

TEO and the Peace Puzzle

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It was the International Day of Peace, and the class was buzzing and brainstorming. Shari said that war was not a way to bring peace, but a way to make conflict worse. Johnny stood up and said that grownups did a lot of peace-talking, but then went to war anyway. Julia said that it is impossible to foster harmony when you feel awful inside, and Malika said that sometimes you feel like you are in pieces. This is when Teo raised his hand and started waving at Miss Wilson. What a fantastic chance to share one of his favorite stories...

“It’s the story of a little boy”. He said, grinning. “He is about two, three years old”.

“What’s the boy’s name?” asked Sara.

“Samuel! His name is Sammy!” cried Lionel, thinking about his newborn brother.

Teo gave it a thumbs up and resumed his tale. “Sammy’s parents kept their fragile things out of his reach, you know... whatever he put his hands on became a plaything! The family library door was normally off-limits, too, until the day Sammy found it open. Teo paused. His classmates and Miss Wilson were hanging on his lips.

“The library was a fascinating place for Sammy. Heaps of books were shelved and neatly piled on a table, huge fat files were stacked in the corners of the room, and mysterious rolls of paper were bulging from the highest book shelf...”

“Do you mean like the ancient Egyptian scrolls we’re studying in history?” asked George.

“Exactly! Oh, how Sammy wished to play with them!”, replied Teo. “But how could he?” Teo picked up momentum. “Then... all of the sudden... a gust of wind blew open the window, and made the mysterious scrolls fall to the floor, right in front of Sammy’s feet!” Teo was having fun and started playing the role. He bended over and pretended to unroll a big sheet of paper, then he turned to his friends and said:

“He was holding a rare and breathtaking world map! It was of immense beauty and value. But Sammy was too small to understand the worth of it. He looked at the map and started folding it, crushing it and tearing it to pieces!

“Oh gosh, that’s terrible”, said Sarah.

“And that’s when dad walked in the room!” Teo paused again, amidst everyone’s sighs.

“Hey! Someone want to come up and play the role of Sammy’s dad?”

Joel jumped to his feet without any hesitation and took on the part. “Oh, Samuel!” He cried.

“Look what you did! You played with the world... and now it’s in pieces!”

The class and Miss Wilson applauded and cheered, while Joel continued his performance.

“Will we ever be able to put it back together?!” he asked, as he cued Teo in.

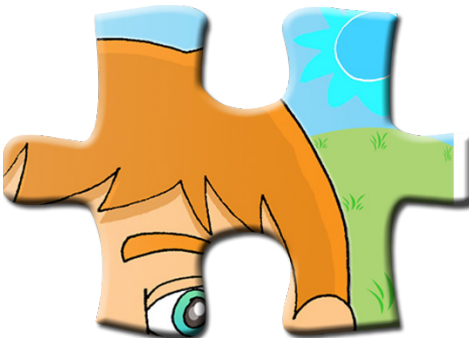
“I only wanted to have some fun...”, muttered Teo, pretending to be Sammy again and bowing his head in repentance. Then he looked at his classmates and said: “Even if Sammy was really small he knew that he had done something wrong. His plaything was broken and there were pieces of paper all over the floor!”

Joel shrugged his shoulders and went back to his seat... he had no clue of what would happen next.

“Sammy and his dad sat down to look for a way to put the pieces back together.” continued Teo. “But if the design... I mean the map of the world was so old and shabby... it was probably like a faded out puzzle...” said Stephanie undertone. “I don’t think they’ll be able to do it.” “Never lose hope, Steffy,” replied Teo reassuringly. That’s what mom always says... and that’s what Sammy’s dad thought, too! He worked at it Sammy’s help, until...” Teo softened his voice: “... a cool breeze entered the room... making all the pieces of paper loop up in the air, and fall topsy-turvy back onto the floor!”

“Daddy! Look!” Teo was playing Sammy again and pretended to discover the back side of a piece of paper. “An eye!”

“Yes, it’s an eye! And here’s another one, Sammy ” said his dad. “Then maybe...” Sammy and his dad turned all the pieces over. Now it was easier to identify them and make out a puzzle. It was the figure of a human being. Sammy’s dad taped the pieces together and turned the puzzle over... and lo and behold, the world was back in place again!



DEAR FRIENDS!
THAT WAS THE END OF
TEO’S STORY, BUT THE
BEGINNING OF AN EXCIT-
ING CLASS DIALOGUE ON
THE DIFFERENT VALUES
THAT PROMOTE UNITY
WITH ONESELF, AS THE
FIRST STEP TO LAST-
ING PEACE AND UNITY
AMONG ALL PEOPLE.

WHEN THERE IS UNITY IN WHAT PEOPLE THINK,
SAY AND DO AND THEIR FOCUS IS ON HUMAN
VALUES, THERE ARE NO MORE SCATTERED
PIECES IN THE WORLD... JUST PEACE!