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Teaching Guide:

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Fairness

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for grades K-5



This page is from the teaching guide for the video *Fairness* in the video series *The Six Pillars of Character* featuring the Popcorn Park Puppets™. Even if you aren't showing this video there is a lot of material here you can use to create a lesson. Feel free to modify it to suit your needs.



HOW TO BE A FAIR PERSON

- **Treat people the way you want to be treated.**
- **Take Turns.**
- **Tell the truth.**
- **Play by the rules.**
- **Think about how your actions will affect others.**
- **Listen to people with an open mind.**
- **Don't blame others for your mistakes.**
- **Don't take advantage of other people.**
- **Don't play favorites.**

EDUCATIONAL GOALS

CHILDREN LEARN:

- What fairness is and what a fair person does.
- How fairness and unfairness affect their relationships with others.
- How to solve problems by thinking.

THE VIDEO STORY



Essie holds a trial.

Essie learns that being fair

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

If you are using the video, ask questions 1 and 2 before viewing.

1. Have you ever said, "that's unfair"? How do you know when something is unfair?
2. Has anybody ever tricked you or cheated you? How did you feel about it?

Questions to ask after showing Act I

3. Describe what happened in Act I.
4. Do you think Burna was being fair with Muggsy? If not, what did she do that was unfair?
 - Was Burna being honest with Muggsy? What did she do that was dishonest?
 - Was Burna treating Muggsy the way she would want Muggsy to treat her?
5. Do you think it was fair for Muggsy to accuse Burna of stealing his script? Why, or why not?
6. Burna gave a better audition than Muggsy. Is there any reason she shouldn't get the part?
7. Muggsy pleaded with Essie to give him more time to find his costume. Burna objected, saying that would be unfair. Whom do you agree with, Muggsy or Burna? Why?
8. How did Muggsy and Burna feel about each other at the end of Act I? Why?
9. What is Essie confused about? Why is she having trouble deciding what is fair?
10. What would you do if you were Essie? What are some of her options?
11. Can you predict what might happen next?

Questions to ask after showing Act II

12. Socrates said that the best way to solve a problem is by thinking. Do you agree?
 - Why is thinking a good way to solve problems?

to everybody can be a lot harder than it seems. When she has to decide which of her friends will get the starring role in the annual Popcorn Park play, Essie has a lot to consider — including the not-so-fair actions of the two competitors. But a visit to [The Thinking Place](#) helps Essie think clearly about what fairness is, and leads her to a creative idea about how to make this difficult choice.

[Click Here
to Learn About the Video
Series](#)



The Six Pillars of Character

- **Trustworthiness**
- **Respect**
- **Responsibility**
- **Fairness**
- **Caring**
- **Citizenship**

Color these

13. Socrates told Essie that if she doesn't know what fairness is, she should try asking what unfairness is. Did that help Essie?
 - Did she have any trouble thinking of things that were unfair?
 - What were the things Essie said were unfair? (*Getting blamed for something she didn't do, not playing by the rules, not listening with an open mind, playing favorites, taking advantage of people.*)

14. Were Burna and Muggsy guilty of any of these unfair things Essie mentioned? Which ones?

15. Socrates said, "without rules we are nothing but animals." What did he mean by that? Do you think he's right? Why, or why not?
 - What does following rules have to do with fairness?

16. Socrates said to Essie that if she doesn't do any of the things she considers unfair, she'll probably be fair. What do you think of that idea? Is it useful?
 - Did that completely solve Essie's problem? Why not? What was missing?

17. Essie comes away from the Thinking Place planning on having a trial. Can you predict what might happen when Essie brings her fighting friends together in a courtroom?

Questions to ask after showing Act III

18. Do you think Essie's idea of having a trial was a good one? What did this trial accomplish?

19. Essie gave Muggsy and Burna three rules they had to follow during the trial. What were they? (*Take turns, listen to each other, tell the truth.*) What do you think of these rules? Do they have anything to do with fairness? What?

20. Essie said "In order to be completely fair to both of you, I promise to keep an open mind and give you each an equal chance to make your argument." What do these things have to do with fairness?

21. Did Essie do a good job of running a fair trial? Explain your answer.

22. Did the trial help Muggsy and Burna understand the unfair things they had done to each other? How can you tell?

23. Do you think a trial like that might be a fair way for you and your friends to settle conflicts?

24. Was it a good idea to let Muggsy and Burna come up with their own solution?

25. What do you think of the solution Muggsy and Burna came up with?

characters!

Click on the Popcorn Park Puppets below to get blackline masters you can print out for your children to color.



Groark



Burna



Nubbs



Essie

Was it fair? Can you think of a better solution?

26. What did you learn from this video?

General questions about fairness:

27. In every situation is it possible to be fair to everyone? Should you try? Why, or why not?

28. What does treating people fairly mean? Does fairness mean everyone gets the same amount, like an equal piece of a chocolate bar? Does fairness mean enforcing the rules for everyone, even if it means losing a game?

29. How should you treat people who are not fair with you?

30. How does fairness affect your relationships with other people - your friends, for example?

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STUDENT ACTIVITIES

1. What does it mean to be a fair person? Have your class brainstorm a list of do's and don'ts for being fair. Ask for specific examples of each behavior they identify. Compare their list with the one at the top of this page. Hang the list up on the wall as a reminder.
2. Take some of the behavioral examples from activity #1, above, and turn them into role-play situations. The kids can act them out themselves or use puppets. First have them role-play the unfair behavior, and then the fair behavior. Have the group analyze each of the role-plays.
3. Bring in articles from newspapers and magazines reporting on events in which fairness and justice are at issue. Have a discussion about who is acting fairly, and who is acting unfairly in these situations.
4. Invite a judge (or a trial attorney) to come and talk to your class about how the justice system works and about how he/she tries to keep things fair in the courtroom.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

1. If your students are old enough to write book reports, have them write about how the characters in the book behaved in either a fair or an unfair way. Do the same with movies or television programs they have seen. If your children are too young to write book reports, do this

as a class discussion about the books they are reading or that you are reading to them.

2. Think of a time when you've taken unfair advantage of a person or a situation, or when someone has taken unfair advantage of you. Describe it. What was unfair about it? How did it make you feel? What did you learn from the experience?

3. How is fairness related to having respect for others? How is it related to honesty? To being reliable? To being a good citizen?

4. Think of something that you consider to be unfair. Describe it in detail, and write what you think should be done about it. Is there anything you can do to help change it? If so, what?

5. Sometimes to make a fair decision you have to consider the "stakeholders" - all the people who will be affected by your decision. Set up a situation in which you have to make an important decision. For instance, choosing someone to play on your basketball team. Are there more stakeholders than just the two applicants? How can you tell who has a stake in your decision? How does considering the stake-holders help you make a fairer decision.

6. Did you know that almost every decision you make (even small ones) affects other people? Think of a few decisions you have made, and write about how those decisions affected other people.

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(Copy this block and send it home to the parents.)

FOR PARENTS

Dear Parent,

Your child has just viewed a video entitled ***The Six Pillars of Character: FAIRNESS*** which teaches children lessons about fair and unfair behavior, and shows how being a fair person leads to good friendships and positive interpersonal relationships.

Here are some things you can do to reinforce the message of this video and our related learning activities.

- Ask your child to tell you about the video program and what he or she learned from it.
- Ask you child to show you the page entitled "How to be a Fair Person." Discuss the rules for fairness listed on this

page. Perhaps post them in a place where your child will see them often.

- Talk with your child about the importance of being fair with people. Make sure he/she knows that it is important to you, and that it will lead to stronger friendships.
- Watch a television program together. Perhaps find a non-violent courtroom drama. And talk about the various ways in which the characters acted unfairly towards one another.
- Remember that you are a powerful role model for your child. If you treat people fairly, that is what your child will learn from you.

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