

Story Study Facilitator Resource Pack: Goldfish Genius

Teachers Guide: Read the following paragraphs yourself prior to facilitating the discussion questions with children. This will enable you to ask the questions confidently and use them as tools to help children figure out what is going on in the story as well as what lessons can be learnt from it. By asking questions and having children come up with answers, their learning experience will be more fun and more effective than if you were to simply give them all of the answers. If they are struggling to find strong answers, use the following paragraphs to help steer children in a more focused direction.

Story Summary

Neo gets a goldfish as a birthday gift from her father. Neo loves the goldfish and is impressed by its intelligence. The goldfish also loves Neo and is very happy to be with her. When Neo and her father go outside to play ball, the goldfish feels left out. Rather than sulk, the goldfish makes an invention so that it will be more mobile and can join the game. Unfortunately, the invention isn't that well thought through and ends up being very dangerous. Will Neo come to the rescue or will the goldfish be doomed to become octopus' food? Join us for this exciting reading and find out.

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Reading the Story

Before reading the book, look at the cover and ask children what they think the story might be about. Once you start reading you will see that the book doesn't have any words in it. Here are some helpful tips to guide you before, during, and after reading the story:

- Give them enough time to state what they think and feel.
- Spend time with each page and try to let children explain what is going on.
- Ask questions about what is going on in each picture, or give clues like:
 - *Do you think that Neo is happy about her birthday gift?*
 - *Why do you think that the fish was crying when Neo went to play with her father outside?*
 - *Do you think the fish was sad?*
 - *Do you think that Neo and her Dad were trying to exclude the fish?*
 - *How did the fish get into the ocean?*
- Once you have finished reading, ask children what they liked about the story.
- Ask some questions from the list below (choose questions that seem relevant for your child/group of children).



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- Make sure that **everybody** gets a chance to ask and answer questions. Don't let the older, more confident, and/or louder children take over everything.

Discussion Questions and Topics

Comprehension Questions to ask children – These questions are designed to see how well children understood the story:

- What does Neo get for her birthday?
- How does the goldfish end up in the ocean?
- Who gives Neo the goldfish? Why do they give it to her?
- Does the goldfish have any special talents? What are they?
- How does the goldfish use math and science to solve its problem?
- Does he/she meet any nice creatures in the ocean? Does he/she meet any mean ones?
- Where does the goldfish get trapped after it runs away from the octopus? How does it escape?
- How does the goldfish feel when Neo and her dad go outside to play ball?
- How does the goldfish try to solve the problem of not being included in the game?

Discussion Questions to ask children – These questions are designed to help children think critically about the story and formulate their own individual ideas and opinions:

- How does the cat feel when Neo is excited about the goldfish? Why do you think she might be jealous?
- Are Neo and her dad trying to exclude the goldfish? Do they exclude him/her anyway? Has anyone ever left you out of anything? What happened? How did it make you feel? Have you ever left anyone out of anything or excluded them from something? Why did you do it? Do you think that it was the right thing to do?
- The goldfish is contained within its bowl and doesn't have the same freedom that the people or cat have; why is this difficult for the fish? How would you feel if everyone else got to move around freely but you were left out? What would it feel like to live in a glass fishbowl?
- How might this story help us to think about the need for inclusion of people with disabilities?
- Why are Neo and her dad worried/concerned when they see the goldfish floating past them? The goldfish doesn't seem worried; do you think he/she realizes that they are in danger?

Activity 1: Heavy and Light Object

- **Resources:**
 - Basin or open container filled with water
 - Heavy and light objects

Activity: Fill the basin with water and have children experiment with different items to see what floats and what sinks. Have them explain why they think that happened and how it happened.

Activity 2: Favourite Page Illustration

- Resources:

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- Book
- Pencil
- Eraser
- Piece of paper

Activity: Recreate one of your favourite pages from the book on a sheet of paper, this activity improves fine motor skills, visual analysis, builds concentration and more!

1. From the book, ask the children to choose their favorite page and look at how it is designed and structured. Give the children a piece of paper and a pencil each to start drawing out the outlines of their favourite page of the book.
2. Ask the children to color in the page they have drawn.
3. Let the children present why the page was special to them.

Activity 3: Make a Puzzle

➤ **Resources:**

- Piece of cardboard
- A pair of scissors
- Glue
- Crayons

1. For this activity you will need a copy of the downloadable 12-piece puzzle, a piece of cardboard, a pair of scissors, glue and crayons.
2. Print the downloadable 12-piece puzzle page and ask the children to colour it in using bright crayons.
3. Glue the puzzle page to the piece of cardboard.
4. Assist the children to cut out their puzzle pieces.
5. Let the children try to piece the puzzle back together to recreate the picture.

Activity 4: Colour Wheel Circle

➤ **Resources:**

- Piece of cardboard
- Crayons/coloured pencils
- String
- Glue
- Copy of the color wheel
- A pair of scissors

Activity: Give children the colour wheel copy (provided with the lesson plan). Let them colour it in following the steps provided. Once they are finished colouring it, poke holes in the dotted places (inner circle) and put the string through the center. Spin your disk by holding one looped end of the string in each hand and swinging your disk vertically a few times to coil up the strings. Pull the strings in and out

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like you are playing an accordion to get the disk spinning faster. The faster you can spin it, the more powerful the illusion will become.

- What is happening?
 - As you spin and pull the wheel fast enough, the colours will seem to disappear and your disk will turn almost white. This is because when the disk spins so fast that our eyes can't keep up. Because our disk is made up of rainbow colours, when it spins fast enough, we see the whole rainbow at once and it becomes white.

Activity 5: 3-D Hand Illusion

- **Resources:**
 - Copy of 3D hand illusion
 - Pencil
 - Eraser
 - Piece of paper
 - Marker

Activity: Give each child a copy of the hand illusion activity and the materials they will need for the activity. Ask them to trace their hands on the piece of paper using a pencil. Help them go through each step. Once they are finished, encourage them to observe and present their final piece of art. Ask them how it felt to do it? What challenges did they encounter and how did they overcome them? If they could get a chance to do it again, what could they improve?

Activity 7: Make a Fish Home

- **Resources:**
 - Cardboard
 - Paint/ crayons
 - Pencils
 - Glue
 - Optional: Natural things (twigs, soil, stones, leaves, etc.)

Activity: On a piece of cardboard, ask children to design and create their own fish. They can look to the story for ideas, but encourage them not to copy the exact ones from the book but rather to use those for inspiration and come up with their own style. Once the children are finished, ask them to paste their fishes onto a big piece of cardboard and decorate it as an underwater home for the fish.

Activity 6: Compare and Contrast

Read **Goldfish Genius** and **Springloaded** with your child/children. Have a discussion about the ways that the two books are similar and the ways that they are different. Let children try to come up with ideas first but if they are struggling, give them some suggestions.

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- Here are some similarities you could suggest. Both of the books:
 - Have Neo, her father and the cat as characters.
 - Have the same style of drawing.
 - Teach about the importance of other people.
 - Teach about the danger of a 'half-baked' plan or being overconfident.
 - Feature characters who use math and science to solve problems.
 - Feature characters who get into trouble.
 - Feature characters who neglect/ignore other characters leading to trouble. (In both stories the perpetrator also recognizes the error of their ways and the story ends with everyone feeling valued and being included).

There are lots more so think hard and get creative!

- Here are some differences you could suggest:

Goldfish Genius	Springloaded
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has a goldfish.• Takes place partly underwater.• Features an octopus.• Features a bad guy (the octopus).• Features a party.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has special spring shoes.• Doesn't have a goldfish.• Neo and her father are ones who make the inventions.• Neo gets in trouble rather than being the one who does the rescuing.• Takes place partly in space.

Again, there are tons more differences, so encourage children to think hard, get creative and see how many they can come up with.

- Once you have explored some examples, ask children the following questions:
 - Both Neo in Springloaded, and the goldfish in Goldfish Genius make powerful inventions, but they don't think about the dangers involved in what they are doing, and both almost end up in big trouble. They only escape because of help from their family or people who care about them.
 - *What does this suggest about the importance of other people?*
 - *How can these stories help us think about the concept of 'UBUNTU'?*
 - *What do you think that the two stories are trying to get us to think about?*
 - *What do you think are the most important things that the book is trying to get us to think about?*

Activity 8: No Hands Challenge

Find two rocks that are about the same size or two old milk boxes (or any two things that are similar in size and are small enough for a child to grip). Have children try to hold one in each hand and try to use them to pick up and move different objects around. Experiment with things of different sizes and textures. Get the children to try to see if they can move their objects from the floor to the table or onto a chair using their boxes as grippers. With older kids, you can explore ideas like:

- Was it easier to pick up something heavy or something light?



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- Was it easier to pick up big things or small things?
- Did the texture of the object make a difference in how easy it was to grip?

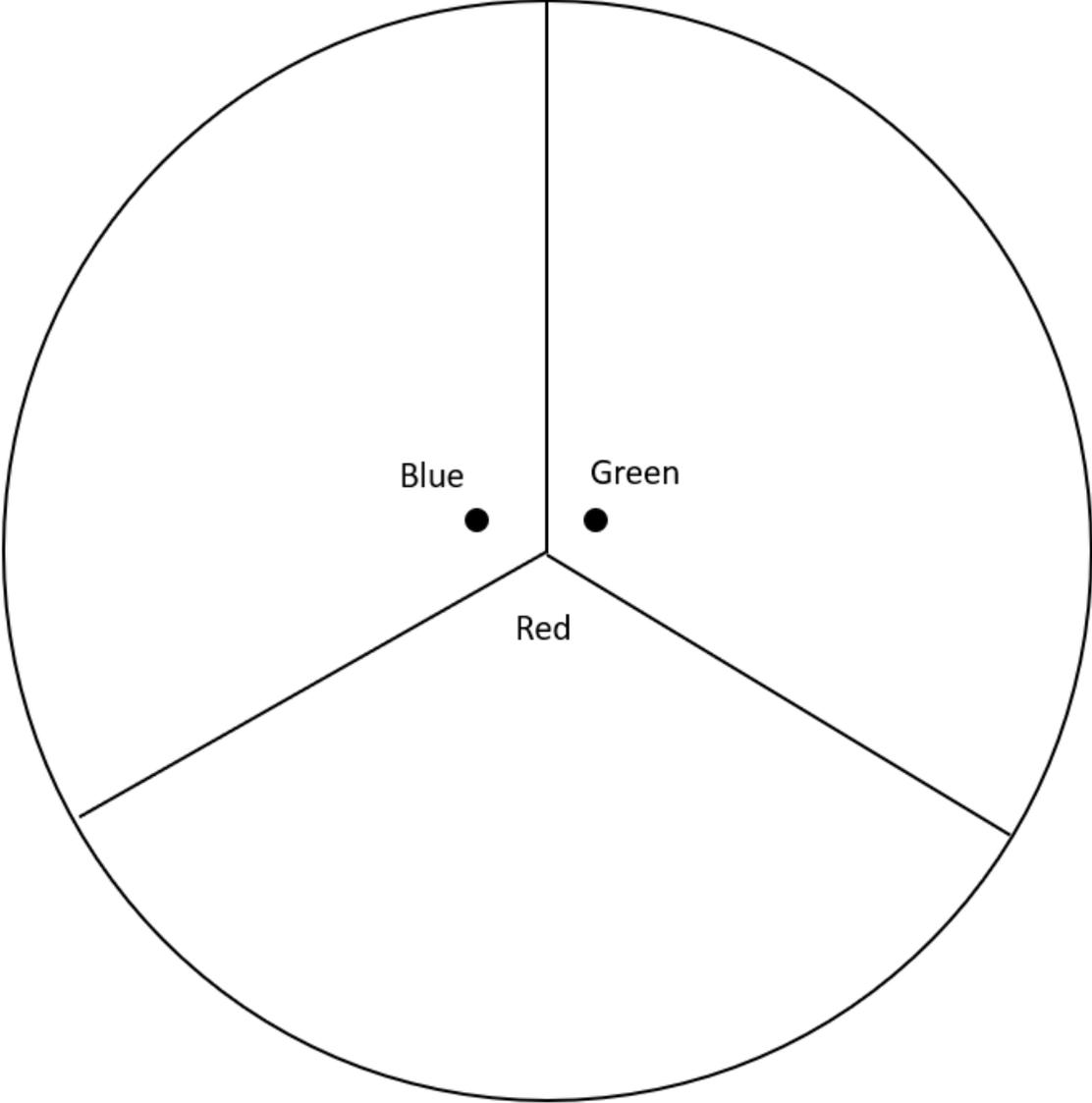
NOTE: Asking questions like this achieves a lot of things for your children's development. It lays the foundation for them to be able to deal with complex problems and to develop the skill to think on their toes. It is also a great chance to add or reinforce vocabulary. By introducing a word like "texture" in the context of the game, children not only learn without realizing it, but they also remember the new vocabulary more easily because their brain is attaching the word to the experience. Similarly, concepts like big and small become increasingly real for children the more that they experience them in real life. As concepts like big and small work their way into the game, they also work their way deeper into the children's minds. This helps move the concept from something that they are starting to understand, to something that they can really feel.

Duplo Version: This activity is the same as before, but children must use two Duplo bricks (one in each hand) to move their other Duplo bricks around. They can try to build a tower or try to move their bricks from the floor to the table. They can also try moving other objects that they can find.

Thanda is a non-profit organisation based in rural Mtwalume, KwaZulu Natal South Africa. Our curriculum is made up of activities that we have developed over 12 years. The ideas and inspiration for our activities come from is a wonderful combination of educators, books, websites, YouTubers, and other places and people on the internet. We are very grateful for all of them. Where we use ideas or activities directly from a source, we always endeavour to give credit to the creator. We do not endeavour to profit from these story studies, we only wish to add value to the lives of people we may have the opportunity of crossing paths with.

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3D Hand Illusion

What you Need:

Paper

A Marker

Pencil

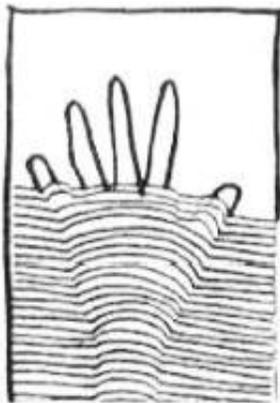
Your Hands



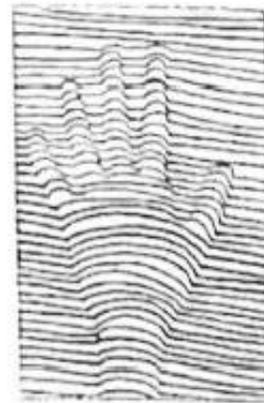
1. Trace around the shape of your hand using your pencil.



2. Now take the marker pen and, starting from the bottom of your page, draw a line until you reach the pencil outline of your hand. When you get there, make a curved line over your hand as shown.



3. Continue to fill the page with straight lines which curve over your hands pencil outline.



1. Admire your 3D hand!