

Helping At Home

Materials and Preparation

Optional Items:

- Copies of “Here We Go ‘Round the Happle Tree” (1 for you or 1/student)
- Laundry basket
- Assorted pieces of clothing and/or towels
- A few toys from your learning center
- Your students’ shoes

Wilbur’s Words of Wisdom

*Let’s do our duties on one, two, three...
It’s time to help our family!*

Guiding Children’s Learning

In today’s lesson, students will begin to understand they each have a critical role to play at home. As a member of a family, they have a duty to help keep their home in order. By helping at home, children show great love for their family. (And remember, if your students develop a sense of duty as a member of the family, it is easy to transition this idea to their role in the classroom!)

(Optional—As you prepare for today’s lesson, scatter the assorted pieces of clothing, shoes, and towels around the room.)

Begin the lesson by asking your students the following questions:

- Do you have chores to do at home?
- Do you like doing your chores?
- Do you have to be reminded to do your chores?
- When you’re reminded, do you do them right away or do you put off doing your chores?

Now, tell the children they’re going to practice helping others while learning a fun song about doing duties.

Attributes

Kindness, Love

Kindergarten Skills and Objectives:

Children learn the joy of helping by fulfilling their duties for the good of the family. In this lesson, children will learn the following:

- To do their part as a member of a family
- To pick up their toys to keep others from tripping over them
- To put dirty clothes in the laundry basket

Using the song lyrics for “Here We Go ‘Round the Happle Tree” (to the tune of “Here We Go ‘Round the Mulberry Bush”), instruct several children to act out the verses of the song as they sing. For instance, while singing, “This is the way we hang our clothes,” the children will pick up a piece of clothing and hang it on their coat hook. While singing, “This is the way we place our shoes,” the children will pick up their shoes and place them in their cubby. While singing, “This is the way we pick up towels,” the children will pick up a towel and put it in the laundry basket, and so on. (You can also choose to have students pretend to act out the different verses of the song if you don’t have the props.)

Sing the song a few more times while acting silly to make the ‘chores’ fun for the kids.

Encourage your students to keep up the good work at home! (One study out of the University of Minnesota showed that children who did housework had better feelings of responsibility and self-worth years later.)¹

If time allows, choose one or more of the **Extended Learning** activities.

Close with the following comments:

- Doing your chores without complaining is a great way to show your helpfulness to your family.
- Last week, you learned about the town of Merryville and its many characters. You were told to remember your manners, like Tommy did, and helping others is one very important way to show the manners that are in your heart.
- I want to see you helping others here in the classroom, too—not just at home!
- There will always be opportunities to help others. You just have to be paying attention.

¹ “Involving Children in Household Tasks: Is It Worth It?” by Dr Marty Rossman, Found online at: <http://www.cehd.umn.edu/research/highlights/Rossmann/>

Definitions:

KINDNESS

Showing care and consideration in an unexpected and exceptional way

LOVE

Genuinely caring for another, unconditionally

EXTENDING CHILDREN'S LEARNING

1. Help your students remember to do their duties for their family, using the “Duty Chart.” Give each child a copy of the chart. Explain that they will bring the chart home to use. Parents can fill in the duties they want their child to complete. As a duty is completed, they should color in the space under the day it was completed. Students may bring the chart back to school in a week to share how they helped their families.
2. Read *The Berenstain Bears and the Trouble With Chores* by Jan & Mike Berenstain (HarperFestival, 2005). Explain that in today's story we're going to find that the Bears don't like to do their chores either, but they find out that not doing their chores causes too much trouble! After the reading, lead the children in a discussion about what happens at the Bears' house when no one does their chores. Use the questions below as a guide:
 - Do the Bears like doing chores?
 - Do Brother and Sister Bear fuss with each other about doing chores?
 - Why does Mama Bear want the cubs to do their chores?
 - Are the Bears happy when the chores don't get done?
 - Do you think Brother and Sister learn a lesson about doing their part to keep their home clean and neat?
3. Read “The Watchman of Merryville” (found at the end of the lesson). Make the following points to your students:
 - Just as the eyes of Cap'n Nick's heart open to helping Ol' McDonald instead of *hurting* him, the eyes of other people's hearts can open, too.
 - Look for ways to help others this week.
 - Remember, the more you help others, the bigger their hearts grow.
 - The more you help others, the bigger your heart grows.
 - The bigger your heart grows, the more you will want to help others.
4. When leaving for lunch or another activity, ask the children to let someone go ahead of them in line. When they return, let them take turns holding the door open for each other. Look for other opportunities for students to exercise their helpfulness to you, classmates, or other students or adults in the school.
5. Using family magazines, have your students make a “Helping Others” poster for your classroom. Throughout the week, have students cut out pictures from magazines that depict people helping each other. Let the children use a glue stick to add their pictures to the poster. With each addition, allow the child to explain why he or she selected the picture.