



Issue 41

SpongeBob SquarePants and Sheriff Woody Help Teens Teach Fourth Graders the 10 Wise Ways

BrainWise high school mentors, excited to teach a BrainWise lesson they prepared at a nearby elementary school, used two well-known cartoon characters. The successful activity was rewarding for the teen mentors and children and presents an instructional model that can be easily replicated.

Reinforcement is critical to retain and internalize BrainWise concepts; popular programs and movies provide situations that offer endless "teachable moments." Teachers, parents, and mentors can create lessons using familiar animated or human characters in problem situations. Instructors may create their own stories or use vignettes from an array of episodes and cast the well-known characters in problem situations. Students help resolve the problems using the 10 Wise Ways.



SpongeBob SquarePants

The following examples show this process and the how students used animated characters to teach fourth graders how to apply the Constellation of Support.



Students Discuss

One of our BrainWise mentors, a high school senior named Blake, created a story about bullying and demonstrated the various roles Patrick, Mr. Crab, Squidward, Sandy, and Gary could play in assisting SpongeBob SquarePants get help from his Constellation of Support. The students eagerly engaged in the activity and worked in teams as they processed the questions Blake asked.

Blake set on the floor with the children and handed them different colored cards containing the name of one of the

SpongeBob's Problem and Who is in his Constellation of Support

characters. He used green string to represent a very supportive person, yellow string to represent a supportive person, pink string to represent a somewhat supportive person, and red string to represent someone who was most likely to be no support at all.

Blake created a story about how SpongeBob witnessed a fellow student being bullied and tried to intervene. The bully threatened SpongeBob that he would get him, too, and warned him not to snitch. As each team of students talked about what level of support they gave their character, they put the card with the character's name on the floor near SpongeBob's card and attached a string to represent the individual's degree of support.

Next, Blake added more information to the story. He said that Patrick, one of SpongeBob's friends, was also friends with the bully. He gave more information about the other characters and the students discussed what changes, if any, they would make to show the degree of help each friend would give SpongeBob. Blake also introduced a teacher as another character and resource.



Blake and Students Build SpongeBob's Constellation of Support



This new information changed the scenario again, and the children discussed the nuances of getting help, the roles the different friends played, and issues of snitching. They identified how the friends could contact the teacher as the person to help SpongeBob. They also talked about the consequences now and later of various solutions and reasoned that the teacher could discuss bullying with the class, work with the bully, and help the bully not only be Patrick's friend, but friends with all of the students.

The use of familiar characters to demonstrate the complexities of real-life problems removes personal drama because participants learn to assess behaviors from the lens of an observer. Instructors can create their own lessons like Blake, or they can pick vignettes from any number of animations or films to discuss applying the 10 Wise Ways to critical issues that include emotions, family issues, fake news, trust, snitching, bullying, planning, and choices. Learning how to apply the wise ways repeatedly and instinctively to problem situations provides the depth of practice needed to build brain connections so they will automatically apply the decision-making BrainWise skills that help them prevent and

Toy Story and BrainWise Poster Presentation

Teen BrainWise mentors Anahi and Montzerrath - both sophomores - used the characters from Toy Story and led students through a lesson on building a Constellation of Support that familiar character Sheriff Woody could use to solve a problem.



Anahi Adds More Information to Sheriff Woody's Story

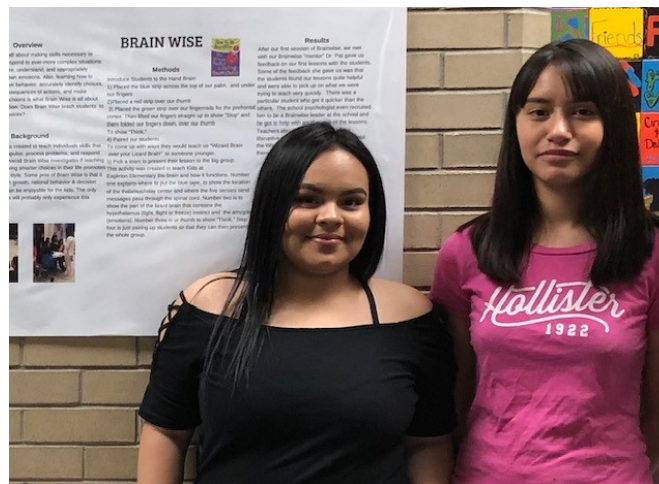
They handed cards to students containing double lines, single lines, and broken lines. Students put the appropriate card on Sheriff Woody's poster showing his Constellation of Support. Again, the degree of support Sheriff Woody receives changes as students received more information about the characters and incident.



Anahi and Montze Ask Students "Who gets a double line and Why"

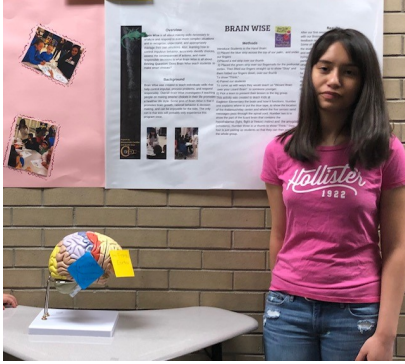
At the end of the story, the teens led the students in a discussion summarizing the process.

BrainWise Mentors Educate Teen Peers



Anahi and Montze Show their BrainWise Poster

Anahi and Montze later presented BrainWise at a Project Forum held at their high school. They told their peers about their experiences as BrainWise mentors with elementary school students and explained the importance of using



Montze With Teaching Aids

Wizard Brain Thinking over Lizard Brain reacting.

The powerful impact teen educators have on students (see the [cascade](#) and [hand brain](#) newsletters) cannot be emphasized enough. Younger children treat them like rock stars, and the teens enjoy the rewards of teaching children new skills. BrainWise instructors of every age have access to the rich trove of stories and characters on television, movies, YouTube, and elsewhere they can use to demonstrate real-life problems and create opportunities for students to practice applying the 10 Wise Ways to problems students face at home and school - minus the personal involvement.

Instructors also make games out of viewing an animation or film by awarding points for the student or team of students who identify where behaviors need wise ways or behaviors where wise ways are used. Some parents and instructors create similar games using the 10 Wise Ways card set.

Even better is knowing the probability that students learning the 10 Wise Ways will pass them on to others, including their future children.

Take care,



Dr. Pat

On a lighter note . . .

In this short video Spongebob seeks help from his Constellation of Support.



Spongebob Squarepants -
Spongebob Gets His Splinter Pulled
Out



The BrainWise Program

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