

The Little Fir Tree

CBSE, English, Class - IV, Unit - II

Be happy with what you have

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Theme: This lesson is about a Fir tree that is granted four wishes by a magician. The tree is not happy with its own leaves and asks the magician to change it. But finally, the tree realizes that it was better off earlier, with its own leaves. The theme that emerges from this lesson is self-esteem and being content with what one has.

Specific objectives:

1. Learning antonyms (building with prefixes)
2. Vocabularies (magician, sudden, shelter, reward, grant, surprise, stole, fir tree, pretty, gold)
3. Speaking skills can be developed through a role play of the story.
4. Listening skills can be developed by the teacher's narration of the story and building a dialogue with the children.

Myself and ourselves:

This is an activity for children to understand and appreciate each other. To pair children at random, squares are drawn on the floor with an alphabet written in each square. The same alphabet must be written in two squares and some may be left empty. The students are asked to move from one square to other until the teacher says 'freeze'. The children in the box with the same alphabet are paired together. They are asked to talk to each other and find out something special about the other person. Once all the pairs are done, they share about their partner in the large group. The

teacher can capture these on a chart and display it in the classroom.

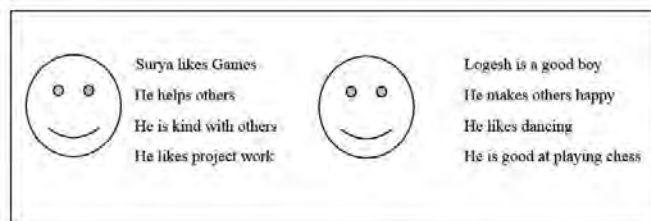


Reflection:

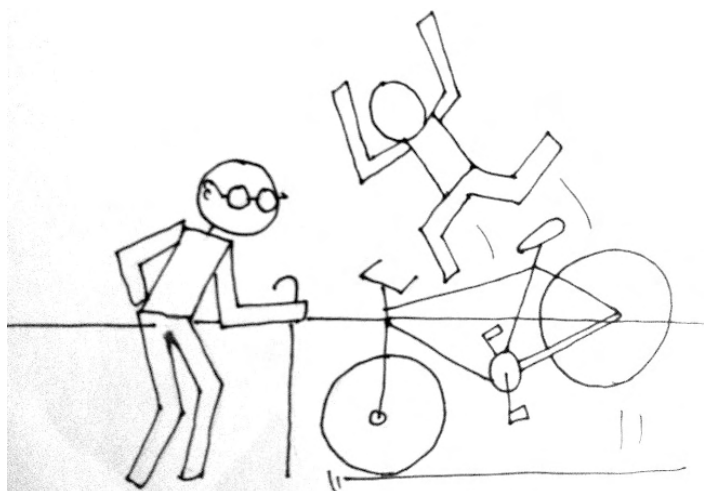
Games and energizers are really important when we handle primary classes. While I had initially planned for only one energizer, I realized that we may need to have a couple of energizers in between the lesson to sustain the interest and energy of the children. Simple ones like "small pot, big pot", "dance and freeze" "forming a group" also work effectively among the children.

In this activity, each child said a positive characters about his partner. Some of their statements are: He is good at reading, writing, helping others, sharing things etc. But I noticed that when one group is presenting, the others are distracted. So a slight modification to the activity could be that after each pair finishes, the rest of the class can add a few more positives about each child and the teacher can capture them on the board or a chart.

This will keep them connected to the discussion. We could also have names written in the chits and the names could be called out. This helps maintain the surprise element and children would be eager to know who is next



Picture Cards for vocabulary: Prepare picture cards to introduce the vocabulary (Fir tree, magician, sudden, shelter, reward, grant,



surprise, stole, pretty, gold). Ask each group to take some cards and discuss what the card is about and introduce the appropriate vocabulary.

As an extension of the activity, divide the class into two groups. One group shows one set of picture cards and the other group can guess the word. Allot points to each group for identifying the word the picture represents.

Reflection: *In this activity, children came up with a lot of different words what they had in mind. When I showed the picture for the word 'surprise', students came up with words like 'gift, happy, boy, sad' etc. I realized that the pictures need to be chosen carefully for children to be able to guess*

the word. In another instance, when the picture was shown for the word 'sudden', students said "come is grandfather" "cycle boy flying". The word 'sudden' didn't occur to them. They also need to be given clues to guess the correct word. It is easier to do this activity for nouns than for adjectives



and the choice of pictures plays an important role in the effectiveness of this activity. But what was interesting is that the picture provided opportunities for the children to speak in English. Another insight is that once the word is introduced, it needs to be reinforced by continuously using it in context.

Story Narration

The teacher may narrate the story and the children can be seated in a circle. The narration must be animated and include all the newly learnt vocabulary. Maintain eye contact with the children to ensure they are engaged in the narration. After the story has been narrated to the entire class, let the students sit in small groups and narrate the story themselves in their own language and the teacher can observe each group. Once the story has been narrated, teacher may use different strategies to help children read and comprehend the story.

Reflection: *I used properties like magic wand, paper cones to depict it as needles, green, golden*



and glass leaves etc. to narrate the story in English interspersed with Tamil. These helped the students to comprehend the story. To check if students' were able to comprehend, I asked them questions in between the story. I have observed that rather than finishing a story in five minutes, it is good to extend it to fifteen twenty minutes by dramatizing it. Then there is more scope for the child to imagine and visualize a story. Also, repeated use of some sentences will remain rooted in the students' mind.

Story Chunks

Split the lesson into 6 chunks; prepare a picture for each and narrate the story in English using those pictures. Stop at the end of each chunk, make the children repeat the story using the actions and gestures done by the teacher. Conclude the story with its message that each one is special and should be happy with what they have and respect others uniqueness.

Students sit with teacher while they read the story from the textbook of picture chunks. Ask questions intermittently to check if they are following. Continue this pattern throughout the story. Allow students to write the answer for the questions in their notebooks.

Finding the correct Pair: To learn antonyms – Divide the class into two groups. Give one group a set of word cards and the other group its



opposites. Students will have to find the right pair. Some of the words that can be given to the two groups are:

Group 1 stop, heavy, little, wet, love, won, everywhere, laughing, full, wise and sad.

Group 2 start, Hate, light, big, dry, lost, nowhere, crying, empty, happy.

Reflection: Students were able to guess and read many words during this activity. I gave them a few easy words like sit and asked them it's opposite. They were able to say stand. We even played a game for a few more opposites.. Gradually I introduced a few difficult words like empty, lost, start etc. and asked them its meaning and helped them find the opposite. Having introduced this grammar portion through a game and an activity, made it easier and interesting for children to learn.



Introducing prefixes: Teacher introduces the prefix rule to the students to make opposites using 'un and im'. If a word starts with the letter 'P', the opposite is formed by adding 'im' before the word, if not it is made by adding 'un' before the word. E.g., Happy, polite, seen, proper, lucky, important, perfect, healthy, safe, patient, pure.

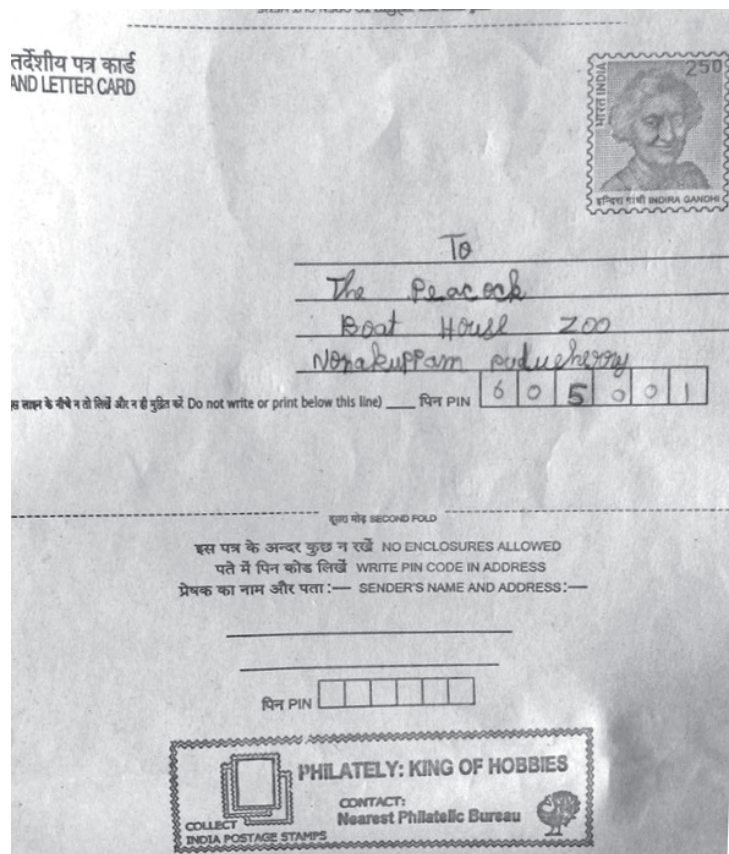
Role-play: Students can perform a role with the help of teacher. The teacher can help the students in articulating the dialogues in English.

Reflection: Students were asked to recall the story. Some of them decided to do it in the form of a role play and used the properties for it. They decided roles among themselves and the others helped them sequence the story by telling them what comes in the next scene. For example, the children brought in the sequence that first the goat has to eat the green leaves, next the thief has to steal the gold leaves, and then wind breaks the glass leaves etc.

Letter writing Activity: Teacher discusses with the students to write a letter to console the peacock who feels dissatisfied with his ugly feet.

Reflection: I did a letter writing activity in the class for children to express themselves and it was very interesting for them. Instead of writing the letter in a paper, I made them write it in an inland with stamps, addressed to the peacock to help them learn the method of writing a letter. In this process, children were asked what they would want to write to the peacock. Their initial responses were one words mainly expressing the moral of the story. I laid the context of the letter

and asked them to imagine how they would want to console the peacock. After a few rounds of discussion, children came up with some points in Tamil. I translated it in English for them and they wrote the letter.



My dear Peacock,
Good morning,
How are you.
you have a good colour and feathers
don't be sad by seeing your legs
be happy with what you have.



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