



Sooper Puppy: Whose Wuzzit?

Theme

Respecting the property of others

Background

Children face the universal problem of wanting things advertised on television. Baxter (alias Sooper Puppy) really wants a popular new toy he saw on TV. It looks like such fun to play with, and all the other dogs in the neighborhood seem to have one. His strong desire for the toy tempts him to take what belongs to someone else. After a series of misadventures and some very scary moments, he learns that it's not a good idea to "borrow" toys from friends without their permission, and that it's never right to steal.

Outcomes

Viewers will

- recognize that they are consumers who are affected by advertising
- learn that it's never right to take something that isn't theirs without getting permission
- explore feelings of jealousy and disappointment
- know why shoplifting is tempting but wrong
- recognize why it's important for friends to trust each other and communicate

Before Viewing

Invite children to discuss their feelings about toys they want that they see advertised and other people have. Use questions such as the following to get started:

1. How do you feel when someone borrows your things without permission? Should they do that? Why or why not?
2. What happens if someone takes something that doesn't belong to them?
3. How do TV ads make you want things?
4. How do you feel when everybody else seems to have a certain new toy? Why can't you have everything you want?
5. What is a bully? How should you treat bullies? Do you think you ever act like a bully? Why do you think bullies act the way they do?

6. It can be tempting to take something you want from a store without paying for it. Why can't you do that? What would happen? What would you be?
7. What would happen if everyone who wanted something in a store just took it?
8. What does it mean to trust someone? How does it feel when you know people trust you? Why?

After Viewing

Encourage discussion of the videotape, perhaps by using questions like these:

1. What television ads do you like? Why?
2. Do you think the things you see advertised on TV are as good as the ads make you think they are? Why do you think as you do?
3. Why did Baxter take Pickles's ball? Was he a thief? Why or why not?
4. Why did Grizzle and Stoops take Pickles's ball? Were they thieves? Why or why not?
5. In the story Grandpaw told, why did the Zorkels think it was all right to steal the Wuzzit?
6. Just about everybody has been tempted to take something from a store. What might happen if they did? Why?
7. How did Baxter feel when he explained and apologized to Pickles? How did Pickles feel?

School Activity

- Let children make a class list of things they see advertised on television that they would like to have. Encourage anyone who has one of the objects to tell how it *is* and *is not* what the ad seems to say about it.

Home Activities

Give each child a copy of Home Activities 19 and 20 to take home. Encourage families to carry out the activities with their children. It is not necessary to have children return the worksheets; they should not feel pressured if their families choose not to participate.

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To the Family from Your Child's Teacher:

We have seen a videotape called "Sooper Puppy: Whose Wuzzit?" It has helped us realize that no matter how we might want to have something, it is never right to steal. When Baxter (also known as Sooper Puppy) really wants a toy he has seen advertised on TV, he is tempted to "borrow" one from a friend without her permission. Grandpaw tells Baxter a story about a make-believe Wuzzit stolen by a Zorkel from another planet. Below is part of the story about Baxter. Read it aloud with your child. Encourage your child to tell you about the videotape. Then go on to the activity on the following page.

Baxter really, really wanted a Sponco ball. He saw it advertised on TV and his friend Pickles had one. He considered taking just one from the huge display he saw in the store. But Grandpaw found him and asked, "Were you by any chance considering merely walking out of here with that ball?"

"Well, yes, sort of," Baxter admitted. "I mean, look how many they've got. I doubt they'd miss it."

"Hm," Grandpaw answered. "And if everybody who wanted a Sponco ball felt that way and came in and took things that didn't belong to them, how many balls do you think there would be on the shelves? And if you took that ball without paying for it, what would you be?"

"Somebody with a Sponco ball," Baxter answered.

"Not exactly," Grandpaw said. "You'd be some thief with a Sponco ball. And that's bound to change the way you feel about yourself and how people feel about you." He told Baxter a story about Zorkels from outer space taking a Wuzzit and finding out it wasn't the right thing to do. Then he said, "If you've made a mistake, you can always tell the truth and apologize. It might not be easy, but if you don't, well, you just might have a bad feeling in your tummy for a long time."

Baxter knew Grandpaw was right. "At least that's one mistake I won't make again," he said.

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Home Activity

20

Discuss the story with your child. You may find this is a good opportunity to talk about TV commercials and how difficult it can be to resist them. Discuss also the main point of the story, which is taking something that does not belong to you. Then help your child make up a story. Follow the directions and questions on this page.

Make up your own story about a character who wants a toy that is advertised on TV.

Who is the main character in your story?

Where does your story take place?

Describe the toy that your character wants that is advertised on TV.

What does your character do about it?

What other characters are in your story? What do they do?

What happens?

What happens next?

How does your story end?

Now tell your story out loud.