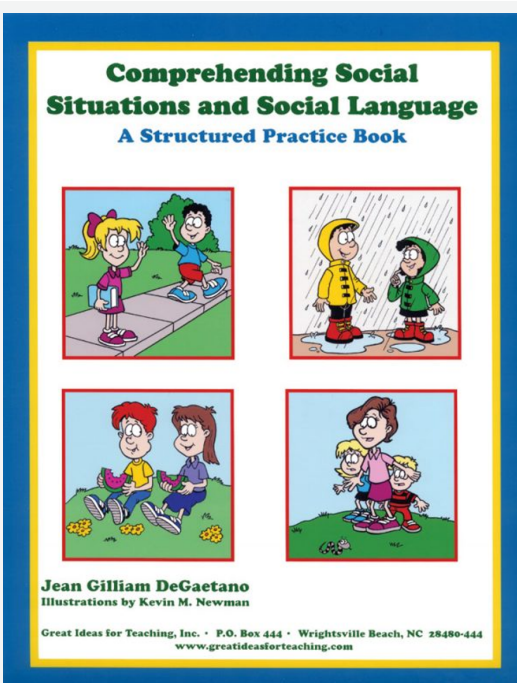




CURRICULUM SPOTLIGHT:

Comprehending Social Situations and Social Language

Overview

This month's highlighted book, *Comprehending Social Situations and Social Language*, introduces a structured curriculum designed to help children strengthen their ability to understand and interpret everyday social situations. Throughout the day, children are expected to gather information from conversations, observations, and their own experiences in order to understand what is happening, why it is happening, and how others may be thinking or responding.

Overview Continued:

However, these skills do not develop naturally for all children. Some children, particularly concrete learners, may focus only on the most obvious details, have difficulty noticing subtle social cues, or struggle to connect spoken information with what they observe. As a result, they may miss important information, misunderstand social situations, or have difficulty understanding the context behind what is happening.

Comprehending Social Situations and Social Language builds these skills through short social stories paired with picture scenes that represent everyday situations. Students listen to the story while observing the accompanying illustration and answer structured questions that guide them in identifying important details, understanding the situation, and explaining their thinking. Each story includes information that is not directly visible in the picture, requiring students to listen carefully and use the full story to understand what is happening rather than relying on the visual alone.

The lessons are presented using simple, structured picture worksheets that provide visual support while encouraging students to notice meaningful details within social situations. The questions are designed to help students look beyond what is immediately obvious, make connections between different sources of information, and develop greater awareness of the clues needed to interpret social situations. Through repeated practice, students strengthen their ability to recognize important details, understand context, and use social language to explain their thoughts and reasoning.

Visual Sample:

Instructors Worksheet: Story Page

Directions: Before beginning, each student should be given the picture page that corresponds to this story page. The story for each picture should be read aloud to the students. One student can answer the question at the end of each story or each student can give an answer.



Andy spilled grape jelly all over his shirt. He said, "I don't think the purple stains will come out of my shirt." His sister Allie picked up a paper towel to wipe it off. What do you think she said to Andy when she started rubbing his shirt?



Ben heard his dog barking and he wondered what was wrong. Ben's dog was barking at its empty water bowl. After Ben poured fresh water into the bowl, what do you think he said to his dog?



Jan stayed up too late the night before watching a movie. She had told her mother she was going to bed early but she did not tell her mother that she was going to watch a movie. The next morning she was too sleepy to get up. Her mother asked her why she was so tired because she thought Jan went to sleep early. What do you think Jan told her mother?



Polly lost the belt to her bathrobe. She couldn't get her robe to stay around her. She found a long ribbon in her closet and tied it around her robe. It worked just great. Her mother saw the robe tied around Polly and asked her, "Polly, where did you find your belt?" What do you think Polly told her mother?

Visual Sample:

Instructors Worksheet: Specific Questions

Purpose: The purpose of these additional questions and activities is to see if the students have combined listening to the story, looking at the picture that shows part of the story, looking for subtle clues in the picture, and answering general-information questions so as to now be able to answer specific questions.

Directions: Before beginning, each student should be given the student picture-page that corresponds to the story and questions for those pictures. The story page and the first page of questions for these pictures should be completed before answering these questions since the answers will be based on the story that was read about each picture. After answering all the specific questions, the students should take turns deciding where they learned the answers to the questions. Was the information in the story or did they see it in the pictures? In some instances, the information might not have been heard or seen but was the opinion of the students, based on what they had learned from both the story and the pictures.



Specific Questions About Story #1:

1. Who spilled jelly on his shirt?
2. What color was the jelly?
3. Who is trying to help him?
4. What did she do and say?

Specific Questions About Story #2:

1. What was Ben's dog doing?
2. Where was the dog standing when it started barking?
3. What do you think the dog was trying to tell Ben?
4. Did Ben understand what his dog wanted? How do you know?

Specific Questions About Story #3:

1. What did Jan do the night before?
2. Did she go to sleep when her mother thought she did? Explain why not.
3. How did she feel this morning?
4. What did her mother ask her?

Specific Questions About Story #4:

1. What did Polly lose?
2. Why could the robe not be worn without the belt?
3. What did she find to use instead of the belt?
4. Was the ribbon just as good as the belt?

Deciding How You Knew the Answers: The students should go over each of the questions on this page again and tell how they knew each answer. Did they hear the information in the story or did they know by looking at the picture? Decide if they needed both the story and the picture in some instances.

Goals to Target Using This Curriculum:

This curriculum targets important skills within both Language/Communication and Social-Emotional development. Students will strengthen their ability to comprehend spoken information, identify meaningful visual details, make connections between different sources of information, and explain their understanding of social situations.

Examples of some goals to target:

- Recall important information from short social stories.
- Identify details within a picture scene.
- Connect auditory and visual information to understand a social situation.
- Answer WH-questions (who, what, where, when, why) related to social situations.
- Explain reasoning by identifying clues from the story and picture.
- Identify cause-and-effect relationships within social situations.
- Infer what happened or why something occurred using contextual clues.

spontight