

Ella Gillespie and Essex Gall

Ethics Lesson Plan

Total Time: 40-45 mins

Materials: The Giving Tree, paper, crayons/colored pencils

Goals: To discuss what makes a good friend as an introduction to a discussion about how we should act.

Learning Objectives:

- Be able to discuss the relationship between the tree and the boy in The Giving Tree
- Describe the characteristics of a good friend and the role that sharing/doing favors plays in friendship.

Introduction (8 mins)

- Names, pronouns, and a fun fact (favorite food?)
- Today we want to talk about being a good friend/how a good friend behaves.
- Model Discussion between Ella and Essex:
- Question: What makes someone a good friend?
- Response: A good friend is kind.
- Follow-up: Why is kindness important to being a good friend?
- Response: I feel sad when someone is mean to me but happy when someone is kind.
 - Does anyone have another example of what good behavior is?
 - Why do we want to have good behavior?
 - Does anyone have an example of what bad behavior is?
 - Why don't we want to have bad behavior?
 - What was the reason?
 - Should we always act this way?

Reading Activity: The Giving Tree (15 mins)

- What happened in the story we just read (plot)?
- Do you think the boy is being a good friend to the tree? Why or why not?
- Do you think the tree is being a good friend to the boy? Why or why not?
- Would you rather be the tree or the boy in a friendship?
- Why does the boy keep asking for more things from the tree?
- What are some things the boy thinks will make him happy? Do you think these things will actually make him happy?
 - Money, a house, a wife, children, a boat
- Do you think it was right for the boy to take the tree's apples, the tree's branches, and the tree's trunk? Why or why not? What makes it wrong? What makes it okay?
 - If they say it wasn't okay for him to take all of this from the tree, then say "but the book tells us the tree was happy after it was able to give so much to the boy. Do you think the tree was really happy or did the tree just think he was happy?"
- After the tree gives something to the boy, the book always tells us that the tree was happy. Have you ever done a favor for someone else that made you happy?

- Do you like doing favors?
- Do you like when someone does favors for you?
- After the boy cuts down the tree's trunk to make a boat, the book tells us this: "And the tree was happy. But not really." Why do you think the book says this?
- When the boy returns the final time, the tree says this: "I am sorry, boy. But I have nothing left to give you." Do you think this is true? Does the tree have nothing left to give?
 - What can the tree offer the boy?
 - A place to sit and rest
- Has someone ever asked you for so much that you had a hard time giving it to them? Has anyone ever asked you for too many favors? Have you ever felt like the tree in this story?
 - Has anyone ever asked you for all your toys or all your candy?
 - Did the boy ask for everything from the tree?
- What did the tree get in return from the boy?
 - Does this seem fair to you?
 - Would you be happy if you were the tree?
- At what point should the tree have said no to the boy's requests?
- Do you think the tree is more like a friend or a parent?
- Did reading this book make you feel sad? Did you like the ending? How would you have made the book end if you had written it?
- Do you like to share? Why or why not?

Transition Movement Activity: Pretend to climb the giving tree (3 mins)

- Have the kids stand up and pretend to climb the giving tree as a movement break

Activity: Shared Drawing Activity and Apple Decorating (10-15 mins)

- Let's pretend that we can draw The Giving Tree back to being fully grown. We're all going to take turns drawing the tree on the same sheet of paper. We each get 10 seconds to draw a little bit of the tree and then we pass it to the next person. If someone draws the whole tree in their 10 second window then we all restart. We want to draw every part of the tree except the tree's apples! Be sure not to draw the apples because we're going to be drawing them later.
- After that, the kids will decorate apples and put them on the tree as a way to give back to the giving tree.

Activity Questions (2 mins)

- Did you like sharing the drawing or did you want to draw the whole thing yourself?
- Do you feel better now that we have given back to the giving tree?

Concluding Questions (2 mins)

- What did we all learn today?
- What is one thing you're going to tell your grown up(s) or your parent(s) that you learned today when you get home?
- Did you disagree with anyone today? How did that feel?