

Little Things Make a Big Difference

Let's show our children the power they have to positively influence the world around them, and show them that little things do make a big difference.

Watch this!

Play *Move Mountain*

- In this film, Mountain never sees the sun rise and this becomes his greatest wish. His friends try to help in different ways, and eventually he experiences the sun in a creative way. Not only that, he also sees the kindness from his friends.



Talk about it!

	What did your students take away from this film? Ask them!	How can your students relate this film to their own lives? Ask them!
Emotions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How did Bear try to help Mountain see the sunrise? How did Bird try to help Mountain see the sunrise? How did Squirrel try to help Mountain experience the sunrise? None of these worked, but how did that make Mountain feel? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you have something you are really good at doing? What is it? Have you ever used your skill to help someone who was less good at something? How did helping make you feel?
Reasoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why did Bear try to help Mountain? Why did Bird try to help? Why did Squirrel try to help? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has anyone ever asked for your help to do something? Did you help them? If yes, why did you help them? If no, why not? Could you get along without anyone's help?
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All of the animals tried to help, but it didn't work. What did the animals finally do to help Mountain? Did it work? It didn't really work, so why was Mountain still happy? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have you ever tried to help someone, and have it not go as planned? How did the other person feel knowing that you tried? Was it nice to that you at least tried to help?

Try this!

Be the Mountain!

Help children learn to appreciate what they have.

- Reenact the episode with students playing the different characters.
- If the sun is out, go outside to reenact the episode.
- Ask Mountain how he/she feels to not be able to move.
- The mountain cannot see the sun, but what can he/she see?
- What can he/she feel?
- If doing the activity indoors, ask the class how the sun feels when they are playing outside.
- Does the sun feel warm?
- Put a blanket on the back of the Mountain and ask him/her if he/she can feel the sun.
- What does it feel like? Does it feel like a warm hug?
- In the film, Mountain could not see the sun, but what could he see? (orange and yellow skies, snowy ground, trees, friends)
- Replay the episode without any volume and ask the students to list all of the things that Mountain could see.
- What are the things that Mountain could do?
- It was sad that Mountain could not see the sun, but do all of these other things make up for it?

Act it out!

We get by with some help from our friends.

- Reflect on the activity where the Mountain recognizes what he does have.
- Ask students what it would be like if they had something wrong with their legs and could not walk. Would they feel a bit like Mountain?
- What if they could not hear? Have some of the students cover their ears while you tell a joke to the class.
- After everyone starts laughing, instruct the students to uncover their ears.
- Ask those students how it felt to see everyone talking and laughing and not know what was being said.
- Choose a student to come to the front of the room and blindfold him/her.
- Instruct the class to tell the student how to get from one point in the room to the other point in the room.
- Afterwards, ask the blindfolded student how it felt to be given instructions.
- Do the activity again, this time with another student as their guide. Ask the blindfolded student to put his/her hand on the other student's shoulder as they slowly guide the blindfolded student across the room.
- How did it feel having a friend's help? Is it clear how much better it is when we help others, rather than just tell them what to do?

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Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All of the animals tried to help, but it didn't work. What did the animals finally do to help Mountain? Did it work? It didn't really work, so why was Mountain still happy? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have you ever tried to help someone, and have it not go as planned? How did the other person feel knowing that you tried? Would you say that it was better to try and fail than to never have tried at all?

Try this!

Act it out!

We get by with some help from our friends.

- Mountain could not move like the rest of his friends could. Ask students what it would be like if they had something wrong with their legs and could not walk. Would they feel a bit like Mountain?
- Group students into pairs, and go to an open area, like a gym, playground, or outdoor field.
- Tell students that they are to walk from one spot to the next.
- Instruct students to take a good look at their surroundings.
- Hand out blindfolds and tell one of the students in each pair to put it on.
- Now instruct the students to go from one spot to the next. Whichever **one** person gets to that spot first, wins a special prize.
- At the end of the game, ask students to sit in a circle.
- How many of them got to the spot? Count the number of hands raised.
- How many of them took their blindfolded partner with them? Count the number of hands raised.
- Of those who were blindfolded and were taken along, ask them how it felt to be cared for and helped to the spot.
- Of those who were left on their own, how did it feel not knowing where to go and feeling left behind by their classmate?
- Of those who got to the spot on their own, why didn't they take their partner?

Kindness starts now!

Children have more power to affect someone's feelings than they realize.

- Put all of the names of your students on separate pieces of paper and put them in a hat.
- Have each student pick out a name and instruct them not to tell anyone whose name they have.
- Every day for the next week, students are to do something kind for this person without revealing who they are.
- They can leave notes, drawings, and small, handmade gifts for them at their desks or in their lockers. These gifts could be as simple as a sharpened pencil with a note telling them to have a great day.
- At the end of the week, have the students guess who their "secret friend" is.
- How did they feel about receiving little treats? Did they anticipate them? Did they look forward to them?
- How much excitement did they have in *giving* the gifts?
- Point out to the class that these little acts of kindness affected both the giver and the receiver, and it took little effort to do. Encourage them to be kind to someone everyday as these little things make a big difference.

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Try this!

Gain some perspective!

Help children see how others feel by stepping into their shoes.

- In the film, Mountain received an invitation to see the sunrise. Make a sunrise playdate with you and your child.
- This can be a breakfast event with various breakfast foods to make it extra special.
- As the sun rises, ask your child to note the colors they see.
- How does seeing the sun rise make them feel?
- Now have them turn their back to the sun and tell them that they are not to move.
- How do they feel now?
- Ask them to consider how it would feel to be Mountain and not see the sun.
- Can he/she feel the sun on his/her back?
- Is that as good as seeing the sunrise or not as good?
- Give your child a mirror and instruct them to hold it up to see the sun behind them.
- Is that better? Is it as good as seeing the sun?
- Help your child understand that some people, like Mountain, cannot do the things they want to do and cannot do things like your child can do. We need to think of how others might feel.

What would you do?

Help children see that they can do a lot for others if they think about it.

- Even though your child is young, there is a lot he/she can do to help others.
- Give them these scenarios and discuss what they could do for each one. Encourage them to think of how the other person would feel, and then what they could do to help.
 - You are playing with friends at recess. You notice one person alone, looking down.
 - Your dad is working hard to get dinner on the table.
 - Someone fell down and is bleeding.
 - Your sister is sick.
 - Mom just came home from work, and it's been a hard day.
 - You hear of another child who isn't going to get any presents for a holiday because her parents can't afford it.
 - You notice a homeless person as you walk through the city.
 - Your friend is over at your house for the first time and really wants to play with your favorite toy.
 - You notice a person on crutches struggling to open a door.
- Point out to your child that he/she is able to come up with great ideas just by thinking of how the other person may feel.