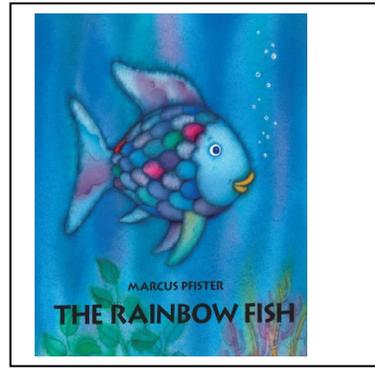


Title: The Rainbow Fish

Author: Marcus Pfister

About: Teaching children how to share

Ages: 2+



The Rainbow Fish is the story of a beautiful, colorful, and shiny fish with metallic scales that lives in the sea. Rainbow Fish loves his scales so much; he does not want to share them when asked by a blue fish. The blue fish is so hurt by Rainbow Fish's refusal to share that he no longer wants to be around him. As the story continues, the other fish also stay away from Rainbow Fish because he does not share with any of them. After a little while, Rainbow Fish realizes he has no one to play with and begins to feel so lonely. He goes to his only remaining friend, the starfish; and asks him for advice. Starfish directs him to a cave where a wise octopus lives so that Rainbow Fish can get the answers he is looking for. When Rainbow Fish arrives at the octopus' cave, he is told to share some of his scales. This was difficult advice for Rainbow Fish, as his scales were his prized possession and sharing them would be very hard. However, Rainbow Fish realized that if he wanted to have friends, he would have to learn how to share.

After leaving the octopus's cave, a blue fish, again asks Rainbow Fish for one of his shiny scales. Even though it is difficult for Rainbow Fish to share, he gives blue fish one of his special scales. Rainbow Fish sees how happy the blue fish is to have one of Rainbows' special scales, and Rainbow becomes very happy as well! Rainbow Fish shares a scale with lots of other fish, creating happiness in both himself and the other fish.

The Rainbow Fish is a lovely, heart-warming story of sharing and the happiness that sharing can bring yourself and others. It also depicts how difficult sharing can be and the impact that sharing can have on friendships. Rainbow Fish, like many young children, has a difficult time sharing. Much like the Rainbow Fish, children will discover that while sharing can be difficult, it creates happiness in those whom they share with and thus in themselves as well.

There are many activities that can accompany this story; however one that I enjoy most (and the children seem to enjoy) is role playing. In the classroom, once the children are familiar with the story, you can have them act it out. The teacher can be the narrator and the children can be prompted to act out their small parts. At the end, the "Rainbow Fish" can distribute scales to all of the other children. Role playing is a wonderful way to make the story come alive and have the children experience the joys and difficulties that come with sharing. Later on in the day when children are struggling with sharing (or sharing successfully) try to remind children about the story of Rainbow Fish.

Reviewer:

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