

Paths Lesson 15 - Avoiding Gossip

Objectives:

- To encourage positive social interaction skills
- To further develop perspective-taking skills
- To define and discuss gossip and rumours and how it affects friendships.
- To encourage children not to gossip

‘gossiping’

Usually we say “a person has been gossiping”

What does this mean?

What is a rumour?

Read 'Avoid Gossip'



Avoid Gossip

Ella slumped on the living room chair
Chewing her nails and tweaking her hair

Dad said,

“Hello Hunny Bun. Why are you looking so glum?”

“I hate Sarah,” she said.

“I really do!”

“Now, hate’s a bit strong. You’ve been friends for so long. What’s wrong?”

“Best friends!” replied Ella

“Best ever friends.

And now she won’t talk

Or even go for a walk.

She won’t even play

And she sat beside Megan today.

When I went to sit beside her

She turned away!”

“And you’re feeling sad

And angry too

Now what, I wonder,

What do you think you should do?”

“Do? Do?
What can I do?
Do you not think I’ve tried?
Do you think I’ve got no pride?”

She doesn’t care!
It’s just not fair.
She can keep her friend Megan.
They’re such a great pair!”

“Ask her what’s wrong.
You’ve been friends for so long.”

“But what if she laughs,
Or says, “Go away!”
I’d feel so daft
What would I say?”

“Don’t you want to find out
What it’s all about?
Ask her what’s wrong.
You’ve been friends for so long.”

“But not any more.
My heart just feels sore.”

“You’ll soon sort it out. I have no doubt.”

“I wish I could. I know I should.

I think I will, but she’s been such a pill!”

“Well you’ll never know till you give it a go.”

“Okay! Okay! I’ll try today.”

“Sarah, why won’t you talk or go for a walk?

Why is Megan your best friend now? I thought I was your best friend.

Why won’t you play?

Why do you just turn away?

We said, “Friends for life. Friends forever!”

What’s happened to cause all this strife?”

Sarah said, “You said I was dumb.”

“What? I did not!”

“Yes you did, Megan said that Maddie said that you said I was dumb!”

“When did I say that? I wouldn’t say that!

Why would I say that? I don’t think you’re dumb!”

“Well, Megan says that Maddie says you did!

At break time on Friday,

And we played hide and seek

And I hid behind the beech tree

And you found me

When I took a peek.

And you said to Maddie,

“Sarah’s dumb!”

“I didn’t. I didn’t. I said, “Sarah’s fun!”

Sarah and Ella looked at each other

For a really long time.

Sarah thought she might cry.

Ella thought she might cry.

Sarah said, “You said I was fun?”

Ella said, “You thought I said dumb?”

Sarah smiled a small smile.

Ella smiled back.

Ella grinned a big grin.

Sarah grinned back.

“Let’s walk to school together tomorrow,” Sarah whispered.

“Okay” Ella sighed, “let’s do that. It seems like forever since we had a good chat!”

1. In the poem we just read Ella and her friend, Sarah, had a problem. Another girl named Maddie told Megan that Ella said Sarah was dumb - that she was too dumb to play a game with. Then Megan told this to Ella's friend. Was this gossip?

2. Did Sarah or Megan check it out with Ella to see if it really was true?

3. Megan caused a big problem between the two friends by gossiping. How do you think the girls felt towards Megan when they found out that what Megan said wasn't true? What could they say to Megan so that she would not gossip next time?

4. Has anyone here ever had a problem with their friends about gossiping or spreading rumours?

If we are a true friend, do we share our friend's secrets or important thoughts with others without permission?

No, a friend is someone you can trust to keep important things private.

Sometimes it is hard to know if you are gossiping about a friend or just talking about someone else. One good way to decide is to use the Golden Rule. Ask yourself, would I want my friend to say things like that about me to other children?

If the answer is no, then it is probably better to not say anything and take care of your friendship.



Closure:

I'm going to describe a few situations and I'd like you to help me decide if what I've told you is an example of gossip or not.

Closure:

You tell some friends that
Megan's father lost his job.

Answer:

Gossip. If Megan wants to share personal information about her family, she'll tell people herself

Closure:

A classmate tells you that he and his family are moving out of town next month.

Answer: Not gossip
because the boy is telling
you voluntarily - on his
own.

Closure:

A friend tells you that Mark's sister ran away from home.

Answer: Gossip. This may be just a rumour and it only concerns Mark and his family, unless he decides to talk about the situation with others.

Remember that gossip can hurt other people and that you can be a good friend by not gossiping.

