. (Traditionally willow branches soaked in water are used to form a circular frame. Soaking the branches makes them soft and pliable.)
6. Provide children with yarn that is tied at one point on the outside edge of the embroidery hoop or plate. Have children weave the yarn from one side of the frame to the other, turning the frame and looping the edge each time. For a final touch, add feathers and beads.
7. Encourage children to hang the Dream Catchers to help give them good dreams while they sleep!

Suggested Reading

Home Connections

Teacher Tips

“Where the Wild Things Are” by Maurice Sendak, “There’s a Monster Under My Bed” by James Howe and David Rose, “There’s an Alligator Under My Bed” by Mercer Mayer, “There’s Something in My Attic” by Mercer Mayer, “There’s a Nightmare in My Closet” by Mercer Mayer

Have each child interview his/her parent or guardian. Children should ask: “Is there anything that frightens you? How do you take care of yourself when you are scared or have a nightmare?” Have children illustrate their parent’s responses.

DREAMCATCHER



ONCE, I WAS AFRAID

Moving from being afraid to being excited.

Learning Area: Feelings/Fears, Dealing with Challenges and Adversity, Reflection

Episode: This activity is associated with any *George Shrinks* episode since a key element of the series lies in George’s ability to face and overcome challenges and adversity.

Objectives:

Children will:

- * Discuss reasons why we may feel afraid.
- * Remember and talk about some things they were afraid to do, but now enjoy.
- * Brainstorm about things that helped them when they were afraid.
- * Complete the handout “Once I was afraid to ..., but now I ...!”

Grades: K-2

McRel Standard(s): Language Arts – Listening and Speaking Standards: 8.1, Makes contributions in class and group discussions 8.2, Asks and responds to questions. Health – Standard 4.1, Identifies and shares feelings in appropriate ways.

Core Curriculum Area(s): Language Arts, Social Studies

Materials Needed: chart paper, marker, handout on following page, colored markers, crayons, paper

Think & Do Activity Preparation:

1. Set up a Writing & Drawing Center in the classroom.
2. Photocopy the “Once, I Was Afraid...” handout—one for each child.

Think & Do Activity Description:

1. Discuss what it feels like to be afraid to do something for the first time. Explain that being afraid is normal and happens to all of us at some point. Sometimes feeling afraid or nervous even helps us tell when something is wrong—like if we get lost from our class on a field trip or separated from our family at the grocery store!
2. Share a time that you as an adult were afraid to try something new. Ask children if they can think of things that they were afraid to do the first time—but now like to do (ride a bike, play a sport, meet a new friend, etc.). Record responses on a chart.
3. Then ask about the things that made them feel better. Did an adult help? How? Did they tell someone how they were feeling? Did a friend help out?
4. At the Writing/Drawing Center, provide colored markers, crayons and the handout, “Once I was Afraid... The children’s directions are to think of something they were once afraid to do, but now enjoy. Then they are to complete the phrase, “Once I was afraid to ... but now I ... !” Finally, they will illustrate their phrase. Invite the children, if they are interested, to visit the Center more than one time.
5. Give children the opportunity to share their completed work with the class.
6. If space is available, the individual pages may be hung in the room. Children who complete more than one page may have their pages made into small books. Use construction paper for covers and staple all sheets together.

Suggested Reading

Home Connections

Teacher Tips

“The Moon in My Room” by Ila Wallen, “Wimberly Worried” by Kevin Henkes, “Who’s Afraid of the Big Bad Book” by Lauren Child, “Sylvester and the Magic Pebble” by William Steig

Inviting children to share their work with the class often stimulates further interest in the Center.

REPRODUCIBLE PAGE
ONCE, I WAS AFRAID

Once I was afraid to _____

But now I _____

_____ **!**

I CAN TEACH!

Sharing our knowledge and talents with each other.

Learning Area: Individuality, Self Esteem, Expression

Episode: This activity is tied to any *George Shrinks* episode since a key element of the series is portraying characters as having special gifts and talents. Mother’s talent is creating visual art, Father plays musical instruments, and George often invents things to solve problems.

Objectives:

Children will:

- * Discuss the idea that we are all special in some way—and have gifts and talents to be shared.
- * Discuss talents and interests.
- * Take turns planning and teaching something at the “I Can Teach” Center.

Grades: K-2

McRel Standard(s): Life Skills Standards: Working With Others - 5.1, Occasionally serves as a leader in a group.

Self Regulation 5, Maintains a healthy self-concept.

Core Curriculum Area(s): Language Arts

Materials Needed: chart paper and crayons or colored markers, items needed to “teach”

Think & Do Activity Description:

1. Discuss the idea that we all have special talents and interests. Since we know how to do different things—we can actually be teachers to one another! Ask if anyone has ever taught a younger sibling or friend how to do something? What was it?
2. What is something someone knows and would like to teach? Some ideas: Sharing knowledge on dinosaurs, fossils, rocks or seashells. Teaching how to do magic tricks, play checkers or chess, make snowflakes, play tic-tac-toe, etc.
3. Ask for volunteers to teach at the I Can Teach Center and schedule a new “instructor” each day.
4. Tell the children that they will be responsible for setting up their own Teaching Center. Help them to think of what classroom supplies will be needed.
5. At the beginning of each “teach time,” invite the child who is the instructor to announce what (s)he will be teaching and how many people may come to the Center at one time to learn.
6. At the end of the “lesson,” invite children to share what they’ve learned how to do!

Suggested Reading

“George And Martha” by James Marshall
 “Frog and Toad are Friends” by Arnold Lobel

Home Connections

Ask parents to help their child identify one thing that he or she might like to teach.

Teacher Tips

Children enjoy sharing knowledge and are natural teachers to one another!

I AM SPECIAL

Exploring how each of us is unique with special gifts.

Learning Area: Diversity, Self Awareness, Self Esteem

Episode: "A Star Is Shrunk" Synopsis: George saves the day using resourcefulness, good problem-solving skills and the advantage of his unique size!

Objectives:

Children will:

- * Discuss the fact that we all are special in different ways.
- * Talk about people in their lives who are special to them and what makes them so special.
- * Draw a self-portrait and underneath, complete the sentence: I am special because...

Grades: K-2

McRel Standard(s): Life Skills – Working With Others Standard 3, Works well with diverse individuals and in diverse situations.

Core Curriculum Area(s): Social Studies, Language Arts

Materials Needed: book about diversity, chart paper and crayons or colored markers

Think & Do Activity Description:

1. Read the book "We Are All Alike, We Are All Different" (or another book about diversity or differences) to children.
2. Ask them to think of some ways that they are alike—and some ways they are different.
3. Ask students to think of someone they love or of someone who is special to them. What makes that person special? (Chart different responses on paper.)
4. Ask children to think of one thing that makes them special. Help them to identify attributes of ability or character rather than material possessions.
5. Hand out paper to each child. Instruct children to draw a picture of themselves—and underneath it to write one thing that makes them special. (Younger children may have their words dictated onto the picture.)
6. Give children the opportunity to share their completed work with classmates.
7. Now, decorate a wall with children's finished work or compile it into a classroom book!

Suggested Reading

Home Connections

Teacher Tips

"We Are All Alike, We Are All Different" by the Cheltenham Elementary School Kindergarten
 "Will I Have A New Friend?" by Miriam Cohen
 "George And Martha" by James Marshall
 "Frog and Toad are Friends" by Arnold Lobel

Ask parents to help with this activity by identifying different things that they think make their child special and admirable!

For children who have difficulty seeing themselves positively, it is sometimes helpful to ask their classmates. For these children, hearing what others think can make a difference.

WHAT IF?

Learning that being a responsible decision-maker can be a challenge.

Learning Area: Responsibility, Conflict Resolution

Episode: "On the Road" Synopsis: During a trip with dad, George and Jr. get to stay in a snazzy hotel! They employ self-control and decision-making skills after the bellhop tells them to enjoy "anything" from the bountiful, in-room snack bar.

Objectives:

Children will:

- * Explore the concept of "a dilemma."
- * Learn about responsible decision-making.

Grades: K-2

McRel Standard(s): Life Skills - Thinking and Reasoning-Standard 5.1, Identifies simple problems and possible solutions.

Core Curriculum Area(s): Social Studies

Materials Needed: sentence strips and markers

Think & Do Activity Preparation:

Write out the "What if" questions (see below) – with one question on each sentence strip.

Think & Do Activity Description:

1. Brainstorm the concept of "a dilemma" with the children. If they are unfamiliar with the term, introduce it as "a situation that requires making a difficult choice."
2. Have a discussion about "who sets the rules" at home, at school, and in the community.
3. Talk about times when children get to make the decisions about rules
4. Inform the class that together, they are going to practice making decisions that have to do with dilemmas.
5. There are 4 dilemmas. Find out how they would respond in the following "What If" situations.

Present the sentence strips and ask the questions:

- a) What would you do if you found a pair of really special sunglasses while playing in the park? You would like to keep them...but they are not yours. What would you do?
- b) What would you do if your best friend tells you not to play with Jeff because Jeff is "not cool?" You like your best friend and you like Jeff, too. What would you do?
- c) You and your brother are playing in your mom's room. Mom has a collection of pretty little vases. By accident, you break one of them. You know that if your mom finds out, you are going to get in big trouble. What would you do?
- d) You are supposed to come right home after school. All of your friends want to go to the park. You know your mom will be at work then. What would you do?

6. Allow for open conversation and debate about the different dilemma scenarios.

Suggested Reading

Home Connections

Teacher Tips

"Strega Nona" by Tomie de Paola
 "Dr. DeSoto" by William Steig