

Trade Book Activity

Title of book: *The Berenstain Bears get in a Fight*

Authors: Stan and Jan Berenstain

1. Name the conflict:

- The kind of conflict that Brother and Sister get into is classified as interpersonal. Today, they are having difficulties getting along with one another.

2. Who is involved? What is their conflict resolution style?

- The main conflict centers upon Brother and Sister Bear, although Momma Bear intervenes, but that is only to help solve their problem. She allows for both her cubs to see that everybody gets into an argument once in a while, but these disagreements do not have to last for forever, that is as long as the people involved agree to end it. If it would not have been for Momma's mediation, the two cubs may still be fighting.
- Their conflict resolution took the form of competing; both were putting their interests before the other's. At one point, Sister took back all her toys, including her modeling clay, that she normally shared with Brother and sure enough Brother did the same with his toys. The consequences of handling a situation with the style of forcefulness include the possibility of ruining a friendship, in which Brother and Sister only damaged their relationship temporarily. I think that they acted this way because neither wanted to collaborate or consider an alternate solution to their fighting. They both thought they were right and since they did not collaborate in the beginning, they did not have one another to play or talk with. However, once Momma stepped in, the cubs were able to work together to solve their problem.

3. How did the conflict start?

- It begins with Brother being rude, in which he yells at Sister for putting her feet in his face, but after all, that comes with having bunk beds. In turn, Sister shouts back at Brother and this begins a series of arguments that continue throughout the entire day. One of the arguments they had concerned sharing, in which this problem is discussed in #2. I think what made it escalate was the idea that they both wanted to outdo or surpass one another in their actions.

4. How did the characters feel?

- I think that Brother and Sister both feel frustrated because neither one will admit that they are wrong. Therefore, their anger keeps escalating and this brings about more conflict.
- I will be honest and say that if I were Sister, I probably would have acted the same way. I am putting myself in her shoes, as a child of about seven or eight years old though. I think that if this situation were to happen to me, I would not

have gotten so angry, although I attribute that to the fact that this was a trivial situation and nothing too major.

- There have been times when I have become frustrated and unfortunately let it get the best of me. For instance, there was one time when my niece and I had to spend the entire day with one another. That day we continually argued over trivial things, such as “that’s my blanket, get your own” and “you said you’d watch this movie with me and now you don’t, you lied to me.” Those were minor disagreements, but these types of things carried on throughout the day. Actually, I felt as though we were sisters because of how much we were fighting.

5. What does each character want? Need?

- Both Brother and Sister want to be right and not give into one another. However, they both need to set aside their differences and talk out their problem or at least agree to disagree.
- Momma wants her children to quit fighting. She needs for them to see that everyone has disagreements, but they don’t have to last forever. To show this, the example of a storm is used, in which Sister realizes this comparison. In fact, she says “A rainbow is something very beautiful that happens after a storm...like making up after a fight.”

6. What question would you like to ask _____ character?

- Why did Brother wake up in a bad mood? Did he have a bad dream the night before?

7. How are the characters the same and different?

- Differences: In the beginning, Sister wakes up happily, but Brother wakes up in a bad mood.
- Same: Once Brother yells at Sister, they both are angry with one another for most of the day. They won’t collaborate, or work together, on anything, not until Momma steps in anyways. Another way to look at the situation is that they are both stubborn and set in their ways.
- Since both cubs were stubborn and kept arguing, it did not make the situation any easier. In fact, it only made it worse. Their unwillingness to compromise only escalated the state of affairs.
- Sister and I are both:
 - i. Girls.
 - ii. Stubborn.
 - iii. The babies of our family (well sister is at least the baby in this book, but not in future books).

- iv. Can easily become upset.
- v. Likes to spend a lot of time in the bathroom.

- Sister and I both share the problems of:
 - i. Having to share a room with someone, which limits the amount of space you have. Therefore, we both have another thing in common- bunk beds. This can cause a problem in that the top person's feet can sometimes hang down and get in the way of the person on the bottom bunk.
 - ii. We both only have one sibling, so this can be a problem when you both get into an argument. I say this because when you both disagree and have trouble compromising you may not have another person to talk to or play with when at home.

8. Higher level question:

- How might you have handled the situation, of Brother yelling at you in the morning, using the conflict resolution steps you have learned so far? (I-Messages could be utilized at this point.)

9. Skills:

- How to manage anger.
 - i. This book demonstrates the wrong way of how to handle anger. Therefore, the teacher can use this book as an example of how not to act in an argument.
- How to help each other solve problems.
 - i. Momma Bear intervened with the cubs' fighting, in which she helped them to work out their differences. She allowed for them to see that it is alright to disagree but eventually the situation needs to be resolved if you want to maintain a relationship with the other person.