



PRINTABLE LESSON

The Show-Off Pufferfish

A lesson in what puffing up makes you too big to see



One complete lesson from The Sing Me a Fable Lesson Book

Ages 4 to 8 . Printable . 26 lessons in the full book

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The Show-Off Pufferfish

Fable H from Sing Me a Fable — a lesson in what puffing up makes you too big to see

AGE	LENGTH	SUBJECT	GROUP
4–7 (Pre-K to Year 2)	30–40 minutes	PSHE · SEL · Speaking	Whole class, then pairs

Learning objective

Children understand that making yourself bigger than everyone else does not make you safer or better, and that the bigger you get the less you can see, until the thing that matters is the thing you miss.

You will need

The fable, read aloud One balloon Six small paper fish Poster H to colour The song (optional)

The paper fish are the little fish of the reef, a name on each. Do not inflate the balloon before the lesson.

Before the story

4 minutes

Hold the empty balloon up, and lay the six paper fish on the floor behind it where the class can see them.

Ask: “If you could look bigger than everybody in this room, would you want to?”

Then: “Keep your answer. We will come back to it when the balloon is full.”

Read the fable

5 minutes

Read fable H aloud. Puff one breath into the balloon every time Perry swells, boasts or looks down on somebody. Say nothing about it while you read.

By the last verse the balloon hides the paper fish. Somebody will say so, which is better than you pointing it out.

Talk about it

10 minutes

1. Perry got bigger every time. So why did the net catch him and not the little fish?
2. Nobody in the reef told Perry to stop. Why do you think they did not?
3. Can a pufferfish let the air out? What would Perry have to do, and who would have to see him do it?

Question 2 is the one to stay with. Nobody in this fable punishes Perry, and nobody corrects him. He is simply left alone at his own size, which is not the same as being told off and is much harder to argue with.

Main activity: The balloon in the doorway

12 minutes

1. Let the balloon down, flat, and lay the six paper fish out again where everyone can see them.
2. Read a situation from the teacher's sheet. Each one has a puffed-up answer and a plain one.
3. The class votes, hands up, puff or plain. The class decides, not you.
4. Plain: nothing happens to the balloon and every fish stays visible. Puff: one breath in, and one paper fish goes behind the balloon and stays there.
5. After the third situation, stop and ask what they can still see, and what they cannot.
6. At the end, hold the full balloon up beside the hidden fish. Ask who would swap it back.

Do not steer the vote. And if somebody asks to let the air out at the end, let them. That is the repair, and it should be their idea.

Plenary

4 minutes

“Nobody told Perry off. So why was he the one who did not see the net?”



Play it together

Put the game on the board. At every choice, stop, let the class vote, then press the card they chose.



Scan to play

OPEN IT

singmeafable.com/arcade/perry-the-show-off-pufferfish

UNLOCK WORDS

WAITING FOR

CHOICES

6, about 2 minutes of play

Level 1 · The Grand Reef Strut

**Swelling Beyond Compare**

- A Inflate even bigger and glare with scorn.
- B Let your air out with a whoosh and smile. ✓

**The Coral Archway**

- A Deflate completely and let the small fish pass. ✓
- B Wiggle angrily and refuse to shrink down.

Level 2 · The Approaching Net

**Blinded by Pride**

- A Laugh and pose in front of the net.
- B Gasp in alarm and deflate quickly. ✓

**Caught in the Mesh**

- A Sigh, release all your air, and slip through. ✓
- B Thrash around and refuse to admit fault.



The last level, and what to ask

The tick marks the choice that earns the stars. Keep this page to yourself while the class votes.

Level 3 · The Humbled Blue



Back to the Reef

- A Boast and make excuses for getting caught.
- B Bow your head and apologize for being arrogant. ✓



The Celebration Branch

- A Stay small, smile, and twirl together with everyone. ✓
- B Inhale deeply and puff up again to loom over them.

Ask at every choice

Before pressing: “Which card would you press, and why?”

After it plays out: “What changed because of that choice? What would the other card have done?”

How it joins the lesson

The main activity, **The balloon in the doorway**, takes the same lesson off the screen and into the room. Play the game first, so the class has already watched both kinds of choice play out before they make one themselves.

Every choice plays out and nothing is timed, so a wrong vote is something to talk about, not a failure. Stars at the end of each level show how many right choices the class made.



Six situations to vote on

Read the left column aloud only. The right column is what plain sounds like.

THE SITUATION, AS THE CLASS HEARS IT	WHAT PLAIN SOUNDS LIKE
You finished the puzzle first. You could tell everyone how fast you were.	"I finished. Do you want a hand with yours?"
Somebody is new and does not know the game yet.	"Come on, I will show you. I got it wrong at first too."
You got the top score. Your friend got the lowest.	"I did well today. You were quicker than me last time."
You know the answer and somebody else is still thinking.	"I will wait. You nearly have it."
Your drawing is the best on the table and you know it.	"I like how you did the sky. Look at mine."
You can already read the word and the others cannot.	"I can read that one. Shall we do it together?"

Every plain answer on the right still lets the child keep what they did well. That is deliberate. Being modest is not the option where you give up being good at something.

The line, in one sentence

Puffing up makes you bigger. It does not make you stronger, and it puts something in front of your own eyes.

Give the class that sentence at the end, never at the beginning.

Adapting for your class

Age 4 · Pre-K. Three situations, not six, and use a real object instead of the fish: a toy that goes behind the balloon and cannot be seen.

Ages 5-7 · K to Year 2. Run it as written.

Ages 7-8 · Year 3. Add the hard case: is it ever right to say you are good at something? It is, and they will need to work out what makes the difference. The answer is usually who it is for.

Mixed ages: pair an older child with a younger one and give the older one the job of asking, not answering.

What children take away

- **Puffing up works, for a moment.** That is why people do it, and pretending otherwise to a child does not survive the playground.
- **The bigger you make yourself, the less you can see.** Perry misses the net because he is in front of it.
- **Nobody tells a show-off to stop.** They just stop coming near, and that is much harder to notice than being told off.
- **Letting the air out is your own job.** Nobody can do it for you, and somebody has to see you do it.

If you have more time

- **Colour the poster.** While they work, ask what the smallest fish on the reef would say to Perry now.
- **Sing it.** The fable's song with on-screen words runs about 90 seconds.
- **Play it.** The browser game lets the child choose, twice a level, whether the pufferfish shows off or makes room for the little fish, and each choice plays out.

Where this fits

One of twenty-six lessons, one for each letter and one character trait each. A week at a time, the set covers a school year. All twenty-six songs and the printable posters are free at singmeafable.com.

Curriculum links. PSHE and SEL: humility, pride, noticing others, repairing a friendship. Speaking and listening: justifying a choice, predicting an outcome. Literacy: letter recognition, traditional tales, cause and effect.