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TITLE: Rocky Reminders				

Recommended Grade Levels: 1-5

Applicable Character Traits: Forgiveness

Objective:

By the end of the lesson, learners will understand that carrying around feelings of hurt can be a heavy burden. Learning to forgive and to be forgiven is a wise and healthy choice to start to heal and move on.

Time Frame: (Approximately 35 minutes)

Approximately how long the entire lesson should take to complete. It's nice to let the teacher know, so you are both on the same page. Be sure to check with the teacher in advance as to how much time is allotted for the lesson, and keep an eye on the clock.

Materials/ Preparation:

- Print out "Forgiveness Paper Rocks" – 1 rock for each student
- Print out 1 copy of "Rocky Reminders" (attached)
- Forgiveness Character Trait
- A bag of rocks (if available)

Opening Statements: (5 minutes)

- Have the class sit on the floor.
- Greet students and remind them of your name.
- Ask the learners if anyone knows what the character trait is for the month
- Ask the learners - What does it mean to forgive?
- Read the Character Trait Statement
- Explain that today the class will hear a story about a girl who never forgave anyone. After the story, they will have a discussion and receive a 'Forgiveness Rock' to help them when they forgive others and need to be forgiven.

**TITLE: Rocky Reminders****Activity:** (15- 20 minutes)

Read the story, “Rocky Reminders”

If a bag of rocks is available –

Ask the class

- Please take a turn holding the bag of rocks and try to imagine carrying that around all day. Then pass the bag to the next person.

Ask the class about the story they just heard –

- Why did Janie put the rocks in her pocket? (To remember who hurt her and why she was mad)
- What happened to Janie as a result, of carrying around the rocks?(She was angry, she never smiled, her friends didn’t want to play with her)
- What do you think Janie learned by never forgiving?
(Carrying around anger weighed her down. It made her life miserable, she wasn’t happy)
- Why is it important to forgive others?
(People make mistakes. Forgiving starts the process of letting the anger go and feeling better)
- Why is it important to be forgiven? (You may not be able to change the mistake you made, but you can ask for forgiveness and do your best not to hurt them again and begin to move on)

Wrap up and Reflection: (5 -10 minutes)

- Have the students return to their desks.
- Show the students the paper rocks and explain that these Forgiveness Rocks will be a reminder of how important it is to forgive and to be forgiven, as well as a guide to help them find the words when it is time to forgive and be forgiven.
- On one side of the rock you will write –
I AM SORRY FOR_____. PLEASE FORGIVE ME.
- On the other side of the rock you will write –
I FORGIVE YOU. LET’S MOVE ON.
- Pass out a paper rock to each student and have them complete the assignment.

Character Trait Statements**Forgiveness**

At EBS we practice Forgiveness.

We acknowledge our mistakes, apologize, and try to make things right again.

We understand that everyone makes mistakes and we accept the apologies of others.

We do not bring up past mistakes or gossip about what others did wrong.

We move on and are friends again.

**TITLE: Rocky Reminders****Additional activity if time permits (recommended by volunteers who performed lesson with their classes).**

We recommend doing this first thing, as a fun activity. We were very clear about the rules. We explained that there would be no throwing, no running, and fair play.

Items needed:

2 sand/beach buckets (medium size)

1 rock per student (Small to medium in size)

Activity:

It's a friendly relay that has students working as a team.

- Have the class line up in two even lines.
- Space the lines about a 2 feet apart, if you are able.
- Have the students turn and face the other line, so in each line the students are arm to arm not front to back.
- Pour out the rocks on the floor in front of the first person in each line.
- Place the buckets on the floor at the last student in each line.
- One by one, the first student in the line will pick up one rock at a time and hand it to the next person in line. That person will then hand the rock to the next person in line and so on, until the rock is received by the last person in line.
- The last person in line will place it in the bucket, and continue to do so until all of the rocks are in the bucket.
- Once all of the rocks are in the bucket, the bucket will then be handed back up the line (one by one) to reach the first person in line. This way everyone feels the weight of the rocks, which is quite heavy.

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Rocky Reminders

Once upon a time there was a girl named Janie. It was library day, and she was excited to check out the next book in her favorite series, Junie B. Jones. She practically skipped on her way to the library. When it was checkout time, she hopped over to library shelf to select her book. But before she got there, another student in her class pulled the last Junie B. Jones book off of the shelf. Janie couldn't believe it! She wasn't going to get to check out the book she wanted! Janie was furious and wanted to yell. But she knew it was quiet time in the library and she couldn't yell ... so she did the next best thing. She picked up a rock from the library's garden display and put it in her pocket to remind her of how angry she was. Every time she felt that rock in her pocket, she would remember how mad she was that she didn't get her first choice book that morning, and the rock would remind her to stay grumpy all day!

In fact, that one day at the library started a whole new habit for Janie. She decided to keep putting a rock in her pocket every time someone did something to anger her or hurt her. The rock served to remind her of what took place and to make sure she didn't forget to stay angry at the person responsible!

One day, Janie's friend, Joey, accidentally tripped Janie. Joey said he was sorry and asked Janie to forgive him. Janie was mad and embarrassed. She refused to speak to Joey; instead, she picked up a big rock for being tripped and placed it in her pocket. On another day, her mom was late picking her up from school. She grabbed another rock. Later on, her sister ate the last chocolate chip cookie. Yet again, she grabbed a rock and put it in her pocket. And every night, Janie transferred the rocks she had collected to her outfit for the next day.

I bet you can guess what started to happen after awhile. Janie's collection of reminder rocks soon spilled out of her pockets. Her clothes began to look baggy and strange. She had to start wearing a jacket every day to carry more rocks to remind her of how hurt and angry she was. And one day it was really hot and she didn't want to wear her jacket, and that made her even angrier. So she grabbed another rock. Janie became so weighed down with rocks that she started to slump forward and walk slow. The rocks became VERY heavy. Janie became even angrier! When her jacket got full, Janie started putting rocks in her backpack. After a few weeks, she had to switch from a regular backpack to a rolling backpack because her pack was so heavy.

After awhile Janie's friends didn't want to play with her. She never smiled anymore because those rocks were so uncomfortable! The rocks she carried, that reminded her of all of her negative feelings towards others, came to take over her life.

The next morning, Janie and her sister were walking to school. Janie didn't see a crack in the sidewalk. By accident, she tripped and fell – right on top of her old friend Joey! Joey was knocked to the ground because of the weight of all of those rocks! Joey didn't yell or get mad. He laughed! Janie was surprised, but Joey's laugh was so contagious that she started to laugh too. Janie said, "I'm sorry. Will you forgive me? I didn't mean to hurt you. Are you okay? I tripped over that crack in the sidewalk." Joey responded with, "That's okay. I forgive you. I remember that I accidentally tripped you a few weeks back." Janie had been so mad at so many people that she had actually forgotten about that particular incident.

Janie suddenly realized how fun Joey was to play with. She knew she needed to make a change. Right then and there, she took off her jacket that was filled with rocks, and cleaned out every pocket. She cleared out her backpack. Then one by one, she removed each rock from her pants pockets. Janie realized that she needed to forgive all the people that had made her feel angry, sad or hurt. She also

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needed to forgive herself for the things that she did, that hurt others. She started to feel much happier! She wasn't angry anymore. She felt much lighter!

So, Joey, Janie and her sister continued on to school. It had been a long time since Janie felt this happy and proud. She stood up straight! Joey had missed his good friend. He asked if she wanted to play tetherball with him after school. Janie responded with "YES! I would really like that!"

Story idea from 'Pocket Full of Rocks' by Larry A. Hiller, New Era magazine, March 1985, reprinted 1996



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