

Treehouse Pirates

Teacher Notes

Suggested age range: 4–8 years

Suggested school levels: Early Years / Lower Primary

Overview

Treehouse Pirates is a warm and imaginative picture book about family play, kindness, and the power of inclusion. What begins as a playful family adventure is interrupted by a lonely, grumpy neighbour who complains from a distance. But when the family responds with kindness and invites the neighbour to join their pirate game, everything begins to change. Through shared play and welcome, a grumpy outsider becomes a friend.

These teacher notes are designed to support discussion, reflection, and simple classroom activities around empathy, imagination, belonging, and friendship.

Key Themes

- Kindness
- Inclusion
- Friendship
- Family connection
- Imaginative play
- Empathy
- Community

Learning Opportunities

This book supports learning in the following areas:

- speaking and listening
- personal and social development
- imaginative response
- empathy and relationships
- classroom discussion

Before Reading

Before sharing the story, invite children to think about play, friendship, and how people sometimes behave when they feel left out.

You might ask:

- Why do children enjoy imaginative play?
- How can families have fun together?
- Have you ever known someone who seemed grumpy or lonely?
- What can make a person feel included and welcome?

During Reading

As you read, encourage children to notice:

- the joy of the family's pirate game
- the neighbour's reaction
- how the family chooses to respond
- the change that happens when kindness is shown

You may like to pause and ask:

- How do you think the neighbour is feeling?
- Why might he be acting this way?
- What could the family do in this situation?
- What happens when someone is invited to join in?

After Reading Discussion Questions

- What happened in the story?
- Why was the neighbour grumpy at first?
- Do you think he was only angry, or might he also have been lonely?
- How did the family respond to his complaints?
- Why was the invitation so important?
- How did play help change the situation?
- What does this story teach us about kindness?
- How can we include others who seem left out?
- How can friendship begin in unexpected ways?
- What would you have done in the family's place?

Key Message

A kind invitation can make a big difference. When we choose empathy and welcome instead of frustration, we can help others feel included and turn loneliness into friendship.

Classroom Activities

1. Pirate Play and Friendship

Invite children to imagine their own pirate adventure. They can draw or describe who would be in their crew and how they would make sure everyone feels included.

2. Include Someone In

Create a class chart titled: Ways We Can Help Others Feel Included. Children can suggest kind actions for the classroom, playground, and home.

3. From Grumpy to Friendly

Ask children to draw two pictures: one showing the neighbour at the beginning of the story, and one showing him after he joins in. Talk about what changed and why.

4. Friendship Role-Play

Act out simple situations where one person is left out, upset, or standing alone. Invite children to practise ways to welcome that person kindly.

Cross-Curricular Links

English

retelling the story; discussing characters and feelings; identifying problem and solution

Personal and Social Learning

empathy; inclusion; friendship; community and belonging

Art / Drama

pirate drawings and imaginative scenes; role-play; friendship posters

Extension Ideas

- Create a class pirate crew with each child choosing a pirate name and role.
- Make a poster titled Everyone Is Welcome on Our Ship.
- Write or dictate a short ending about another adventure the neighbour joins.
- Talk about how play can help people connect and become friends.

Home Connection

Encourage children to talk with family about ways they can include others, show kindness, and turn a difficult moment into a friendship opportunity.