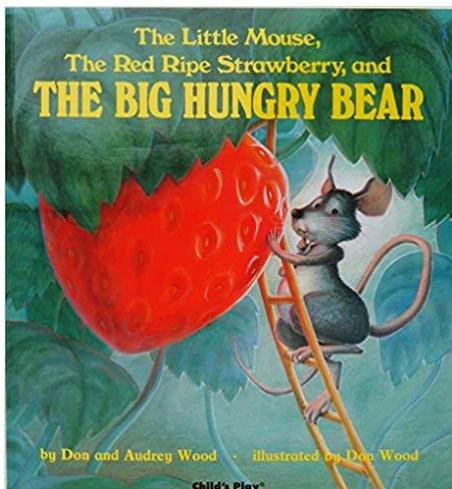


Children's Lit Kit

Supporting Social Emotional Development through Literature

BOOK SELECTION



The Little Mouse, The Red Ripe Strawberry, and The Big Hungry Bear

By Dan and Audrey Wood

Child's Play

The Little Mouse, The Red Ripe Strawberry, and The Big Hungry Bear by Dan and Audrey Wood tells the story of a mouse who is trying desperately to hide a luscious, ripe strawberry he found in the forest. The narrator, who interacts with the mouse throughout the story, provides the warning and helps the mouse come up with a solution to this problem (after several failed attempts).

In the story, the mouse works very hard to pick the strawberry, but the fear of the big hungry bear prevents him from being able to enjoy it – until he reaches a solution to the problem. This story explores two social emotional skills: problem solving and sharing.

This book can be purchased on [Amazon](#) or checked out digitally in one-hour increments on the [Internet Archive](#). YouTube also features several [Read Aloud](#) videos of the book.

BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER READING

Examples of activities that can be used before, during, and after reading *The Little Mouse, The Red Ripe Strawberry, and The Big Hungry Bear* to promote social and emotional development:

Before reading, ask children what it means to share. Ask them to think of a time when someone shared something with them. How did that make you feel? You can also ask children to think of a time they shared something with someone. How did the act of sharing with someone else make you feel?

While reading, ask children to identify the problem the mouse faces.

While reading, draw attention to the failed solutions the mouse implements to protect the strawberry. Ask children why these solutions would not work. Ask what *they* think the mouse should do.

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While reading, highlight the facial expressions and body language of the mouse. What is the mouse feeling right now and how do we know? Ask this as the expressions and body language change on each page.

After reading, ask children which solution worked for the mouse. Ask the children why sharing the strawberry was the best solution. Is the mouse a good friend? Why?

After reading, refer to the examples children provided when asked about a time they shared something with someone. Refer to the way sharing made them feel. Look at the mouse's expression when sharing the strawberry and when the mouse is eating his half. How does the mouse feel? How do we know?

PROBLEM-SOLVING

Art: Mouse solved the problem of what to do with the strawberry by sharing it with a friend. Have children cut out [these objects](#) (or provide them pre-cut) and assemble the mouse and a strawberry. Color the finished product.

Numeracy: In small groups or individually, have children complete the [Number Match File Folder Activity](#). In this activity, children are presented with a mouse holding a strawberry, but half of the strawberry is missing. Children will use the number written on the strawberry half the mouse is holding to match it to the missing half with dots that match the number.

Scenarios: Introduce the Solution Kit in your classroom. The Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program has developed an [Introduction to the "Solution Kit"](#) with tips for introducing, practicing, and maintaining the use of the strategy. If you are new to the Solution Kit, start with the "Share" card after reading this book. Use the problem scenarios on page 5 of the linked document that could be solved by sharing and have children act out how they would respond. You can download and print [small Solution Kit cards](#) and/or [large Solution Kit cards](#). Reinforce children when they share to solve or avoid a problem.

Model and Support: When a child comes to you with a problem, resist the urge to solve it for them. Instead, ask questions. How are you going to solve that problem? How did that happen? What can we do about it? What are you going to do next? This encourages children to discover their own solutions through guided questioning.

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BEING A GOOD FRIEND/SHARING

Art: Trace and cut out children's handprints (or provide pre-cut handprint shapes) and have them write, draw, etc. one way to be a good friend on the shape. Post the handprints in your room. Refer to these actions, qualities, etc. when you see them displayed. (Source: [Reading is Fundamental](#))

Free Play/Centers: For the children who struggle with sharing, use a visual timer to help them know when to take turns with a toy, item, or activity. Start with small intervals of time and gradually increase. Phase out use of the timer as the child becomes consistent with taking turns independently.

Make-Believe: Use puppets or dolls to reenact situations where figures share with each other. Emphasize how the figures feel to both give and receive when sharing. Incorporate sharing-related problems into the scenarios, when appropriate, and have children help the figures solve the problem.

Model/Reinforce: Children will take cues about sharing from you. Model sharing with others when the opportunity arises organically. Say aloud what you are doing and why. When you witness children sharing (with you or one another) acknowledge them and let them know they are being a good friend.

Games: Incorporate cooperative games/activities that involve turn-taking or role-sharing to achieve a common goal. Examples: work a puzzle, build a tower together, play a matching game, follow the leader, gardening, keep balloons in the air, etc.

ENGAGING FAMILIES AND CAREGIVERS

The National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations has developed the [Solution Kit: Home Edition](#). Provide these instructions and solution cards to parents. Offer suggestions for using at home, such as starting with 1-2 solutions at a time (slowly adding other options) and acknowledging children when they implement the solutions.

This [article on Parents.com](#) lists specific ways families and caregivers can support children in learning to share. Strategies include using a timer to help facilitate turn-taking, putting away special items when guests are over, leading by example, and using the donation of toys to charity as an opportunity to talk to your child about giving to others.

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USING THE PYRAMID MODEL TO REFLECT

Problem solving and friendship skills are vital social emotional skills addressed in Tier 2 of the Early Childhood Pyramid Model. When Tier 1 features (Nurturing and Responsive Relationships, High Quality Supportive Environments) are in place with fidelity, early childhood professionals can make informed decisions about which students need additional, targeted social emotional supports. The following checklists can be used to reflect on practices implemented in your classroom to identify your strengths and possible areas for growth.

[Friendship & Problem-Solving Checklist](#)

[Practice Implementation Checklist: Social Emotional Teaching Strategies](#)

This Children's Lit Kit was assembled by Jess George.

