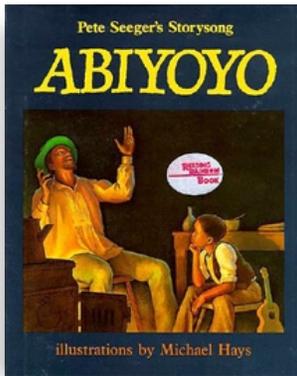


Book Nook

Using Books to Support Social Emotional Development



Abiyoyo

By Pete Seeger
Macmillan 1986

Abiyoyo is a story based on a South African folktale. After being “ostracized” from town for playing too many tricks on people, a magician and his son use their unique talents to save the town. When a giant named *Abiyoyo* comes to the village, a magician’s son uses his ukulele to get *Abiyoyo* to dance so fast that he falls down, and then the magician makes the giant disappear!
(Ages 3-8)

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

- Teach children the “Abiyoyo” song so that they can participate in the book reading by singing as the story is read. As the story progresses, have everyone sing the song faster and faster until *Abiyoyo* falls on the ground and disappears!
- Encourage children to chant “Zoop!” every time the father uses his wand to make something disappear. Make sure that children understand what the word “disappear” means. Ask what happens when something disappears. Use bubble solution to demonstrate what it means to make something disappear. Blow bubbles and then clap your hands on one of the bubbles to make it disappear. Blow more bubbles and give the children a chance to make bubbles disappear! Discuss how they would feel if someone made something they were using disappear. What if they were getting ready to sit in a chair and someone made it disappear? How would they feel?
- While reading the story, engage children in conversations about how the characters in the story feel. For example, ask the children why they think the townspeople wanted the boy and his father to leave. How do they think this made the boy and his father feel? Ask children if they would have “ostracized” the man and his son like the townspeople did (make sure children understand what “ostracized” means). Ask children how they think the boy and his father felt when the townspeople wanted them to come back to town after they made *Abiyoyo* disappear.
- Discuss the special talents of the boy (played the ukulele) and his father (magician). Ask children what their special talents are and how they can use their talents to help their friends.
- Once children are familiar with the story, have them act out the story. They can demonstrate the different feelings of the characters, All the children can be involved by being townspeople and singing the *Abiyoyo* song to make *Abiyoyo* dance so fast that he falls down!



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 *Abiyoyo* for several days in a row and use some of the ideas, activities, and teaching opportunities listed below to enhance social and emotional skills.

Disappear

Talk about how the father, the magician, made things disappear. Remind children of how they made the bubbles disappear. Tell the children that they will have the opportunity to make things disappear during center time! If possible, have a local magician come to class and show the children how to make things “disappear!”

Science: Discuss with children how the father made things disappear. He was a magician! Tell the children that they are going to paint and make their paintings disappear! Give each child a small container of water and objects to paint with such as rollers, sponges, and brushes. Have children paint on a chalkboard and then fan the painting with paper until it disappears. Talk about what happened and why the painting disappeared. Children can also take their buckets outside and try painting on the sidewalk and watch their painting disappear. As children paint, discuss how the townspeople felt when the father made things disappear (chairs, glasses of water, etc.). Ask how they feel when they paint a picture and then it disappears?

Music/Movement: Have children experiment with instruments such as a ukulele. Let children take turns playing the instruments like the boy in the story and dancing like Abiyoyo. Experiment with playing music slower and then faster (like the boy in the story) and see how it changes the way the children dance. Remind children how Abiyoyo was so happy when he heard his name in the song. He had never had a song written about him! How do they think Abiyoyo did his happy dance? How do they dance when they are happy? As they sing the song, have them put their hands over their mouths to make the sounds disappear. Play the audiotape/cd of the Abiyoyo song by Pete Seeger. Have the children dance to the music and then stop playing the music (make the music disappear!) without warning the children. Ask the children if they like it better when they can hear the music or when the music disappears.

Make-Believe: Talk about the father in the story. What did he do? How did he use his magic wand? Encourage children to pretend to be magicians. Have fabric available for children to use as capes and construction paper to make magic wands. They can pretend to be the father, the son, and Abiyoyo. They can sing the song faster and faster until Abiyoyo falls down and then they can pretend to make him disappear! Talk to the children about how they think the boy and father felt when they were trying to make Abiyoyo disappear. Were they scared? Were they brave? Talk about how the father and son had to work together (help each other) to make Abiyoyo disappear.