

Puppet Play - Humility

EXPLANATION:

Young children may not have the vocabulary to express the idea of humility, but using puppets will give them the opportunity to explore actions, scenarios, and feelings related to humility.

GRADE LEVELS: Preschool–Kindergarten

STUDENT GROUPING: Whole group and individual free play

ACTIVITY LENGTH: Group session time

CASEL CORE COMPETENCY: *SOCIAL AWARENESS*

- Recognizing strengths in others
- Showing concern for the feelings of others
- You can learn more about the CASEL framework [here](#)



SCOPE OF TASK:

Puppet play is an enjoyable, play-based activity for young children that encourages imagination and creativity. It stimulates communication, social skills, and emotional development. Puppet play provides a sense of security that makes it easier for students to express thoughts and feelings and to enact situations. Concepts associated with humility and elevating the value of others—including respect, gratitude, and empathy—can be explored using puppets.

1. During story time, read age-appropriate books that explore concepts of humility. Examples of stories include the folktale “The Emperor’s New Clothes” or *The Big Brag* by Dr. Suess. (See Resources section below.)
2. Ask students to retell the story, highlighting the behaviors of the characters. Assist the students with associating the actions in the stories with relevant vocabulary words, such as “boastful,” “kind,” “self-important,” and “bossy.”
3. Using puppets, the teacher can enact and overexaggerate scenarios that explore characteristics of humility; through these scenarios, the teacher can evaluate students’ understanding. Events from the books could be re-enacted. Other examples could include:
 - The puppet saying that he is the best runner in the whole world or better than [name of a student in the group].
 - The puppet saying that he has the prettiest hair in the whole world or nicer hair than [name student in the group].

Other examples can be of interchanges between two puppets that demonstrate disrespectful behavior, ungratefulness, or a lack of empathy.

4. Ask students to tell you what was happening in the puppet play, asking questions such as:
 - What did the puppet do?
 - What did the puppet say?
 - Was that fair/kind/nice?
 - What could the puppet have done/said differently?
 - Is the puppet being a good friend—why or why not?
5. Ask the students to take turns engaging in puppet play with the teacher, creating stories that demonstrate humble actions. For example, the play could be about congratulating a friend for their efforts, recognizing others’ skills or talents, demonstrating good sportsmanship when losing a game, or apologizing for mistakes.

Once themes associated with humility have been explored and age-appropriate vocabulary introduced, the puppets can be left in an accessible location in the classroom for students to explore further.

Hint: Share with parents/guardians the concepts of humility that you are exploring so that the ideas can be discussed and reinforced in the home environment.

RESOURCES:

- Puppets—or—
- Materials to make puppets, e.g., socks, glue, scraps of fabric, collage materials

Andersen, H. C. (1837). "The Emperor's New Clothes."

Suess, Dr. (1998). *The Big Brag*. Random House Books. Originally appeared as a story in Suess, Dr. (1958). *Yertle the Turtle and Other Stories*. Random House, Inc.

Online video of narrated book: "Kids Story The Big Brag by Dr Seuss Stories and Fairy Tales for Children Bedtime Stories (HD)," Angel Thomas, sourced from <https://youtu.be/oLYBMVpD7I4>

