Contents

Introduction
We are all fellow travelers, young and old alike, on the path of how to be good. Each story is like a journey. They can carry us to far away places, places where special people live and special things happen. But the most special place is in our hearts. And when we connect with the light in our hearts we can learn how to brighten our whole world and make our world the most special place.

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* original stories by Ralph Singh
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Sample
Snappy the Snapping Turtle was always snapping at anything or anyone who came near him. Even those who just happened to say, “Good morning,” nearly got their heads bitten off. He was so angry that soon there was no one in the pond who would go near him. You might be grumpy, too, if you were always stuck in the mud.

But everything changed the day a pair of swans on their way home spotted the little pond where Snappy lived and decided to drop in for a rest. Snappy had never seen anything so beautiful.

It was hard for the pond residents to believe but Snappy actually made friends with the swans. He’d look forward to their visits and tales of the lands far away with lots of green grass and plenty of water. He longed to see those places, too. He would keep the swans busy for hours asking questions. They would smile at each other and take turns patiently answering him. And Snappy even thanked them at the end of the day.

Then one year it didn’t rain at all. The pond began to dry up under the heat of the burning sun. Everyone in the area, both the people and animals, were starving. The birds were leaving to find a better home.

The swans decided that it was time for them to leave as well. So they came to say a sad goodbye to their friend.

Poor Snappy couldn’t believe that they would leave him behind. The swans, too, wondered how they could save their friend. But everyone knew that turtles can’t fly.

Snappy came up with an idea. He told the swans to get a long stick. “My snappy jaws are strong enough so that if you fly slowly you could hold the two ends and carry me along. Once I clamp down on something, nothing escapes my grip.”

But the swans were worried. What if Snappy couldn’t control himself and opened his mouth? He would lose his grip and fall down. They made him promise not to open his mouth, no matter what.

So off the three friends flew. Higher and higher, over hills, valleys, fields and plains they went. “Wow, I never thought I’d be able to see these things,” thought Snappy. But no matter what new things he saw he still kept his promise and held on tight.

Birds would fly by and laugh, “Hey a flying turtle! I’ve never seen a turtle bird.” But the swans told their friend just to ignore them. “They’re just jealous. Don’t pay any attention. Just keep your mouth shut and enjoy the ride.”

But then, they flew over a city. The people of the city were amazed to see such a strange sight. They laughed and clapped their hands. Snappy tried his best to ignore them. But then someone shouted, “Look at the swans carrying that silly turtle.” That made Snappy angry. “Why are you foolish people making such a racket?” he snapped. He had forgotten his promise. He lost his grip on the stick. Down, down, down he fell and crashed to the ground, because he just couldn’t keep his mouth shut.
Thoughts:
So my fellow travelers, on this journey we have discovered that the most important thing to control is ourselves.

Essential Question:
Why is it important not to be distracted by what others say or do?

Sample Questions:
Why didn’t the pond animals like the turtle?

How did the swans help the turtle?

What did the turtle forget to do?

Sample Applications:
Have we ever had to try hard to be quiet?

What kinds of things help us pay attention?

Have we ever had to clamp down hard, too, to keep from saying something?

What do we miss when we do all the talking?

Background:
This story from India was adapted from the Panchatantra, “The Tortoise and the Geese.” Most people don’t realize that many of the stories from the Panchatantra have spread all over the globe. Some appear in Aesop’s Fables. Even more interesting is their origin. The stories were created to teach the princes of a local king how to be good rulers. The king was very sad because his sons had no interest in managing his kingdom. Finally the king offered a reward for anyone who could teach the boys. All the teachers failed. Finally a great saint came into the court. People laughed at the way he was dressed. “I’ll teach the boys,” he said. Everyone was amazed. So he made up these stories using animal characters, and within a short time, the boys had learned the art of statesmanship.
Lesson: “The Turtle Who Just Couldn’t Keep His Mouth Shut – A story of self-control” (preK-2)

Essential Question: Why is it important not to be distracted by what others say or do?

Lesson Objective: I can retell a story using puppets.

Materials

1. Puppet templates for Snappy and the 2 Swans.
2. Paper for the Pond scenery and the city scenery.
3. Copy of “The Turtle Who Just Couldn’t Keep His Mouth Shut – A story of self-control” story and CD.

Lesson Procedures: Students will be sitting in a large group circle ready to review the story

   Re-read (or play) story to further ingrain it in their minds.
2. Ask students to retell the story the way they remember it. Teacher writes down key points of the story as they retell on chart paper.
3. Talk about how the story we heard may have had parts of it that are not mentioned, for example, “What did Snappy say when he got angry with the other pond animals?”
4. Tell the students that we will be working in small groups to create our own versions of the Turtle story.
5. Do a numbering off around the circle 1-4. When done, tell students that 1 will be Swan-1, 2 will be Swan-2, 3 will be the Narrator and 4 will be Snappy in each group. (Groups can have 2 narrators to make up the difference in numbers.)
6. Next, students will leave group and work on their respective props and puppets. Narrators should work on scenery, based on the story. If some finish early, they may help others in their group finish their part.
7. After puppets and props are mostly finished, they should begin to re-enact the story with their puppets in various sections of the room. Go over the importance to do this quietly so their “version” of the story will be a fun surprise for the others. Talk about how it is OK to add details to the story to explain what the characters say other than what was heard in the original. Details should be based on each of the characters. It is important and quite beneficial for groups to practice their enactment a number of times.
8. After a set period of time, depending on grade and developmental levels, students will engage in puppet show re-enactments of “The Turtle…” For each show, set up a small table or couple of desks in front of a wall. Students will get under and behind the table or desks and the scenery will be above them for the presentation.
9. Talk about decisions that the “storytellers” made as they presented their version of the story. Make sure to ask the essential question of students after each performance. Make sure each “performer” has a chance to talk about their roles, as if teacher and class are interviewing them after a movie or tv show. Talk about this. Point out ways that the puppet show used key parts of the story and especially brought out the lesson that the story teaches. Use discussion after each show to reinforce the idea of appropriate self-control for Snappy.
10. Discuss decisions that characters made and what it tells us about the character. For oldest and more sophisticated students, talk about the moral and lesson of the story.

Assessment (Formative and Summative)

Students will demonstrate that they can explain the importance of self-control through their answers to the essential question and discussion after their performance.

Student participation and involvement in their puppet plays will be a demonstration of their ability to retell the story.

Extensions and Adaptations:

- Pre K usage: This lesson could be used by preK classes through this adaptation. It also may work better for kindergarten classes with this adaptation. Students would be read (or played) the story for a second or third time and would then be prompted on what happens next throughout the story. After that the teacher would present the Snappy and Swan puppets pre-made and ask for volunteers to use the puppets while the story is told and acted out for the whole group. Questions would be posed to the group on what happened to Snappy and why at key points in the story. A further adaptation might be for students to color their own Snappy puppet.
- The entire lesson might be extended throughout the week with opportunities for puppet shows presented daily.
Special needs and/or ELL accommodations may include:

- offer an option of listening to the story with the CD version
- read/listen to the story more than once, with the first time spent just visualizing the story
- preview vocabulary (such as fable, moral/lesson, distract, clamp, ignore) with discussion and visuals
- teacher illustrates as well as writes the key points of the story on the chart paper
- offer the option of re-enacting the story with students actually playing the parts rather than making puppets
- provide sentence frames for talking about their roles, such as: “My role/character was ___________. My role/character helped teach the lesson in this story by ______________.”

**Common Core Standards**

*Grade Pre-K:*

**CCSS.ELA Literacy.RL.K.1** With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

**CCSS.ELA Literacy.RL.K.2** With prompting and support, retell familiar stories, including key details.

*Grade 1:*

**CCSS.ELA Literacy.RL.1.1** Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

**CCSS.ELA Literacy.RL.1.2** Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson.

**CCSS.ELA Literacy.RL.1.3** Describe characters, settings, and major events in a story, using key details.

*Grade 2:*

**CCSS.ELA Literacy.RL.2.1** Ask and answer such questions as who, what, where, when, why, and how to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.

**CCSS.ELA Literacy.RL.2.2** Recount stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message, lesson, or moral.

**CCSS.ELA Literacy.RL.2.3** Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.

**Cross Curricular Connections**

**Common Core Mathematical Practices**

**M.P. 6** Attend to precision.

Mathematically proficient students try to communicate precisely to others. They try to use clear definitions in discussion with others and in their own reasoning....In the elementary grades, students give carefully formulated explanations to each other. By the time they reach high school they have learned to examine claims and make explicit use of definitions.

**NYS P-12 Common Core Learning Standards for Mathematics**

**PK.CC.4** Count to answer “how many?” questions about as many as 10 things arranged in a line, a rectangular array, or a circle, or as many as 5 things in a scattered configuration; given a number from 1–10, count out that many objects.

**K.CC.4** Understand the relationship between numbers and quantities; connect counting to cardinality.

**NYS Elementary Level Science Core Curriculum K-4**

**The Living Environment**

**Key Idea 5: Organisms maintain a dynamic equilibrium that sustains life.**

**P.I.5.2** Describe some survival behaviors of common living specimens.

**Key Idea 6: Plants and animals depend on each other and their physical environment.**

**P.I.6.1** Describe how plants and animals, including humans, depend upon each other and the nonliving environment.

**NYS K-8 Social Studies Framework**

**K.2** Children, families, and communities exhibit cultural similarities and differences.

**K.4** Children and adults have rights and responsibilities at home, at school, in the classroom, and in the community.

**K.5** Rules affect children and adults, and people make and change rules for many reasons.

1.1 Language, beliefs, customs, and traditions help shape the identity and culture of a family and a community.

1.3 A citizen is a member of a community or group. Students are citizens of their local and global communities.

**Related Links and Resources:**
1. www-legendsandlore.com/teacher-resource.html (Attached pages on puppets and children telling stories)
2. www.wisdomthinkers.org
Puppet Templates

Swan Puppets

for Turtle’s story
Snappy Paper bag Puppet
Lesson: “The Turtle Who Just Couldn’t Keep His Mouth Shut – A story of self-control” (3-5)

**Essential Question:** Why is it important to not be distracted by what others say or do?

**Lesson Objective:** I can understand and demonstrate appropriate group work rules and expectations.

**Materials**
1. Story on page 29 of *Stories to Light Our Way* book
2. Sample application questions on page 31
3. Anchor chart and markers

**Lesson Procedures:**
1. Listen to “The Turtle Who Just Couldn’t Keep His Mouth Shut – A story of self-control” on CD or read it to the whole class.
2. In small groups, have the students discuss the essential question.
3. Share ideas from each group.
4. Then have students discuss with a partner of their choice the answers to the sample application questions on pg. 31
5. Share ideas from partners and discuss the importance of listening and respect as a whole class.
6. Using the anchor chart and markers, decide on the appropriate group work rules and expectations for the class.
7. Record them on the anchor chart to display daily in your classroom.

**Assessment (Formative and Summative)**
Observations of students and their responses during whole class discussion.
Class created anchor chart.

**Extensions and Adaptations:**
- Include a picture of a turtle with a stick in its mouth on the anchor chart as a visual reminder of the importance of listening and respect.
- Create a peer evaluation rubric regarding the topics listed on the anchor chart.

**Special needs and/or ELL accommodations may include:**
- offer an option of listening to the story with the CD version
- read/listen to the story more than once, with the first time spent just visualizing the story
- preview vocabulary (such as fable, moral, lesson, distract, clamp, ignore) with discussion and visuals
- create visuals to go along with the group work rules and expectations

**Common Core Standards**

**Grade 3:**
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 3 topics and texts, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.3.4 Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking clearly at an understandable pace.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.3.6 Speak in complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation in order to provide requested detail or clarification.

**Grade 4:**
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.4.3 Identify the reasons and evidence a speaker provides to support particular points.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.4.4 Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience in an organized manner, using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.
Grade 5:

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.5.1** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 5 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.5.2** Summarize a written text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.5.4** Report on a topic or text or present an opinion, sequencing ideas logically and using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.

**Cross Curricular Connections**

**Common Core Mathematical Practices**

**M.P.6** Attend to precision.

Mathematically proficient students try to communicate precisely to others. They try to use clear definitions in discussion with others and in their own reasoning...In the elementary grades, students give carefully formulated explanations to each other. By the time they reach high school they have learned to examine claims and make explicit use of definitions.

**NYS P-12 Common Core Learning Standards for Mathematics**

**NYS Elementary Level Science Core Curriculum K-4**

The Living Environment

**Key Idea 5:** Organisms maintain a dynamic equilibrium that sustains life.

**P.I.5.2** Describe some survival behaviors of common living specimens.

**Key Idea 6:** Plants and animals depend on each other and their physical environment.

**P.I.6.1** Describe how plants and animals, including humans, depend upon each other and the nonliving environment.

**NYS Intermediate Level Science Core Curriculum 5-8**

The Living Environment

**Key Idea 3:** Individual organisms and species change over time.

**P.I.3.2** Describe factors responsible for competition within species and the significance of that competition.

**NYS K-8 Social Studies Framework**

3.4 Each community or culture has a unique history, including heroic figures, traditions, and holidays.

3.5 Communities share cultural similarities and differences across the world.

3.6 Communities from around the world interact with other people and communities and exchange cultural ideas and practices.

4.2 **NATIVE AMERICAN GROUPS AND THE ENVIRONMENT:** Native American groups, chiefly the Iroquois (Haudenosaunee) and Algonquian-speaking groups, inhabited the region that became New York. Native American Indians interacted with the environment and developed unique cultures.

5.1 **EARLY PEOPLES OF THE AMERICAS:** The first humans in the Western Hemisphere modified their physical environment as well as adapted to their environment. Their interactions with their environment led to various innovations and to the development of unique cultures.

5.2 **COMPLEX SOCIETIES AND CIVILIZATIONS:** Between 1100 B.C.E. and 1500 C.E., complex societies and civilizations developed in the Western Hemisphere. Although these complex societies and civilizations have certain defining characteristics in common, each is also known for unique cultural achievements and contributions.

**Related Links and Resources:  www.wisdomthinkers.org**
Lesson: “The Turtle Who Just Couldn’t Keep His Mouth Shut – A story of self-control” (6)

Essential Question: Why is it important to not be distracted by what others say or do?

Lesson Objectives:
1. I can read and comprehend literature including stories, dramas or poems within the 6-8 grade text complexity level.
2. I can engage effectively with my peers in a range of collaborative discussions.
3. I can include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations.

Materials:
1. Individual copies of “The Turtle Who Just Couldn’t Keep His Mouth Shut – A story of self-control” for each student
2. Index cards
3. Template for Public Service Announcement
4. Poster paper
5. Markers or colored pencils
6. Computers (for each pair of students)
7. Flip cameras (optional)

Lesson Procedures:
1. Pose the essential question to students as they enter the classroom and have them write their responses on an index card.
2. Have individual students share responses within their table groups or with a partner. How are their answers different? Similar?
3. Invite students to share situations or examples of what can occur if they are distracted by what others say or do.
4. Pass out student copies of “The Turtle Who Just Couldn’t Keep His Mouth Shut – A story of self-control” and have students read the text independently.
5. On the back of their index card, have students respond to the essential question again, but from Snappy’s perspective. What literally happened because he could not keep his mouth shut? What message/theme is this supposed to teach us about how we live our lives?
6. After completing the index card questions, students circulate the room trying to find someone with a message similar to the one written on their own index card. (If students are having trouble pairing up with someone, put them into pairs and have them generate a theme/message by merging both of their ideas.)
7. Working in pairs, students will create a Public Service Announcement that portrays the message of the story while relating to students of this generation/age. In their presentation students must include:
   - The essential question- Reworded if needed.
   - A situation/example of what happens when people are distracted by what others say or do.
   - A piece of advice/slogan to help student to remember stay focused and use self-control. (Not be like Snappy ☹)
8. Students will prepare a Public Service Announcement by using one of the following:
   - PowerPoint presentation
   - Prezi
   - Poster (Neatly done and presented to the class)
   - Recorded “announcement” using flip camera
9. After students have completed their projects, they will present them to the class.
10. A rubric will be used to score presentations to ensure criteria have been met.

Assessment:
Formative Assessments: Teacher observations, index card responses, completed PSA templates
Summative Assessment: competed projects and rubrics