

Sweet Sophie

By: Isabella Weyerman



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ISBN: 9781794501010

**Sweet Sophie's mom always
told her to be sweet.
So Sophie said she'd be sweet
to everyone she'd meet.**



**When Sweet Sophie went to
school, she was so polite
She made lots of friends before
the first day was night.**



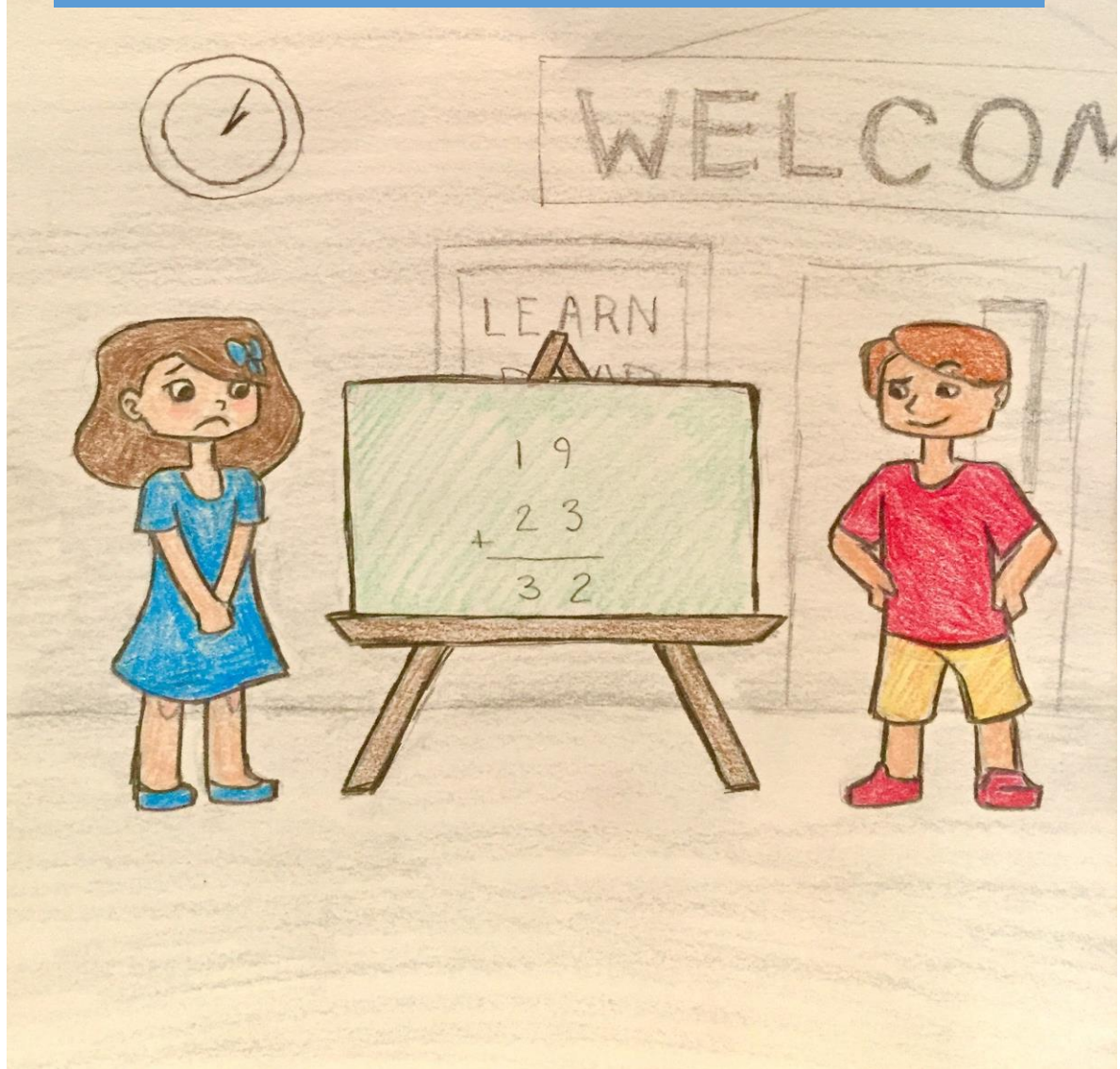
**Sweet Sophie let her friends
have their way,
Even about games she didn't
want to play.**



**Her friends broke rules and
caused mayhem,
but poor Sophie was too
sweet to tell them.**



In class her partner did their
project wrong,
Even though Sophie knew what
the answer was all along.



One day a classmate named Emma made fun of her friend, and Sophie decided she'd had enough of this trend.



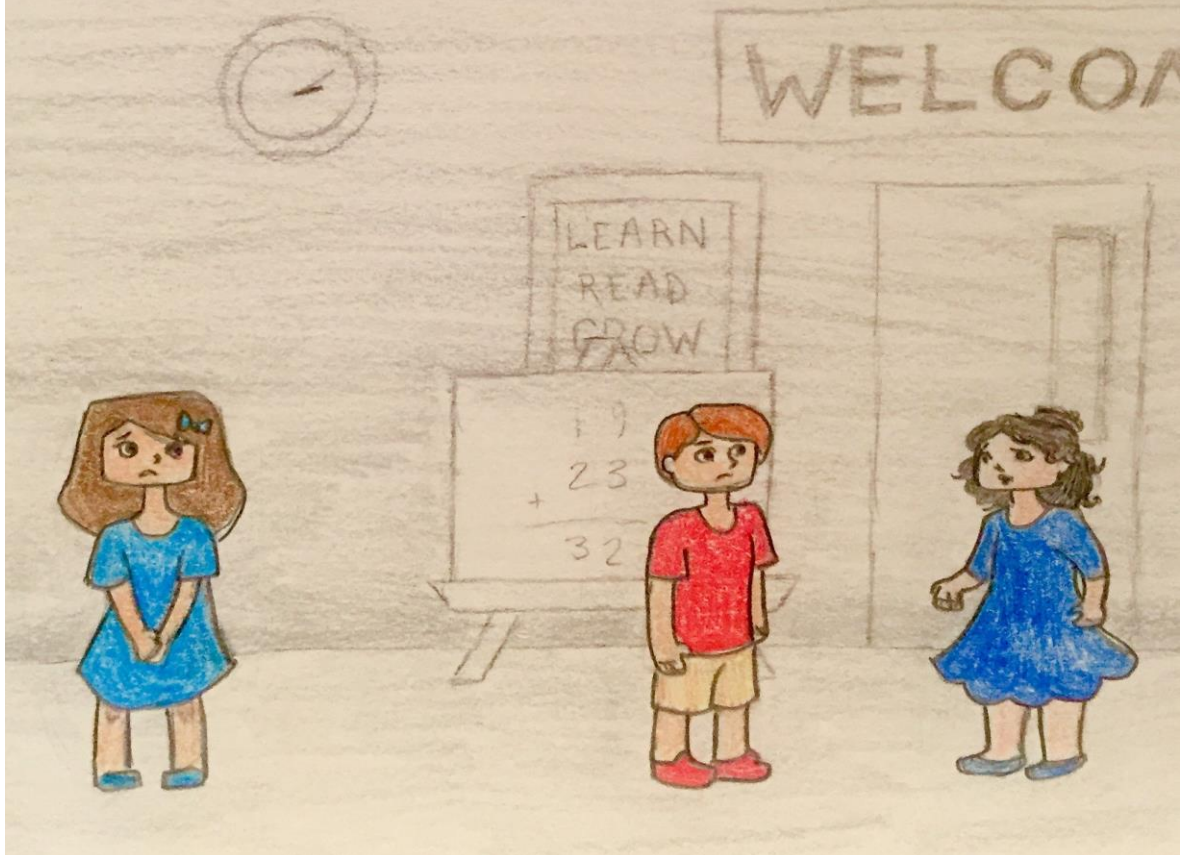
**“Enough!” cried Sweet Sophie,
“Stop being so crude!
I just can’t be sweet when you’re
being so rude!”**



**"I'm sorry" sighed Sophie, "Yelling
wasn't the way,
but sometimes we do things that
aren't okay."**

**"No, no" agreed Emma, "What you
said is true.**

**Being mean is no way to be
listened to."**



Now Sweet Sophie knows a better way.

She finds games everyone wants to play.

Sweet Sophie and her friends played hide and seek, but Sophie saw her friend sneak a peek.

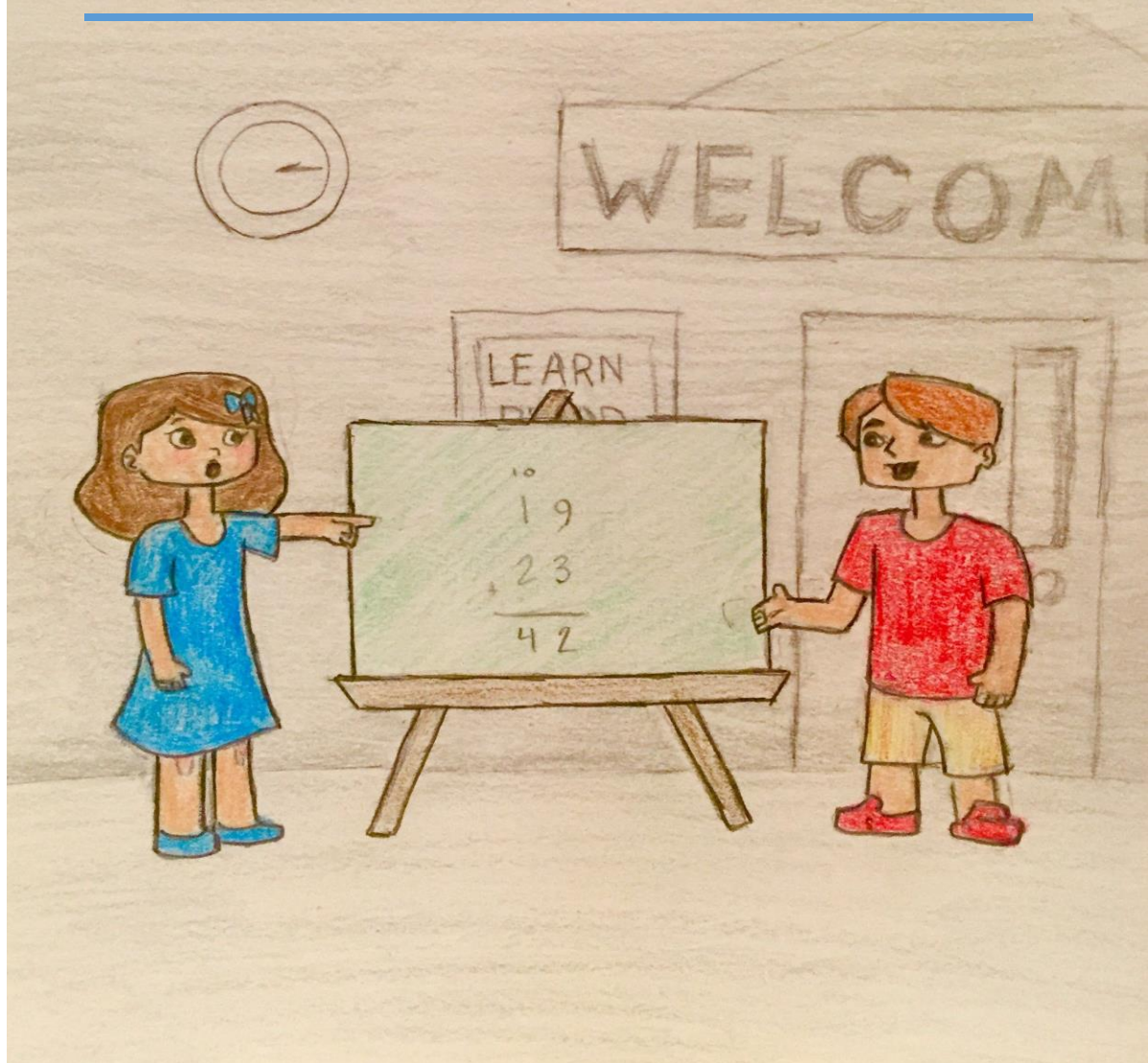


**“In this game, the rules are
only a few.
You wouldn’t want your
friends to cheat against you.”**



**When Sweet Sophie's partner
was confused, she taught him the
way.**

**Both of them got a good grade
that day.**



**Sweet Sophie listens to how
everyone feels
so she has all the sides to make a
good deal.
Sweet Sophie's friends all like this
way better.
Now they can all have fun together!**



A note from the author



My hope is that parents, teachers, and counselors use this book to help children learn lifelong communication and conflict resolution skills. Friends are easier to make than keep when you don't know how to listen and express yourself effectively. Conflicts and misunderstandings are a part of life that many children don't know how to handle. I often find extremes in elementary school personalities. Some children are very quiet and go along with whatever anyone says in the hope of being liked and keeping peace, and some children believe if they are the loudest, most forceful, and unmoving it gets them their way. It seems that more and more children rely on teachers and parents to resolve conflicts for them because they don't know how to do it themselves and get more and more frustrated with their peers. I have added a lesson plan to explicitly teach conflict resolution using Sweet Sophie. Happy communicating!

Isabella Weyerman

OBJECTIVE: Children will use effective communication and listening skills to resolve conflicts and create positive relationships.

American School Counselor Association standards alignment:

1. Mindsets: Self confidence in ability to succeed
2. Behavior: Self-Management
3. Strategies: Demonstrate effective coping skills when faced with a problem
4. Social Skills: Use effective collaboration and cooperation skills

Outline:

1. Engage students by asking them to predict what the new book is about by looking at the cover. Let everyone share an idea with a partner or the class and possibly write down his or her prediction.
2. Ask students what being sweet means to help them connect to prior knowledge.
3. Explain that you will read the short book all the way through without stopping the first time, but you will go back for them to discuss what happens on the pages and in the illustrations on the second reading. (This allows students to enjoy the rhyming singsong rhythm of the text.)
4. At the end of the book, ask students if they think Sophie is sweet. Have them share with a partner one reason why they think Sophie is sweet or not.
5. Ask for a show of hands of who agreed with their partner and who did not. We are going to go back and reread the book and see if Sophie always agreed with her friends.

6. This time after reading each page, allow the students to explore what is going on in the illustration as well as the text. Prompt students to share thoughts about what is happening and what they think about how Sophie and her friends communicate.
7. At an opportune time in the discussion of the text stop and allow students to get moving by having them stand up or move to a certain part of the room to reflect their answer to your questions. Some questions might be: a) Stand up if you have ever had a misunderstanding with someone. b) Stand by the door if you felt frustrated or it hurt your feelings c) Stand by the window if you have ever felt like a friend didn't listen to you. d) Stand by the board if you have felt frustrated by the way a misunderstanding was resolved.
8. Explain that today we will learn an acronym that will help us know what to do when we have a conflict and want to resolve it in a way that helps us be happy and keep our friends.
9. Reveal the entire acronym then explicitly describe and model how to do each letter

Just be SWEET!

S – say how you feel

W – wait and listen to what the other person has to say

E – engage in sharing ideas to resolve the conflict

E – elect a solution that is as fair as possible for everyone

T – take a step forward in being friends

SAY HOW YOU FEEL

1. Place students in groups and have them discuss ideas and make a list of feelings they might have that may cause a conflict with someone. (frustrated, sad, angry, confused, disappointed, worried, and embarrassed are just a few words they may come up with)
2. Then tell them what they did specifically that made you feel that way. Specific means say exactly what happened. For example, when you wouldn't play tag with me verses when you were mean.
3. Lastly, tell them what you would like them to do to make it better in a nice way. For example, you could tell them to please play with you next time and be willing to compromise what you play together. Sometimes you may need to say, please stop doing an action.
4. You need to use a calm voice and body language to resolve the conflict and keep being friends. Practice modeling what that looks and sounds like.
5. Have students practice using the model below with partners and scenarios of things that might happen to cause a conflict.

I feel _____

When you _____

Could you please _____?

Some scenario examples:

- a. Someone calls you a baby.
- b. Someone won't let you play a game with them at recess.
- c. Someone is talking while you are trying to hear announcements.
- d. Someone broke in front of you in line.
- e. Someone told a classmate that you weren't going to be invited to their party.

WAIT AND LISTEN TO WHAT THE OTHER PERSON HAS TO SAY

1. Place students in groups and have them brainstorm responses they might have to some of the I feel statements created that would help resolve the conflict instead of make it worse.
2. Explain that when someone uses an I feel statement it may catch them off guard and it may be a good idea to take a deep breath and think before they respond. Our first thought is not always our best thought. This is why we take a minute to wait and listen.
3. Good responses often start with restating what the person said to make sure you understand what they are saying and acknowledging what you think happened.

ENGAGE IN SHARING IDEAS TO RESOLVE THE CONFLICT

1. Have students work with other partners or groups to brainstorm ideas that would resolve some of the scenarios presented.
2. Explain to them that compromise is necessary in most circumstances which means the solution may not be exactly what either of you wants, but it will be enough to make both of you continue to be friends.

ELECT A SOLUTION THAT IS AS FAIR AS POSSIBLE FOR EVERYONE

3. Have students practice compromising to elect solutions that are acceptable for both. It is a win-win. Both friends feel better by the outcome.

TAKE A STEP FORWARD IN BEING FRIENDS

Groups discuss what a person can do to continue being friends and not hold onto hurt feelings that will cause damage to the friendship and home or learning environment. This taking a step forward means doing the best to treat others the way you would want to be treated which includes forgiveness.

ADDITIONAL CONFLICT SCENARIOS:

1. Tracy isn't talking to her friend Kim because Kim sat with Amy at lunch instead of her.
2. Brian and Cindy both want the same library book, but they only have one copy.

3. Hudson wants to be the team captain in football, but John Carson has already “called it”.
4. Saxton is frustrated with Liam because he told their friends that Saxton isn’t good at soccer.
5. Nancy is sad because she heard Alyssa laugh when she mispronounced a word during read aloud.
6. In line for lunch, Tom was standing behind you and stepped on your foot. It really hurt.
7. At recess, Layne always grabs the swing and won’t get off.
8. On a field trip Rollins ignored you on the bus and you had no place to sit.
9. You heard Lauren say you were the “teacher’s pet”.
10. Savannah has a highlighter that looks just like mine that is missing.

DEBRIEF:

1. What is hard about using the SWEET conflict resolution method?
2. How will the SWEET method help you?
3. When can we encourage each other to use this method so everyone feels respected and accepted at home and school?
4. How can we show patience in our communication?
5. When should you ask a parent or teacher to help you resolve a conflict?

*The more you practice using conflict resolution skills the easier it is to resolve misunderstandings, which leads to more friends and a **SWEET** life!*