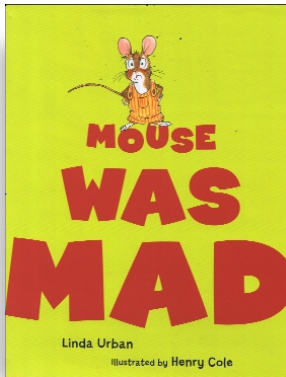


Book Nook

Using Books to Support Social Emotional Development



Mouse Was Mad

By Linda Urban

Harcourt Children's Books

Mouse Was Mad follows a young mouse through the forest as he searches for the perfect way to show that he is feeling mad. As Mouse tries different ways to express himself, other animals in the forest try to teach him the “right” way to be mad. Hare explains how to hop, Bear shows how to stomp, Bobcat tries to teach a scream, and Hedgehog demonstrates the perfect way to roll. But none of these are right for Mouse! He becomes more and more upset until finally, he discovers his very own way to be mad. *Mouse Was Mad* provides a great opportunity to talk about feeling mad and how we express that feeling. (Ages 2-5)

Examples of activities that can be used while reading *Mouse Was Mad* and throughout the day to promote social and emotional development:

- Before reading *Mouse Was Mad*, ask the children what they do when they are feeling mad. Tell the children what you do when you are feeling mad. Explain that everyone has a different way to show that they are feeling mad and that there isn't a right or wrong way. Some of us are quiet, some shout or cry. Some want to be alone and some want to tell someone else. Tell the children that you are going to read a story about a Mouse who was mad. Ask the children what they think a mouse might do to show that he was feeling mad. Then read the story to find out!
- Ask the children how they would know if someone was mad. What would someone's face look like if they were feeling mad? Would they smile or frown? Show some pictures of children showing different emotions (make sure some of the faces look angry or mad). Ask how they think the children in the pictures are feeling and why they think that (point out facial expressions). As you read the book, ask the children to look closely at the illustrations of Mouse. What can they see that shows that he is feeling mad? Children might notice that mouse has an angry frown on his face, or that his hands are in fists, or that he is hopping, stomping, screaming, or rolling. Ask children to think of what other animals might do to show they were mad. What would a lion do? Or a horse? Talk about different ways that people show that they are mad. Ask, “When Mouse was mad, he stomped his feet. Is that something a person might do if they were feeling mad? What else might they do?”
- Explain to the children that it is okay to feel mad. Even though we all feel mad sometimes, there are many ways to express feeling mad and to help the feeling go away. Remind the children how, at the end of the story, Mouse finally just stood still and then he realized that he wasn't mad any more! Ask the children to share what they do to help a mad feeling go away. Some might take a break from what they are doing or tell someone else how they feel. After getting ideas from the children, explain that you are going to teach them a special way to calm down when they feel mad. Teach the “Turtle Technique” (See the Tucker Turtle Takes Time to Tuck and Think in the “Scripted Stories for Social Situations” section of the CSEFEL website – www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel). By using this technique,



children will learn to keep their hands, feet, and voices to themselves. They will know to take three deep breaths to calm down, and to think of a good solution once they are calm. The website also includes a list of potential solutions that children can use to help them think of good solutions. Post the turtle technique in your classroom and talk about it often so children will know what to do when they feel mad.

Reading the same book for several days in a row is a great way to provide opportunities for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers to develop a sense of competence and confidence, which is an important part of social and emotional development. They become able to turn pages, point at and label pictures, talk about the story, predict what will happen next, learn new vocabulary words, talk about their own experiences in relation to the story and even make up their own story! Try reading *Mouse Was Mad* for several days in a row and use some of the ideas, activities, and teaching opportunities listed below to enhance social and emotional skills.

Feeling Mad

Playground/Outdoor: Before you go outside to play, review some of the things that Mouse did to try to show that he was mad (stomp, hop, roll, etc.). Explain to the children that you are going to play an outdoor game using all of the actions from *Mouse Was Mad*. When you get outside practice each of the actions together so that everyone knows how to do them. Then play a “Simon Says” type game that incorporates the actions along with direction following skills and numbers/colors/letters. You can say things like, “If you are wearing red, hop like Hare two times” or, “If you have the letter “M” in your name, roll once like Hedgehog.” You can make the instructions as simple or as complex as needed depending on the group of children. At the end, everyone can practice the Turtle Technique together by standing very still (just like Mouse did) and taking three deep breaths. Use a parachute or green sheet as Tucker turtle’s shell so everyone can go under the sheet (adults can hold the sheet) to practice taking three deep breaths. Remind children that they can do this when they are feeling mad to help themselves calm down.

Art: Reread the first part of the story where Mouse falls into a mucky mud puddle every time he tries to follow the other animal’s advice on how to be mad. Ask children how they would feel if they fell into a big mud puddle. Would it make them mad? Tell the children that they can make their own “mucky mud puddle” finger paintings. Give the children smocks and large sheets of paper. Provide various shades of brown, black, and grey washable finger paints that will look like the mucky mud puddles from the story. If some children don’t want to get paint on their hands, they can use a brush or other tools (plastic silverware, old toy cars, leaves) to make designs with the paint. Then dive in and have fun!

Dramatic Play: Help children “act out” the *Mouse Was Mad* story. They can pretend that they are either Mouse or the other animals in the forest. Talk about how the other animals in *Mouse Was Mad* tried to tell Mouse what he was doing wrong when he stomped, hopped, rolled and screamed. Ask the children what they would do if they saw that a friend was mad. Would it be a good idea to tell the friend what they were doing was wrong? Or, would it be better to help him calm down and think of a good solution? Children can practice being Mouse and the other animals, but instead of trying to tell Mouse what he is doing wrong, they can help mouse think of a solution. This is a great time to practice the turtle technique and coming up with good solutions! This could also be a group activity during story time.