Life's Little Lessons
A PBS KIDS Learning Kit with Daniel Tiger
It’s important for all children to feel comfortable about their uniqueness and begin to realize that they are, in some ways, both alike and different from everyone else. With those feelings at the core, they begin to feel inner strength and confidence. From that core, they find it easier to accept others.

Children learn from example. They learn more from the way they see us interacting with others than they learn through the things we say. You can help children respect others by the way you greet people, talk with them, and talk about them afterwards.

By watching the video of Daniel Tiger’s experience of getting to know Prince Wednesday’s cousin, Chrissie, you can open a discussion and talk with children about appreciating likenesses and differences among people.

**Children Are Working On**
- Thinking and verbal skills
- Sorting and classification skills
- Appreciating similarities and differences

**Materials**

**Set Up the Topic**
- Today we’re going to watch a video of when Daniel Tiger meets Chrissie, Prince Wednesday’s cousin.
- They decide to pretend play ‘knights’ in Prince Wednesday’s castle, really his bedroom. Daniel learns that Chrissie has leg braces to help her walk and that he really has fun playing with her.
- Let’s see what happens.

**Watch**
Watch the episode: “Daniel’s New Friend.”

**Talk About It**
After watching the video, you could ask the children the following questions:
- What were the children playing?
- Who is Chrissie?
- How do you think Daniel and the other children feel about Chrissie?
- What does Chrissie need to help her walk? Do any of the other children in the show need something to help them? (Prince Wednesday has eye glasses that help him see.)
- Do any of us need help doing things? (Using a wheelbarrow or wagon to move things that are heavy.)
• Let’s talk about how all of us are the same. (We all like to pretend play; We all like to have fun; We are all in the same classroom.) How are we different? (height, hair color, clothes)

• It might be interesting to ask the children how the characters in the show are alike and different. (Do they notice who’s an animal? Who isn’t? Or do the children see all the characters as children?)

Sing the Strategy Song: 🎵 In some ways we are different, but in so many ways we are the same. 🎵

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**Play & Explore**

**Part 1**

• Later that day or on another day that week, you might have children, in a small group, talk about ways that they are alike and ways they are different. You might ask:

  • What does each of you like to play?
  • Who walks to school? Who rides to school?
  • Who’s wearing tie shoes? Velcro shoes?
  • Who has a sister? A brother? No sister or brother?
  • Who has a grandma? Grandpa?

**Part 2**

• Materials: Blank drawing paper, crayons/markers

  • Suggest that the children draw pictures of themselves, maybe with their families.

  • When they are done, ask the children to tell you about their drawings. Talk about ways their drawings are the same and ways they are different.

  • Remind the children that people can accomplish the same things but in different ways. For example, everyone talks, but some people talk in different languages or talk in sign language using their hands and fingers. We all wear clothes, but our clothes may be different colors or styles. We all like to eat, sometimes the same food, sometimes different food.
Young children are naturally curious. They ask a lot of questions. A child who looks or acts in a way that differs from the majority will be noticed by other children, even if those other children don’t make open comments. However, curiosity about someone new or different can disappear over time as the children build relationships with one another. Children do have the capacity to learn and understand that a child that has adaptive equipment (like leg braces or eye glasses) is able to do much of what most other children can do, even if it’s done differently.

Here are some reminders about how you can help children recognize both similarities and differences, and assign positive attitudes of respect and neighborliness when they do.

• The most important thing to do is to model comfort and acceptance. Children pay close attention to adult emotions, like nervousness and/or fear.
• Anticipate children’s questions.
• Gather information from family members.
• Find out what each child can do and emphasize that with other children.
• Respect family privacy if they are not open to offering information about their child.
• Keep your explanations simple.
• Assist children with disabilities if they need help navigating or joining activities.
• Assign buddies or partners when needed.

Things to Remember:
• It is healthy and natural to notice differences.
• It’s okay to be curious, but not okay to be mean.
• Being different doesn’t mean being bad or wrong.
• Children can learn to be “neighborly” to everyone.

In some ways we are different, but in so many ways we are the same.
Disappointments are part of everyone’s life. Through this activity, you can use video clips from DANIEL TIGER’S NEIGHBORHOOD to help children learn to recognize this feeling, give it a name, and rehearse some ways to handle the disappointments in their lives.

**Children Are Working On**
- Naming feelings
- Recognizing feelings
- Expressing strong feelings in appropriate ways

**Materials**
- 11 ½ minute episode: “Daniel’s Birthday”

**Set Up the Topic**
- We’re going to talk about times when we were disappointed. Does anyone know what disappointed means?
- Today, in this video, Daniel Tiger is going to share with us a time when he was disappointed, and what he did.

**Watch**
Watch episode: “Daniel’s Birthday.”

**Talk About It**
After watching the video, you could ask the children the following questions:
- What happened to Daniel and his birthday cake? How did he feel? What did he do?
- Was there ever a time when you were disappointed? Tell us about it.
- Listen to each child tell a story. Ask how he/she felt, acknowledge the feeling and then repeat back a summary.
- What did you or someone else do to help you feel better?

Sing the Strategy Song: 🎵 When something seems bad, turn it around and find something good. 🎵

**Play & Explore**
- During free play, you might remind a small group of children about one of the other children’s stories shared earlier. You might suggest that the children draw a picture or pretend play that story.
- Making up stories gives children a way to rehearse experiences at times when they’re not emotionally upset. That can help them think more clearly about how to manage real-life disappointments. It takes practice for young children to recognize the feeling of disappointment and learn how to cope with it.
- You can replay the videos and clips several times throughout the year.

Watch more videos and play games with Daniel Tiger by visiting pbskids.org/daniel

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As teachers we have the opportunity to help children learn how to cope with disappointment. One way to do that is to help them think about what they do have and what things did go well – just as Daniel Tiger’s strategy song suggests.

Use the following suggestions to minimize the chances for disappointment and celebrate the everyday victories.

- Routinely celebrate the small things in everyday life: the sunshine, story time, songs, and smiles.
- Stick to a regular classroom routine and environment as much as possible so that children know what to expect each day. During holidays and special celebrations such as birthdays, help yourself and the children by keeping stimulation to a minimum. When putting out paints, markers, crayons, and paper, select a few specific colors that fit the occasion so that no matter what the children create, it will look special and festive for families to admire.
- Try to be aware of when children seem to become stressed. Give them quiet activities and classroom places where they can find respite and calm.
- In the moment: “I know you’re disappointed that... Sometimes things don’t turn out the way we want them to. Let’s think about what we can do.” Example: “I know you wanted to play in the block center today, but your other classmates are already playing there. Let’s think about what else you could play today, and tomorrow I’ll be sure that you’re the first one to be in the block center.”
- When you are listening to children tell you how they are feeling, be sure to acknowledge whatever feelings they are naming before trying to help find a solution. Acknowledging the children’s feelings helps them feel that they are being heard and allows them to focus on what to do next.

♪♪ When something seems bad, turn it around and find something good. ♪♪

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Sometimes friends want to play together but have different ideas and minor conflicts arise. If there is a conflict, ask the children to think about what they wanted to play and point out that maybe they just want to play together.

### Children Are Working On
- Expressing feelings and ideas
- Listening to each other
- Problem-solving skills

### Materials
- 11 ½ minute episode: “Daniel and Miss Elaina Play Rocketship”

### Set Up the Topic
- You might start off by telling the children that today they will be watching a video about Daniel Tiger and his friend, Miss Elaina. They are playing at Miss Elaina’s house. They are excited about playing out space and rocketship. While they’re playing, they have a problem. Let’s watch and see what happens.

### Watch
Watch episode: “Daniel and Miss Elaina Play Rocketship.”

### Talk About It
- What were Daniel and Miss Elaina playing?
- What problem came up?
- Did someone help? Did they solve it on their own?
- Does anyone want to tell us about a time when you were playing with a friend and you had a problem?
- How did you feel?
- What made you feel better?

Sing the Strategy Song: 🎵 A friend just wants to play with you. 🎵

### Play & Explore
- Sometimes friends don’t agree. Throughout the year, when the situation seems right, remind children who might be disagreeing to sing the strategy song again. Follow up by saying, “Let’s talk about how you can play together.”
- At snack time or at the end of the day while waiting for families to arrive, you can begin conversations about friends who were disagreeing and how they were able to work things out. What did they say? What did they do?
The first way young children make social connections is usually side by side. They may just watch each other or imitate each other. That’s how friendship begins. It is important to remember that children have different temperaments. Some seem naturally sociable, while others seem to prefer spending more time alone or with family members.

Use the following suggestions to help children practice playing together and resolving conflicts that arise during play.

- A good time for teachers to facilitate social skills is when children are playing together and a conflict occurs.
- Teachers can use playtime as a way to help children who have less effective social skills to try out new ways of interacting.
- It is important to remember that social competence is defined differently in different cultures. It’s key to be supportive and sensitive to the cultural backgrounds of the children and families served. Talk with families about how they handle social interactions and conflicts at home.
- During the preschool years, it is common to hear a child proclaim “You’re not my friend anymore!” That’s often just a way of saying, “I’m really angry that you won’t do what I want you to do.”
- Show the video clip of Daniel Tiger’s strategy song as a discussion starter. Let the children share examples of times they might sing the song.

🎵🎵 A friend just wants to play with you. 🎵🎵
Classroom Activity: Mad Feelings & Fast, Slow, Then Stop

Before children can think clearly enough to deal constructively with their angry feelings, they need to develop self-control in order to slow down and calm down. Just as Daniel Tiger uses music to help him calm down, you can use music and movement to help children practice slowing down and controlling their actions.

Children Are Working On

• Developing self-control
• Listening carefully

Materials

• 11 ½ minute episode: “Katerina Gets Mad”

Set Up the Topic

• Today we’re going to talk about what makes us mad and what we do when we’re mad.

• Let’s watch a video of DANIEL TIGER’S NEIGHBORHOOD when his friend, Katerina, gets mad.

Watch

Watch the episode “Katerina Gets Mad.”

Talk About It

After watching the video, you could ask the children the following questions:

• Do you ever get mad?
• What makes you get mad?
• What do you do with the mad that you feel?
• Does it help you to feel better? What happens?
• What did Katerina do?
• Let’s see if it helps us too.

Sing the Strategy Song: When you feel so mad that you want to roar, take a deep breath and count to four... 1, 2, 3, 4.

Watch more videos and play games with Daniel Tiger by visiting pbskids.org/daniel
Play & Explore

• Each day acknowledge when children have been able to control themselves. You could say, “K, you did a great job stopping yourself before you hit.”

• For a gross motor activity, play music with varying rhythm. Have children move their bodies to the music.

  • Start by playing slow music and giving children verbal cues that the music is going to stop. Explain that they should “freeze” when the music stops.

  • After the children understand the game, continue with the slow music, but don’t give the verbal reminders.

  • Once the children have mastered slow music, switch the game to fast music and let the children see how hard it can be to stop when they are doing something fast.

  • After playing several rounds of the game, end with some slow music so the children can calm down and get ready to transition to a new activity.

• If there is no music available, you can practice self-control with a simple clapping game, asking the children to clap or roll their hands slowly, then even more slowly, then quickly, then even more quickly.
Managing our feelings takes self-control. Children are not born with self-control. They learn it gradually from infancy and through every stage of development. Learning to manage anger is a process learned by having strategies to use in the moment and using them time after time. There are no magic answers or tricks for helping children to get their anger under control.

Use the following suggestions to help the children in your classroom develop strategies for managing their mad feelings.

• When a child seems angry, here are some words you could use:
  • “I can see you’re angry. I want to help you feel better. Can I hold you while you calm down?”
  • “I can see that you’re mad. I can’t let you hurt others or yourself. It might help to tell ____, ‘I didn’t like it when ___.’”
  • For an older child, you might say: “I’ve been trying to help you with your mad feelings, but it doesn’t seem to be working. I’m going to let you sit here where I can see you. When you’re ready, let me know. You can come to me or let me know that I can come to you.”
  • For preschoolers, use positive statements, rather than using the word “No!” Example: When you say “No hitting,” children hear “hitting.” Instead say something like “Use your words” or “Keep your hands to yourself.”
  • For a toddler, say a quick “No” followed by what they should do.
  • When a child is showing self-control, congratulate him/her.
  • Plan activities throughout your curriculum that require children to practice physical control, like stopping and starting, or add stop signs in the block area or outside on the playground.
  • Give children a chance to express their feelings through Daniel’s online game Feel the Music - http://pbskids.org/daniel/games/feel-the-music/.
  • Show video clip #2 of children practicing the strategy and have the children in your care practice it, too.
  • Remind children to sing Daniel Tiger’s strategy song whenever they feel mad.

🎵🎵 When you feel so mad that you want to roar...
Take a deep breath and count to four... 1, 2, 3, 4. 🎵🎵
Watching a video or reading a book about a new experience, like going to the doctor, can help children better understand that experience and know that it is also new – and sometimes scary – to others. Knowing what to expect and playing about it helps children feel like they’re the ones in charge. That makes the new experience easier to manage.

By using a Play Doctor Kit and watching the video of Daniel Tiger’s experience at the doctor, children can be better prepared for when they need to visit the doctor.

**Children Are Working On**

- Using play to work on feelings
- Developing imagination
- Feeling proud of themselves for facing a new experience

**Materials**

- 11 ½ minute episode: “Daniel Visits the Doctor”

**Set Up the Topic**

- We all go to the doctor, sometimes when we’re sick and sometimes just for a checkup. Today, we’re going to see Daniel and his mother visit Dr. Anna, Daniel’s doctor.
- Watch for how Dr. Anna talks to Daniel and what she does with him and Tigey.
- Let’s see what happens.

**Watch**

Watch the episode “Daniel Visits the Doctor.”

**Talk About It**

After watching the video, ask children the following questions:

- How was Daniel feeling about going to see Dr. Anna?
- Can any of you share how you feel when you need to go to see your doctor?
- What do you do to feel better?
- What did Daniel do?
- How did Daniel’s mom help?

Sing the Strategy Song: 🎵🎵 When we do something new, let’s talk about what we’ll do. 🎵

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Play & Explore: Build a Play Doctor’s Kit

- Have the children help build a Play Doctor Kit. See the materials section below.
- Let the children know that the kit will be in the dress-up corner all week or for a few weeks. They can pretend-play doctor whenever it’s free play time.
- You could add a Band-Aid or two to a doll or stuffed animal and replace them in the doll corner. See if that prompts some pretend play.
- Sing the strategy song whenever you know children will be having new experiences.

When we do something new, let’s talk about what we’ll do.

Materials

- A box or bin to hold the pretend medical supplies
- Stuffed animals or dolls
- Long strips of white cloth to use as bandages
- Tape for bandaging
- Toy stethoscope
- Old white shirts for medical smocks
- Toy needle or ball point pen that has a “clicker” on top for pretend injections (remove the ink cartridge)
- Soft white gloves
- Clipboards with pencil/ marker

Besides going to the doctor, children might have other new experiences such as traveling on an airplane for the first time or staying at a friend’s or relative’s house for the first time. You can create play kits and sing the strategy song throughout the year whenever a child is facing a new experience. It could also be brought out as part of a week-long curricular lesson.
When children play about something that’s worrying them, they feel more in charge. When they feel more in charge of it, they can better manage it. And just as Daniel Tiger sings in his strategy song, talking about a new experience can help too.

One new experience for children is going to the doctor. Use the following suggestions to help the children in your classroom prepare for a trip to the doctor.

• Teachers can help children manage their worries by putting out materials and facilitating doctor play. Children can take on the roles of doctor and nurse. They might want to use dolls or stuffed animals as patients to practice giving shots and medicine and applying bandages.

• Teachers can facilitate comforting actions following such pretend medical procedures.

• Remember: Drawing is a form of play. Make materials freely available for children to use as a way of expressing their feelings and worries.

• Children often are most worried about getting a shot. Ask them to think of ideas that might help to make the “pinch” easier to take. Maybe by sitting in mom or dad’s lap, holding on to a “blankey” from home, singing a song really loudly, or having a stuffed animal or baby doll get a pretend shot first!

• Before the visit, talk about doctors and nurses as being kind and caring. They were children once, too. Some of them are even moms and dads with their own children that they care for and love.

• Before the visit, allow children time to play the online game Doctor Daniel - http://pbskids.org/daniel/games/doctor-daniel/

• Be honest and careful with your words when preparing children for new experiences. Through these experiences, children will learn to trust you and their doctors, nurses, and other medical professionals.

• Be sure to observe and listen throughout the year as children express their concerns about going to the doctor or other new experiences.

🎶 When we do something new, let’s talk about what we’ll do. 🎶
Self-confidence comes with success — by trying and practicing and getting better. When it comes to helping children feel good about themselves and what they can do, cheering their efforts is part of celebrating their triumphs.

By using this activity and strategy song from Daniel Tiger, you can help children think about trying harder when they’re ready to give up.

Children Are Working On

- Persistence
- Building self-confidence
- Building self-competence

Materials

- 11 ½ minute episode: “O Builds a Tower.”

Set Up the Topic

- Show a picture of O the Owl and remind the children that he’s one of Daniel Tiger’s friends.
- Today, we’re going to see what happens when O tries to build the tallest tower in the world while he’s in the block area at school.
- Watch for what he and his friends do.
- This video also shows Daniel learning how to button his jacket, and how he teaches his friend, Katerina, to button hers, too.
- Let’s see what happens.

Watch

Watch the episode: “O Builds a Tower.”

Talk About It

After watching the video, you could ask the children the following questions:

- Did you ever try to button your coat or build a tall, tall tower? Was it difficult at first? How did you feel?
- What was the song Daniel and Katerina sang to help them button? “Peek-a-boo, pull it through.”
- O was trying to build a strong, tall tower. How did he feel? What did he do?
- Who wants to tell us about a time when you tried and tried to do something you wanted to do?

Sing the Strategy Song: ♫ Keep on trying, you’ll get better! ♫
Play & Explore

- Prior to group time, select something new that you want to teach the children. It can be a song, a poem, or a new game.

- Explain that part of growing up is practicing and remembering new things.

- Explain that one way to remember something new, like a new song, is to go over each line a lot of times.

- Go over the words (or new instructions) a few times, and encourage the children to repeat them after you.

- Repeat the song (or new routine) several times a day for a few days until the children seem to have mastered it. This can be done while waiting on line or waiting for parent pick-up.

- As you all practice, talk about how hard it can be to learn something new and how much practice it takes.

- Remind the children that their hard work and practice show that they are growing inside, too.

- Once children have learned the new song or routine, invite them to choose other things they might want to practice and memorize, such as their telephone numbers, addresses, or letters in their names.

- For an individual child, offer a piece of bubble wrap and see if the child can put in enough effort to smash all the bubbles.
Some children seem to be highly persistent, while others seem to give up easily. As teachers, we want to help children love to take on challenges and not shy away from them or become overly frustrated.

An important part of being persistent is learning from mistakes. When trying is not enough and things don’t turn out in the way they’d hoped, we can encourage children to look more closely to see what they could do better. Who can help? Where might they find some answers? With that help, they can try again.

Daniel Tiger’s friend, O the Owl, wants to build a tall block tower, but needs encouragement to persist at what he wants to achieve. Just as Teacher Harriet supported O, you can use the following suggestions to support your interactions with children who seem to give up too easily.

• Help children accomplish small tasks that you know they can master so that they can experience the pleasure and gratification that comes with effort and achievement.

• For less persistent children, help them break tasks into smaller parts so that they can reach goals more easily.

• When you see a child struggling and wanting to give up, you might say “I know you can do this. Maybe take a break for a minute and try again.”

• It’s not always best to take over and do tasks for children when they look or act frustrated. Sometimes, it’s okay to let children make mistakes or not quite reach the goal they’re aiming for. Point out how hard they’ve been working. Talk about what they might learn from what went wrong.

• When children succeed, rather than telling them how smart they are, you might ask them to tell you what they’ve been working on. You can also describe what you’ve observed: “I can see how much time you’ve spent building this tall building. Tell me about what you did.”

• Remind children that it’s natural to feel frustrated and discouraged when learning or trying to do something new. Give children suggestions that just boost their skills to the next higher level … just like you might give a gentle nudge to help a child who’s struggling to get to the next step on the climbing ladder of the slide.

• Be a role model. Demonstrate how much effort you’re willing to put into accomplishing tasks, especially ones that you find challenging.

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Here are examples of things you might say:

- “I see how hard you’ve been trying; I bet you’ll get it soon.”
- “You figured it out!”
- “Give it a good try and see what happens. Keep trying.”
- “Tell me what you want to do next, and I’m sure we can figure out a plan together. I know if we do some thinking, we can figure this out.”
- “What’s another way we might solve this problem?”
- “It can be fun to practice getting better at something.”
- “Let’s think about what we could learn from this mistake.”

Keep on trying, you’ll get better. ♫
Today, there is a lot of emphasis on school readiness. School readiness is much more than recognizing letters, numbers and colors. To be successful learners, children need to develop skills in self-control, symbolic thinking, self-expression, and problem solving. Pretend play offers a fun and natural way for children to develop in all those areas.

Through pretend play children learn to:
- Identify and manage emotions
- Use social skills
- Develop language skills
- Problem solve
- Explore ideas that they find scary, confusing, or brand new

Here are some suggestions to refresh your skills so that you can show children that you value their creative play:

- Provide adult-sized dress-up clothes that inspire new pretend play ideas, or that might help children who are coping with changes at home (an ill parent, new baby, or grandparent moving in).

- Help children develop their ideas into stories that have a beginning, middle, and end. Here are some questions that you might use to help children develop and share their story ideas. If more than one child is contributing to the story, make sure each child has a chance to answer the questions.
  - What is the idea of your story? Help me understand.
  - Who or what are you pretending to be?
  - What other dress-up clothes do you need? Do you need any other toys or things to help everyone understand what’s going on?
  - What will happen first in your story?
  - What will happen next?
  - What happens at the end of your story?
  - Is there anything else I can do or get for you to help you tell your story?

- Stand close by and watch as the children carry out their ideas. If conflict arises, ask them to think about ways they might work together to solve the problem.

- If the pretend play idea starts to waver or fall apart, offer verbal reminders about what they’d planned, or move a prop into their vision that prompts the play to get back on track.

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• Help them think about how the play will end: “So, what will happen at the end your story? Keep playing so your story has an end.”

• At snack, you might start a conversation to help children recall and share their play ideas with the other children at their table.

• During free play, you might suggest that the children draw pictures about their pretend play. Display the drawings to share with family members.

• You might also ask children to tell you the story, and you could write it down for them.

♫ ♪ When you pretend, you can be anything. ♪ ♫
Classroom Activity: Pretend Play

When preschoolers play, they show that they have symbolic thinking when they use one thing to stand for something else. This experience with symbolic thinking can actually help when children learn to read because part of learning to read is coming to understand that words on a page are ‘symbols’ that stand for something else. For example, the alphabet letters D-O-G stand for the animal that we all know as a dog. Children who can play symbolically are more likely to make connections between the words on a page and the ideas that those words represent.

By watching the video and talking about Pretend Play, children can be encouraged to use their imaginations and develop symbolic thinking just as Daniel and his friends do at their school.

Children Are Working On

- Imagination
- Language skills
- Symbolic thinking (creativity)

Materials

- 11 ½ minute episode: “Pretend Play.”

Set Up the Topic

- We pretend play at school all the time. So do Daniel Tiger and his friends.
- Today we going to watch a video of how Daniel and his friends play make-believe with a big box their teacher put out in their dress-up corner.
- Any ideas about how you think they’ll use that big box? Did you ever pretend play with a big cardboard box?
- Let’s see what happens.

Watch

Watch the episode: “Pretend Play.”

Talk About It

After watching the video, you could ask the children the following questions:

- Teacher Harriet brought in a big cardboard box for the children to use. How did they use it?
- What were their pretend ideas?
- What play idea did they decide to play all together? How did they decide that?
- What did O the Owl think the box was? Did he play too? Why?
- What did the other children say to O’s idea?
- How did O finally play with the other children?

Sing the Strategy Song: ♫ When you pretend, you can do anything! ♫
**Play & Explore**

- You might bring in a big cardboard box and put it in your dress-up corner and help the children to think about and act out pretend play ideas.

- Review the props and dress-up clothes you have out. Do they call out “Play with me!”

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**Activity: Keys to an Imaginary Land**

**Materials:** An old key on a keyring that’s large enough to catch the children’s attention.

**Directions:**

- Place the key somewhere in the dress-up corner so that it is quickly visible to the children who select that area during free play.

- Let the children examine the key on their own for a few minutes. Watch and see if they think of an idea for using it in pretend play.

- If you need to facilitate the play, you could say something like: “You could pretend that the key opens doors to an imaginary land. I wonder where it could be in our room? What would the door look like?”

- Let the children pretend to open the door.

- Ask questions like: “What do you see in this land? What does it look like? Who lives here? What are they doing? What would you do if you were there? What is this place called?”

- If the children start to turn this into a “scary place”, you could re-direct them by saying something like: “Oh, this is what I see.” Point out pretend things that shift their focus.

- Once they have established who lives there, suggest that they take on roles of those characters. Continue to help the children imagine and build out their ideas until they can take over the play on their own.

- The more they do, the more child-directed the play becomes. All you may need to do is occasionally offer guiding suggestions or questions.

Later, you might extend the play by suggesting that children draw what the imaginary land looks like. You could record their remarks and attach them to their artwork. Now, you’ve moved pretend play into a literacy activity as well.

You can use this strategy anytime, in any area of your classroom. You may even want to encourage the children to sing the strategy song when they are thinking of ideas for pretend play.
Children can experience many different emotions when they attend a new school or go to school for the first time. They may be excited to meet new friends and try new things, they may be nervous about new expectations or about being away from their family, or they may have mixed emotions with both excitement and worry.

By using this activity and strategy song from DANIEL TIGER'S NEIGHBORHOOD, you can help children better understand their feelings about going to school.

**Children Are Working On**
- Feelings about separation and independence
- Memory skills
- Developing self-control

**Materials**
- 11 1/2 minute episode: “Daniel Goes to School”

**Set Up the Topic**
- Today we’re going to talk about starting school and all the thoughts and feelings we have about that.
- Sometimes you might miss your mom, dad, grandma, grandpa, or even your dog or cat.
- Let’s watch a video about Daniel Tiger starting school.

**Watch**
Watch “Daniel Goes to School.”

**Talk About It**
After watching the video, ask children the following questions:
- How do you think Daniel felt about going to school?
- How do you think Daniel felt when his dad was getting ready to leave?
- What did Daniel do to feel better
- Can you think of a time when you felt like Daniel?
- What did you do to help yourself feel better?

Sing the Strategy Song: Grownups come back.
Classroom Activity: Starting School

Play & Explore

- Pay close attention to individual children when their families are leaving. When they seem upset, you could remind them what Daniel did by singing:

  🎵🎶 Grownups come back. 🎵🎶

- You could put toy animals in the sandbox so that children might pretend hide and find.
- Play peek-a-boo with individual children who seem to be having a hard time coping with feelings of separation.
- You can watch the shorter clips and sing Daniel Tiger’s strategy song. Remind the children that they can sing that song, and it might help them feel better.
When children start attending child care or school for the first time or start in a new school or classroom, they may feel sad or nervous about leaving their loved one or familiar grownup. When Daniel Tiger starts school, he doesn’t want his dad to leave either.

Use the following suggestions to help the children in your classroom make this transition, and remember that “grownups come back.”

- Ask families and children to visit and tour before the first day of care.
- Remember that letting go is hard for grownups, too.
- When child care starts, encourage the parent or family member to stay a little while for the first few days. Have them gradually shorten the time, but keep the routine the same when they leave.
- Some children like to bring along a stuffed animal, favorite toy, or their beloved “blankey.” It’s comforting to have something that’s a part of home, even if that toy has to stay in a “cubby.”
- Discourage grownups from sneaking out the door. In the long run, that makes it harder for children to trust adults who are leaving them. Help the parents or family members to tell their children when they are leaving and help them leave. Be there to hold and comfort children who have a hard time letting go. Assure the child and family member that you will care for them until the family member returns.
- Create transition routines and rituals (for you, the family, and the child). Some children need goodbye-to-family routines more than arrival-to-class routines.
- Remember there will be times when children may need extra help adjusting to separation. This may occur after a weekend at home, holiday, vacations, an illness, when there’s a substitute teacher, or when the group moves on to another room – even if it’s in the same center.
- Be available for children who are still adjusting to care and need to check in with you. Some strategies include making eye contact with you, a hug, gentle touch, or verbal acknowledgement.
- Play games of hiding and finding, burying and rediscovering to help children work on feelings around separation.
- At the end of each day, point out to children that their grownup has come back, just as promised.

♫ ♪ Grownups come back. ♪ ♫
Classroom Activity: Take a Turn and Give It Back

Learning to share isn’t easy for children. Part of children’s ability to share comes from an understanding that they’ll get the toy back, and then, get another turn.

Children Are Working On

- Turn taking
- Recognizing and responding to the needs of others
- Verbal skills
- Practicing waiting

Materials

- 11 ½ minute episode: “Daniel Shares His Tigertastic Car.”

Set Up the Topic

- Today we’re going to talk about taking turns.
- What do you know about taking turns?
- Why is it important to take turns?
- What is it like when you have trouble taking turns?
  Explain that taking turns is one way we can show we care about other people and their feelings.
- How do you feel when you see someone else using your favorite things?
- We’re going to watch a video and see what Daniel Tiger learns about taking turns with his Tigerastic car.

Watch

Watch the episode: “Daniel Shares His Tigertastic Car.”

Talk About It

After watching the video, you could ask the children the following questions:

- What was Daniel’s favorite toy in this episode?
- How did he feel about sharing his Tigertastic car? What did he do? Did he have a hard time sharing?
- Did anyone else in the show share? Who did he share with?
- How do you think Daniel felt about that? How did Prince Wednesday feel?
- How do you feel about sharing your toys?
- Why is it sometimes hard to share?
- What did Daniel learn that makes him feel better about sharing?
- What did you learn today about sharing?

Sing the Strategy Song: You can take a turn, and then I’ll get it back.
Play & Explore

Later that day or on another day, try this group activity during indoor or outdoor gross motor time.

- Bring out a few of the group’s favorite gross motor wheeled toys: tricycle, scooter, dump truck.

- Prior to starting gross motor time, invite the children to think of ways they can take turns and show they care about the feelings of others. For example,
  - How might they decide the order in which turns will be taken?
  - How do they know when a person’s turn is over?
  - What could they do while they wait to get their turn back?

- After the group brainstorms ideas, review the short list.

- As the children participate in gross motor time, help them practice using the plans they just talked about.

- Afterwards, encourage children to talk about how they felt when they had to stop, give the toy to someone else, and wait to get it back.

Other activities that can help children practice sharing and turn-taking are:

- Cooking activities
- Mural painting
- Pointing out what things belong to everyone

For More Practice:

Visit the DANIEL TIGER’S NEIGHBORHOOD website to play the game “Tea Party.”
http://pbskids.org/daniel/games/tea-party/

Remember to sing the strategy song whenever a child needs some help to share.
Young children are naturally egocentric. They largely see the world from their own perspective. For example, when you bring a full bag into a room, the young child asks, “What’s in the bag for me?” Typically, when solving a problem, young children tend to focus on one aspect of the situation to the exclusion of all others. So, when you ask them to share, they think mostly about themselves and what they want. This way of thinking shows up in other ways as well. That’s how we know children aren’t just being selfish. For example, let’s say you have two balls of play dough that are exactly the same size and shape. You show both pieces of the play dough to the children, and then, as the children watch, you roll out one piece into a snake shape. Once you have the two different shapes, you ask the children to tell you which one is bigger; some will say “the ball” and others will say “the snake.” That’s because they see the problem from one perspective…theirs.

Use the following suggestions to help the children in your classroom learn to share:

- When facilitating sharing, have each child express his/her needs, desires, and emotions. By doing this, each child will be exposed to how the other feels. Neither is faced with having to figure out the other child’s perspective. By using this on a regular basis, you’ll be teaching children how to read each other’s cues, so they will be better able to solve interpersonal conflict as they mature.

- Have multiples of the children’s favorite toys so that children don’t have to share as much. (Examples: tricycles, school buses, dump trucks, baby dolls)

- Let children have certain things that they don’t have to share and that others can’t touch or take without first asking them for permission. (Example: a blanket or favorite stuffed toy)

- Set a timer for taking turns. This helps children trust that when they give up a toy, they will get it back after a certain time.

- Teach by example. Talk with children about things that you share, like the iPad, markers, and ideas.

- Plan some one-on-one time each day with each child. How children feel about sharing things may be related to how they feel about sharing adult attention.

- Teach children to use the words that Daniel Tiger and his friends use: 

  You can take a turn, and then I’ll get it back.
Classroom Activity: Show and Tell Feelings

When children learn to express their feelings through words and play, they are developing healthy self-control. Being able to use words to express their feelings with others is a valuable skill that will serve them all their lives—in school, at work and in their families.

By watching the DANIEL TIGER’S NEIGHBORHOOD video of Daniel Tiger and Katerina playing train, and using the following activities, you can help children practice ways of using their words to identify and share their feelings.

**Children Are Working On**
- Observing, listening and thinking skills
- Recognizing and identifying emotions
- Practicing using language skills

**Materials**
- 11 ½ minute episode: “All Aboard.”

**Set Up the Topic**
- Today we’re going to watch a video about a time when Daniel Tiger and his friend, Katerina, are at school pretending to play “train.” They disagree about what they each want to do. Each child only says “Grrr” when upset. With Teacher Harriet’s help, they learn to use their words to tell each other how they feel.
- Watch what Daniel and Katerina do and how they work things out by using their words.

**Watch**
Watch the episode: “All Aboard.”

**Talk About It**
After watching the video, you could start a discussion:
- Katerina and Daniel are pretending to be on a train and want to do different things.
- What does Katerina do? Does Daniel understand her “Grrr?”
- How does he finally understand? What does she say?
- Have you ever become angry at someone because you wanted to have things go your way and they didn’t? What did you say or do? What happened?
- Did you ever help another child practice how to use his or her words?

Sing the Strategy Song: ♬ ♬ Use Your Words. ♬ ♬
**Play & Explore**

- Ask the children to name as many feelings as they can.
- Record their responses on a chart, calling attention to the fact that these are the names of feelings.
- Use body language as well as facial expressions to pantomime the feelings as you write them. For example:
  - Happy (clap your hands, laugh)
  - Sad (rub your eyes, pretend to cry)
  - Surprised (jump, raise your arms)
  - Afraid (shiver, bite your nails)
  - Angry (stomp your feet, grit teeth)
- Invite the children to use body language and facial expressions to show the different feelings, either just as you have demonstrated or in their own way.
- After the group has practiced showing their emotions, have individual children think of a feeling and whisper it to you. Then have each child pantomime that feeling while the group tries to guess what feeling the child is demonstrating.
- If the children are still engaged, you could have them draw faces to show the different feelings the group just talked about. Be sure to label the faces with the corresponding words.
- As a followup activity, you could make a matching game using pre-cut magazine pictures of people/children to match with an iconic symbol of two or three different expressions.
When children can talk about their feelings with a caring listener, they find out that their feelings are natural and normal, and that others have felt that way, too. Teachers can help children find constructive ways to express themselves — ways that won’t hurt themselves or anyone else. Teachers often discover that when children learn to say things like: “I’m mad,” “I miss my mom,” “I’m tired,” and “I’m sad,” they are less likely to bite, hit, kick, or use some other disruptive behavior.

We need to encourage children to talk about their feelings. Being able to use words to describe what they are feeling gives children power over their feelings. Giving words to feelings can make them become a lot less overwhelming or upsetting or scary.

Here are some tips for helping the children in your care learn to use their words to express how they are feeling.

- Children have internal sensations that they might not know are emotions. Help children label those inner sensations. Giving children simple words to use can help them feel power over those feelings.
- Explain each feeling by using words and pictures from familiar children’s stories or by showing examples from a children’s television series like DANIEL TIGER’S NEIGHBORHOOD.
- Keep it simple: Use visuals or pictures and relate the lesson back to the child’s life.
- Offer individual praise to a child when he remembers to use words to state how he feels, instead of hitting or pushing or biting. Ex: “I really liked the way you used your words when you told J that he hurt your feelings.”
- Remind children that they can always ask for a teacher’s help.
- Understand that managing emotions is critical to children’s overall development.
- When children are upset, remind them to take a deep breath, count to four, and then they’ll be better able to find their words.
- Remember that children who can express their feelings in socially acceptable ways (with words) are less likely to exhibit behavior problems.
- It is important for children to know that adults have feelings, too. Model using your words when you are full of “feelings.”

🎵 Use Your Words. 🎵

Watch more videos and play games with Daniel Tiger by visiting pbskids.org/daniel