

Little Red Riding Hood Learns to Negotiate

Ask for volunteers to play the part of Red, the Wolf and the Narrator. Have participants practice the script a few times, then read it in front of the class. Ask students in the audience to make a list of the negotiation skills they see being used.

NARRATOR: Once upon a time, there was a little girl named Red, who was off to visit her grandmother, and a Wolf who loved his forest very much. Now some of you may have heard already, cuz I know how news travels around here, but Red and the Wolf, they had problems. Big ones. I don't want to get into the whole thing, but from what I heard, Red was really mad at the wolf for trying to eat her. The Wolf claimed it was all a misunderstanding. Now here they are, trying to work it out.

RED: I'm Red Riding Hood. I agree to take turns talking and listening and to cooperate to solve the problem.

WOLF: I'm the Wolf. I agree to take turns talking and listening, and I agree to cooperate with you, Red Riding Hood, to solve the problem.

NARRATOR: So I can see they are off to a good start. They have both agreed to negotiate.

RED: I was taking a loaf of fresh bread and some cakes to my granny's cottage on the other side of the woods. Granny wasn't well, so I thought I would pick some flowers for her along the way.

I was picking the flowers when you, Wolf, jumped out from behind a tree and started asking me a bunch of questions. You wanted to know what I was doing and where I was going, and you kept grinning that wicked grin and smacking your lips together. You were being so gross and rude. Then you ran away. I was frightened.

NARRATOR: Oh see that, that's good. They are

gathering information about what happened now.

WOLF: You were taking some food to your grand- mother on the other side of the woods, and I appeared from behind the tree and frightened you.

NARRATOR: What a good job this wolf is doing of reflecting back to Red what she said, in his own words! I bet she feels heard. Now I wonder if the wolf will get a chance to say what he feels?

RED: Yes, that's what happened.

WOLF: Well look, Red, the forest is my home. I care about it and try to keep it clean. That day, I was cleaning up some garbage people had left behind when I heard footsteps. I leaped behind a tree and saw you coming down the trail carrying a basket of goodies.

I was suspicious because you were dressed in that strange red cape with your head covered up as if you didn't want anyone to know who you were. You started picking my flowers and stepping on my new little pine trees.

Naturally, I stopped to ask you what you were doing. You gave me this song and dance about going to your granny's house with a basket of goodies.

I wasn't very happy about the way you treated my home or me.

RED: You were concerned when you saw me in a red cape picking your flowers. You stopped me and asked me what I was doing.

WOLF: That's right.



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RED: Well, the problem didn't stop there. When I got to my granny's house, you were disguised in my granny's nightgown. You tried to eat me with those big ugly teeth. I'd be dead today if it hadn't been for the woodsman who came in and saved me. You scared my granny. I found her hiding under the bed.

WOLF: You say I put on your granny's nightgown so you would think I was your granny, and that I tried to hurt you?

RED: I said you tried to eat me. I really thought you were going to eat me up. I was hysterical.

WOLF: Now wait a minute, Red. I know your granny. I thought we should teach you a lesson for prancing on my pine trees in that get-up and for picking my flowers. I let you go on your way in the woods, but I ran ahead to your granny's cottage.

When I saw Granny, I explained what happened, and she agreed that you needed to learn a lesson. Granny hid under the bed, and I dressed up in her nightgown.

NARRATOR: Okay, so now I see we are getting somewhere. You can see we have just stumbled upon the misunderstanding!

WOLF: When you came into the bedroom you saw me in the bed and said something nasty about my big ears. I've been told my ears are big before, so I tried to make the best of it by saying big ears help me hear you better.

Then you made an insulting crack about my bulging eyes. This one was really hard to blow off, because you sounded so nasty. Still, I make it a policy to turn the other cheek, so I told you my big eyes help me see you better.

Your next insult about my big teeth really got to me. You see, I'm quite sensitive about my teeth. I know that when you made fun of my teeth I should have had better control, but I leaped from the bed and growled that my teeth would help me to eat you.

But, come on, Red! Let's face it. Everyone knows no Wolf could ever eat a girl, but you started screaming and running around the house. I tried to catch you to calm you down.

All of a sudden the door came crashing open, and a big woodsman stood there with his ax. I knew I was in trouble . . . there was an open window behind me, so out I went.

I've been hiding ever since. There are terrible rumors going around the forest about me. Red, you called me the Big Bad Wolf. I'd like to say I've gotten over feeling bad, but the truth is I haven't lived happily ever after.

NARRATOR: Oh I feel really bad for the wolf now. Poor guy. That must have been hard for him.

WOLF: I don't understand why Granny never told you and the others my side of the story. I'm upset about the rumors and have been afraid to show my face in the forest. Why have you and Granny let the situation go on for this long? It just isn't fair. I'm miserable and lonely.

RED: You think that I have started unfair rumors about you, and you are miserable and lonely and don't understand why Granny didn't tell your side of the story.

Well, Granny has been sick—and she's been very tired lately. When I asked her how she came to be under the bed, she said she couldn't remember a thing that →

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had happened. Come to think of it, she didn't seem too upset . . . just confused.

WOLF: So you think it is possible that Granny just doesn't remember because she is sick.

NARRATOR: Now Red's doing a good job of telling Wolf what she heard. This must be very healing for Wolf.

RED: I want to be able to take flowers to Granny when I visit her because she is lonely and flowers help cheer her up.

I want to be able to go through the forest to Granny's house because it is too far to take the road around the forest.

I want you to stop trying to scare me or threaten me in the forest because I want to feel safe. Besides, I think the forest is a fun place.

WOLF: You want to go through the forest to visit Granny who is lonely, and you want to feel safe because you think the forest is a neat place.

RED: Yes, and I want to take flowers to Granny.

WOLF: I want you to watch where you are walking and to stop picking my flowers because I want to keep my forest home looking nice.

I want the rumors to stop because I want people to like me, and I want to be able to enjoy the forest without being afraid that someone is hunting for me.

NARRATOR: Oh I see what's happening now, they are focusing on their interests, and what they want from each other.

RED: You want the forest to be pretty, you want people who visit the forest to like you and not be afraid of you, and you want to be safe in the forest.

WOLF: Right, the forest is my home. I should be

free to enjoy my own home.

NARRATOR: Hmmmm... I wonder how they will solve this problem?

RED: In order to solve this problem, I could try to stay on the path when I walk through the forest.

WOLF: I could try to remember to call out when I hear you coming instead of quietly stepping out from behind a tree. I could plant some flowers over by Granny's house for you to pick.

RED: I could pick up trash I see in the forest and take it to Granny's trash can.

WOLF: I could check up on Granny to make sure she is OK on those days when you can't make it. She is my friend, you see.

RED: Granny and I can talk to the woodsman and tell him we made a mistake about you. I could tell my friends that I'm not afraid of you anymore—that you can be nice.

WOLF: I could meet your friends on the edge of the forest and show them through it.

NARRATOR: These seem like some win-win options to me!

WOLF: Do you think if you tell the woodsman and your friends that you made a mistake about me and that I'm really nice, then I won't have to worry about the woodsman and his hunters catching me?

RED: I think that will work.

WOLF: Maybe I could go with you to talk to the woodsman.

RED: Yes, that would help. You could also go with me when I tell my friends I'm not afraid of you anymore. . . . I'd like to help you plant some flowers at Granny's, and



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I could also help you plant some in the forest. It would be nice to visit Granny together. She's pretty lonely.

WOLF: That sounds good.

RED: I agree.

WOLF: I don't think it will work for you to stay on the path all the time. I can show you where to walk so you don't harm anything.

NARRATOR: Okay, so now I can tell these guys are onto something. They are evaluating all their options.

RED: I think that's fair.

WOLF: I agree.

RED: Will it work for you to check on Granny when I can't visit her?

WOLF: Yes, if you call me early in the morning.

RED: I think it would be a good idea if I ask my friends for a donation when you give them a tour of the forest, and we could use the money to buy more trees to plant and start a recycling program for the trash we pick up.

WOLF: I think we've taken care of both of our interests.

RED: This solution will help both of us.

NARRATOR: Well, I guess all that's left now is to create an agreement. Wonder how they're feeling now?

RED: I'll arrange for Granny and myself to talk to the woodsman. I'll try to get an appointment for this afternoon, and I'll let you know when.

WOLF: I'll get some flowers to plant at Granny's.

I'll have them ready to plant Saturday. I'll draw up a possible forest tour map and give it to you.

RED: As soon as I get your tour map, I'll bring some friends over to try it out. That's when I'll introduce you and tell them you're nice.

WOLF: I'll put a donations box at the edge of the forest for our tree planting and recycling program.

RED: And I'll call you by 7 o'clock if I can't go visit Granny.

WOLF: OK. I've agreed to get flowers to plant by Saturday, to draw a tour map of the forest, to go along with you to talk with the woodsman, to meet your friends and lead a tour through the forest, to take care of the donations box, and to visit Granny when you can't do it.

RED: I've agreed to arrange for an appointment with Granny and the woodsman, to plant flowers with you, to bring my friends to tour the forest and introduce you as a nice Wolf, and to call you by 7 o'clock if I can't visit Granny.

(The two shake hands.)

NARRATOR: That was an amazing negotiation session. Let me see if I can remember everything they did. Let's see.

First they agreed to negotiate. Then they gathered information and reflected back what they heard. Then they focused on their interests, and generated some win-win options. And finally they came to an agreement. I hope I can remember to do that in the future!

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