

Caring Pillar

Native American Value of Wisdom

Annie and the Old One

Subject matter: Reading or life science.

Subject matter objective: Understand some changes involved in the process of aging.

Life skill to be practiced: Managing feelings.

Life skill objective: Dealing with the grieving process.

EXPERIENCE

Introduction

American Indian elders are highly respected and often have a large role in caring for youngsters in their families. They pass on much wisdom and spend a good deal of time with their grandchildren. As with most children, the grandparent/child relationship is very important and strong. Children often have a hard time watching their grandparents grow older and possibly die. In this lesson, the process of aging can be discussed in order to help children understand some of the physical and mental changes their grandparents and other elderly people go through. The importance of caring relationships with elderly people can be stressed, and the concept that caring sometimes means letting go can be explained.

Materials

- The book "Annie and the Old One" by Miska Miles
- Paper for drawing
- Regular or colored pencils

Lesson

Read the book "Annie and the Old One."

Tell children that Annie lives with her mother, father, and grandmother in this story. One day Grandmother tells Annie something that she doesn't want to hear. Annie learns that caring sometimes means letting go.



Share

1. What was it that Annie's grandmother told her that she didn't want to hear? (*That when she finished weaving, it would be her time to die.*)
2. In what ways did Annie show she cared for her grandmother?
3. In what ways did Grandmother show she cared for Annie?

Process

1. How did the grandmother convince Annie to stop undoing her weaving?
2. How did the grandmother know that she was about to die?

Generalize

1. What are some changes that might happen to people's bodies as they grow older?
2. What are some changes that might happen to people's minds as they grow older?

Activity

Have the students think about an elderly person they care about. If this is difficult, they may use another adult or even a pet. Have them draw a picture of that person or pet in the center of the paper, and label it with their name. Then have them draw lines extending out from the drawing of the person and list different ways that they can demonstrate caring for this individual. They can either write or draw how they would show that they care. You may use the attached sheet or have the children draw freehand.

Discuss the drawings and talk about why it is important for the person they drew to have others around that care for him or her.

Apply

1. How does it feel to lose someone close to you?
2. What can you do to make yourself feel better? (*Emphasize that doing things to make yourself feel better demonstrates caring for yourself, which is as important as caring for others.*)

More challenges

1. Make a visit to some elderly people in the community. Have students think about how they might show caring while they visit. After the visit, reflect on how they felt, what they learned, and how they think the elderly person felt about their visit.



Caring for Others

