

Lesson Plans To Use With *Cassie, Who Is Sometimes Sassy*

By Brenda Ellis

Please choose which activities would work best for the age of your students. Lessons are intended for Pre-K - 2nd-grade level.



Starting the school year with lessons on friendship, manners, conflict resolution, and kindness can make the school year a more positive experience for all students. The years I started with these type of lessons, compared to the years that I did not, proved to me the benefit of spending a little time teaching these topics at the start of the year. Reading *Cassie, Who Is Sometimes Sassy* and similar books to your class can help set up an expectation of friendship, kindness, and good manners in your classroom.

Sing: Teach the ASL signs for “please” and “thank you”. Here is a video to help. You may use this video with your students OR...



...you can sing “Please and Thank You” to the tune of “Frere Jacques” Here is that song in case you need help remembering the tune.



Please and Thank You (Tune: Frere Jacques)

Please and thank you (make ASL signs)
Please and thank you
Sounds so nice (cup hand around ear)
Sounds so nice
Manners are important (shake index finger)
Manners are important
Be polite (nod head)
Be polite

Let's Talk About the Word "Sassy"

Vocabulary: sassy

Merriam-Webster dictionary defines sassy as:

1. impudent (marked by contemptuous or cocky boldness or disregard for others)
2. vigorous or lively
3. distinctively smart or stylish

Say: **There are different meanings of the word sassy. Sometimes we can FEEL sassy, and that's OK. Feeling sassy is when you have your favorite outfit on, your hair looks good, and you wake up feeling spunky!** (Put sunglasses on, look in a mirror, and say, "Oh yeah. I look GOOD today!")

Say: **But sassy can also mean acting too bold and not thinking about others. Have you ever heard "too big for your britches"? Sometimes the words that come out of our mouths can sound a bit too sassy, and it makes people unhappy.**

Let's read a book about a little girl named Cassie, who sometimes feels sassy, but...oops...sometimes her words are sassy, too.

Read the book. At the beginning, after Cassie demands a snack from her mom, ask the students to show you the face their mother would make if they spoke that way to her.

After the book:

Say: **Cassie had to remember to use polite words when she needed something. There are other times we need to use our polite words.**

Let's pretend that I invited you to my house to eat, and I have some very yummy food and some food that doesn't look very yummy at all. (Discuss and demonstrate what NOT to do when you are served something gross.)

Say: **I'm going to show you a plate of food, and you say either, "Yes, please" or "No, thank you."**

Show paper plates with pictures of different foods glued on or a slideshow of food pictures. Let everyone practice. Discuss the fact that even though they may not always want to try a food, their parents may not always give them a choice.

Then show each child a picture of food and let them choose "yes, please" or "no, thank you" until everyone has had a turn. You can also play a version of "This or That." Show a picture of food, then instruct the children who would like to say "yes, please" to that food to stand on one side of the room, while the children who would like to say "no, thank you" to stand on the other side of the room. Continue as interest holds.

Say: **Great! Those are very nice words to use at a meal. We can always find a nice way to say what we need to.**

There are also good manners we can use without our mouths at all! Things like picking up your area and leaving it clean, holding the door open for someone, or putting your phone or tablet down when someone is speaking to you. There are SO many ways to be polite! And if you forget, you can try again like Cassie.

Lesson Extension

After learning about trying again with our polite words, you can tailor your lesson to behaviors that you do/do not want to see in the classroom. Use Cassie as a reminder to "try again" if you hear inappropriate words. This part of the lesson could be done the next day.

Re-read *Cassie, Who Is Sometimes Sassy* to your students.

Now, go around your classroom modeling potential behaviors and then "trying again" with Cassie's polite words. For example, go to the pencil sharpener. Have a child pretend to sharpen their pencil. Then, use your "sassy words" to tell them, **"HURRY UP! YOU'RE TAKING ALL DAY!"** Have the class vote with thumbs up/thumbs down if that was the polite way to speak. Then, remind them that when they forget, they can try again like Cassie. Say, **"Can you please hurry so I can sharpen my pencil? Thank you!"**

Continue around the classroom (you know which areas need this lesson!) and either model the sassy/polite behavior, or have children take turns being "Sassy Cassie" and then "Polite Cassie". Have children complete the coloring sheet of Cassie or one of the simple worksheets that can be displayed in the classroom to remind children during the first few weeks of school about not using sassy words but polite ones.

Here are some other books about manners and polite words you can read as a follow-up. (I have not read all of these. Please pre-read before sharing with your students to be sure the book meets your needs and is age-appropriate.)

Taste Your Words by Bonnie Clark

Table Talk: A Book About Table Manners by Julia Cook

How Do Dinosaurs Show Good Manners? by Jane Yolen

Margaret Wise Brown's Manners

12 Books to Teach Your Child Good Manners

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