



USING TOMMY TURTLE



Tommy is a wonderful turtle puppet for exploring emotions and for promoting slow, clear speech.

Emotions: We know that when children can label emotions, they become more aware of their own feelings and can develop in self-control.

Before using Tommy, practise the following emotions in a mirror:

Happy: Simply open his mouth and he looks like he is smiling.

Sad: Withdraw his head into his turtle-neck so that his mouth is slightly covered. Have him look down slightly. His glassy eyes will look full of tears. Keep movements slow.

Shy: Withdraw him right into his shell and have him come little by little and then retreat again. Repeat then have him come out and look side to side slowly.

Angry: Firmly close mouth. Using your thumb in the “jaw”, jut your thumb knuckle out.

Anxious: Have him retreat only a little back into his shell. Make him “gulp”.

Scared: Keep his mouth close and have him shake. Withdraw his head back into his turtle-neck.

Tired: Move Tommy slowly. Make him yawn.

1. Before bringing your Tommy puppet out, explain to a group of children that if they are too noisy or not taking turns in talking, Tommy gets very shy and might go away back into his shell. If this does happen, wait until children are quiet again to bring him out from his shell.
2. When exploring anger, Tommy might like to explain that when he gets very angry he sometimes needs to go into his shell to calm down for a while. He calms down by breathing slowly and counting to 10. Sometimes he thinks about something nice like swimming in the calm ocean. When he is calm, he comes out again. You can use Tommy to show children how to practise big calm breaths by opening and shutting his mouth.
3. Only explore one main emotion per session. Use Tommy to talk about how he feels, why he feels as he does and what he does to cope with this feeling. Remember to include discussion about his body feelings (for example, when I am angry, I feel my heart beating fast etc...). After lots of discussion with Tommy, you can link the discussion to the children involved in the session and their experiences.

Speech and Language: Turtles are slow creatures. A slowed speech model is perfect for promoting speech development and also understanding of language.

1. When using Tommy, make him speak slowly and clearly (although not too slowly). Speak each phrase, pause and continue. Many young children will benefit from this slowed model of speech.
2. Comment to children about how lovely and clear you think Tommy is when he speaks slowly. If children are speaking too fast, remind them to use Tommy Talking! Slowing down can help immensely when a child speaks.
3. Tommy can be used to discuss the ocean and what it is like under the sea.

***Tommy's shell is surface-washable. Just wipe him down if needed!**

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