Life Isn't Always Fair!

INCLUDES THE ILLUSTRATED STORY:

Fair Is Where Grandma
Took Her Pickles In The Fall

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LIFE ISN'T ALWAYS FAIR

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INTRODUCTION

Every adult has heard children whine, *"That's Not Fair!"*

This program includes an original story and a series of lessons and supplementary activities that teach and reinforce the concept of *fairness*. The story is about a little girl and her sisters, who have different talents and opportunities to do things. When the girl realizes that her sisters feel it is unfair that she can do some things better than they can, she learns an important lifeskill lesson: Life isn't always fair.

A lesson is provided for use when presenting the story (pages 9-40). The follow-up lessons include:

- **Stand Up, Sit Down:** This lesson teaches children that we each have different strengths. No one is good at everything, but we all are good at something.

- **Make A Fair Book For The Book Fair:** This clever lesson utilizes homographs to teach children about discovering hidden talents. Each student creates a book using homographs and hides his/her special talent in one of its pages. When the class holds a book fair, every student has a chance to read every book and discover his/her classmates' hidden talents.

- **You Win Some, You Lose Some Wrestlers:** This lesson utilizes math probability to teach children that no one wins every time at everything. Children love this motivational lesson because they each make toy wrestlers.

- **Pretzel Nugget Division:** This lesson uses pretzel nuggets as manipulatives and helps children understand the difference between the concepts of *fair* and *equal*.

- **In The Group, Out Of The Group:** In this lesson, the leader assigns the children to groups, then asks the class to tell why they are grouped that way. This is a great way to involve every child in the class and shows how someone who doesn't understand the groups' criteria might feel "That's not fair!"

- **Everyone Is Sometimes Fair-Haired At School:** This lesson uses the format found in the story *Fair Is Where Grandma Took Her Pickles In The Fall* and applies it to the children's school lives by having them use their own talents and show how others might feel it is unfair that they do not have the same abilities/talents.

Also included is a *Pre/Post Test* for those wishing to evaluate the effectiveness of their lessons. The test is on page 7. The answers are: 1. False; 2. False; 3. True; 4. True; 5. a, b, c, d; 6. c; 7. a, b, c, d; 8. b; 9. b, c; 10. b, c.

This series of lessons is a wonderful antidote to the expression, "That's Not Fair!" and a fun way to teach a concept we all learn sooner or later: Life isn't always fair.

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I didn't think it was fair when my other sister, Wendy, got a brand-new red dress with gold threads in it for her birthday.

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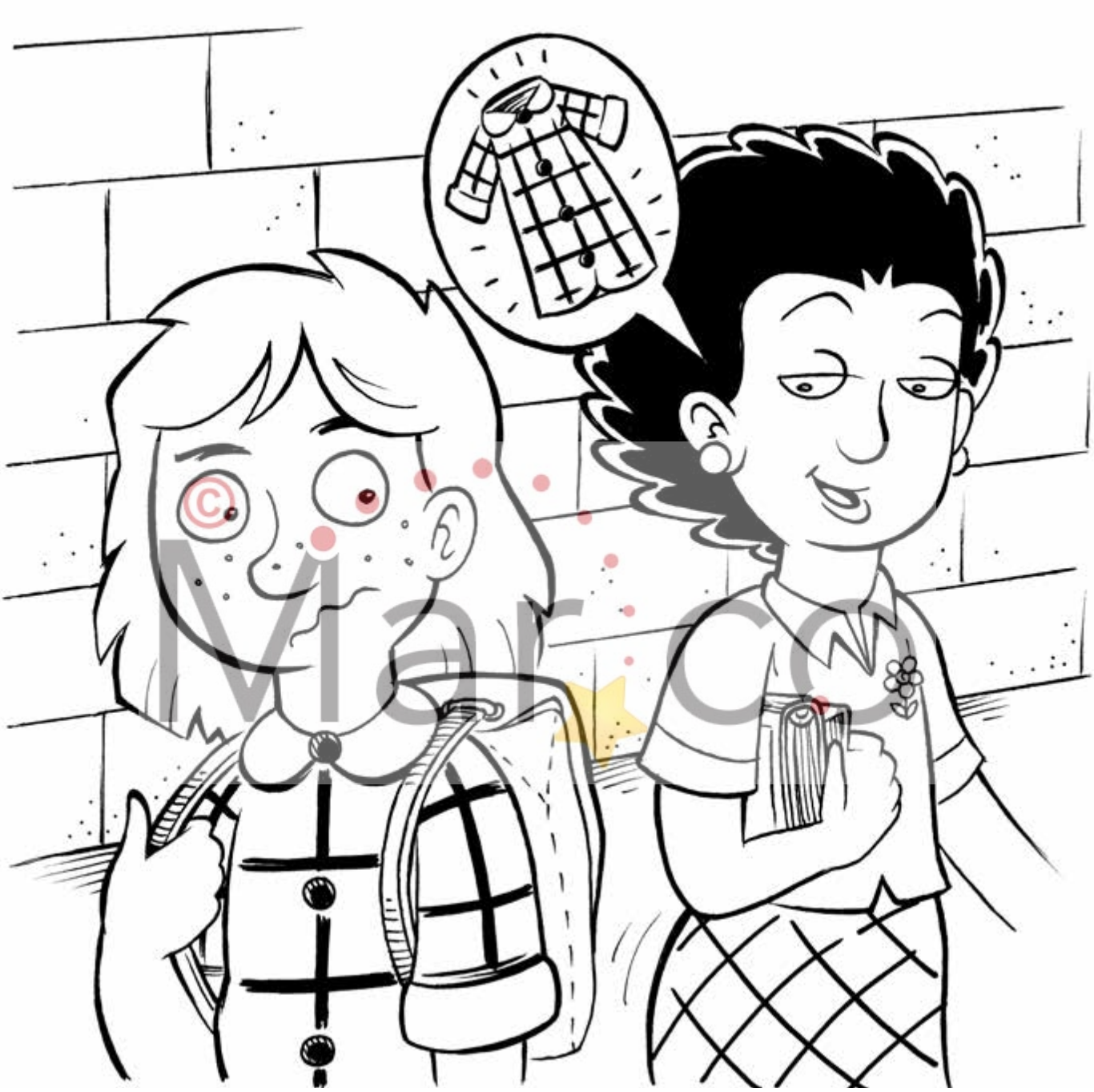
Wendy got a new red dress. I have to wear hand-me-down dresses from my mom's friend's daughter (who always mentions it when I wear one to school).



But...one thing she doesn't get to do, no matter how many times she asks, is stay up as late as I do.

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And when my dad took me, and no one else, to a ball game. I got the team's baseball cap, a star player's pin, a hot dog, and a candy bar.

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Even if it seems unfair that some things come more easily to some people, it doesn't mean you should not keep trying. You don't have to be the best at something to have fun and enjoy doing it.

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If you give up and don't do something because others do it better, you'll never know what you COULD have done.

LESSONS

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STAND UP, SIT DOWN: THAT'S NOT FAIR!

Goal:

- To help students discover that they are good at some things and should not feel slighted when they think things are unfair
- To help students develop a sense of others' talents and show respect for others who excel at things
- To help students realize that there are more things to be good at than school subjects and to realize that even their teacher (counselor) is not good at everything

Materials Needed:

For the leader:
- ☐ Chair

For each student:
- None

Lesson Preparation:

Place a chair at the front of the room.

Lesson:

Introduce the lesson by saying:

> *The first thing you need to do is pull your chairs away from your desks so you can stand up and sit down quickly.* (Pause for the students to follow the direction.) *Now let's practice standing and sitting.*
>
> *The hardest part of this game is to not say a word. You will use only your bodies to stand up and sit down. We may play the game as long as everyone follows that rule. Let's try it.*
>
> *Stand up if you have a sister.* (Wait for those students with sisters to stand.) *Now some of you will want to say you have two sisters or want to tell us your sisters' names. May you do that?* (No.) *The rule is that we may not use our voices, only our bodies to stand up and sit down. May you yell over to someone, "Hey you don't have a sister!"?* (No.) *Remember: We may play the game as long as we follow the rules.*

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YOU WIN SOME, YOU LOSE SOME WRESTLERS

Goal:

- To help students learn about probability, the importance of tempering feelings of disappointment when they lose, and the excitement of winning
- To allow students to experience sportsmanship
- To give upper-grade students an opportunity to use graphing skills

Materials Needed:

For the leader:

- ☐ 2 wooden clothespins (not spring type)
- ☐ Package of rubber bands
- ☐ 1 red and 1 blue marker
- ☐ Timer
- ☐ Chalkboard and chalk

For each student:

- ☐ 2 clothespins
- ☐ 1 red and 1 blue marker

For each student group:

- ☐ Paper
- ☐ Pencil

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Lesson Preparation:

Make two sample clothespin wrestlers according to the directions found in the lesson.

Lesson:

Introduce the lesson by saying:

> *Today, we are going to make little wrestlers. I will hand each of you two clothespins, a blue and red marker, and a rubber band. Use your markers to decorate their faces. Please use a different color for each little wrestler. For example, one may have blue eyes and the other may have red eyes. Do not use a marker to color below the wrestlers' necks.*

IN THE GROUP, OUT OF THE GROUP

Goal:

- To help students understand the feeling of being left out of a group
- To help students realize sometimes friends unintentionally leave someone out and sometimes it is deliberate

Materials Needed:

None

Lesson Preparation:

None

Lesson:

Note: For this game to be most effective, you need an entire class of students. It is not a game that works well in a small-group setting.

Introduce the lesson by asking:

> *Do you remember when we read* Fair Is Where Grandma Took Her Pickles In The Fall? *The sisters in the story were all different. They had different talents, were different sizes, and had different chances to do things.*
>
> *Today, we are going to play a game. We could not play this game if we were all exactly alike. It wouldn't work, and it wouldn't be any fun. When you say, "That's not fair," you are saying that you want everything to be exactly the same, and that is just not the way it is. We are all different, and that is great.*

Explain the game by saying:

> *I will point to certain students and tell them they are in the group. Those students should then come to the front of the room. As I do this, ask yourself:*
>
> > *What does it take to be in the group?*
> >
> > *What do the people in the group have that the people outside the group don't have?*
>
> *If you come up with an answer, raise your hand and wait for me to call on you.*

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WHO'S THE FAIREST OF THEM ALL?

Directions: Sometimes we compare ourselves to others and come up short. Life is not always fair. We are good at some things and better at others. Sometimes we see other people at their best and judge ourselves at our worst. Below are pictures of items from a fair. Draw a line from the correct adjective to each picture. Remember: It is OK to judge pickles, but very unfair to judge people.

Crisp

Crisper

Crispest

Large

Larger

Largest

Fancy

Fancier

Fanciest

Fast

Faster

Fastest

Soft

Softer

Softest

Heavy

Heavier

Heaviest

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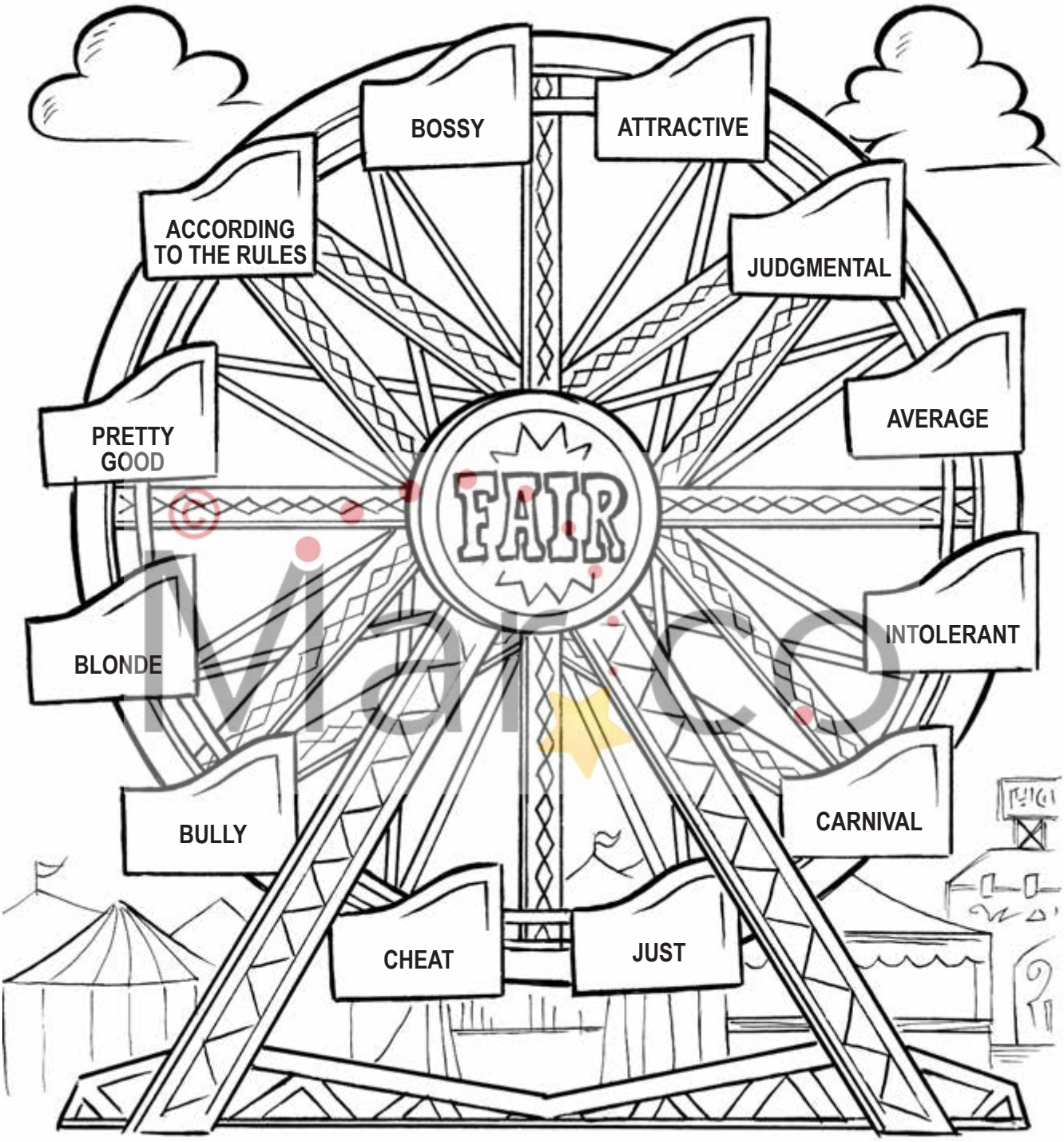
BEAUTIFUL "FAIR'ES" WHEEL

Directions: Draw a line from the word *Fair* in the center of the Ferris wheel to each of the seats whose word or words means the same as the word *fair*.