

Habit Help

Habit 7: Sharpen the Saw

Understanding the Habit

In a nutshell this habit means:

- Sharpen the Saw means to have balance in your life.

The story is that a man was sawing down a tree and not making much progress. When asked why he didn't stop to sharpen his saw, he answered that he was too busy.

Habit 7 reminds us that we are more productive when we are in balance: body, brain, heart, and soul. If one area is being ignored or overused, the rest will feel the results.

A good analogy is a car needing all four tires; as leaders of themselves, they need to take care of all four parts of themselves.

Habit 7 will teach students to:

1. Demonstrate healthy ways to express needs, wants, and feelings.
2. Develop strong intrapersonal skills, self-reliance, self-confidence, and self-discipline.
3. Demonstrate characteristics of a responsible friend and family member.
4. Recognize the relationship between personal behavior and individual well-being.
5. Strive to be healthy for life.

Q: Which hand is better to write with?

A: Neither, it's best to write with a pen!

Putting the Habit into Practice

Getting started

- Read the Habit 7 story from 7 Habits of Happy kids with your class. Have a discussion about how Sophie was able to have balance in her day.
- **Introduce the habit with an object: a sports ball**
*sharpen your soul, body, mind and heart- balance in all things!
- Read other books from the school library that go along with this habit, or a few of these books:

Don't Let the Pigeon Stay Up Late! By Mo Willems
The Snowy Day by Ezra Jack Keats

- **Apple Slice Activity**

Materials:

An apple

Instructions :

At the beginning of the day show the students your apple and cut it in half. Place it aside for the rest of the day. Once you see the inside has turned brown pick it up and show the students. Explain how the apple is similar to us in the sense that if sit around and do not take care of yourself that you won't be good and fresh. Then slide off the good and fresh.

Lesson: If you don't take time to take care of yourself you will not be the best that you can.

Q: Why are cats good at video games?

A: Because they have nine lives!

Baby Steps:

1. For two nights in a row, go to bed early and see how great you feel when you wake up!
2. For one whole week, read for twenty minutes every day.
3. Today go play with someone who you haven't played with for a long time.
4. Go to one of your favorite spots in nature, like a mountain, a park, or a stream. When you get there, think about all the things in your life that make you happy, like your grandma, your dog, a fun toy, or playing with your friends.

Q: What has a mouth but doesn't

eat; a bank but no money;

a bed but doesn't sleep; and

waves but has no hands?

A: A river

Riddle: I pass before the sun, yet make no shadow. What am I? *The wind.*

A saw works better when it is sharp.

A pencil works better when it is sharp.

You work better when you're sharp.

What do you do to keep yourself sharp?

There are lots of ways.

BODY: Sleep, exercise, and eat healthy foods.	BRAIN: Learn new things, read, write
Heart: Laugh, spend time with family and friends, be helpful to others	SOUL: Enjoy nature, listen to music, draw a picture

Habit 7 Update:

Putting the Habit into practice

Getting Started:

- **Introduce the habit with an object:**
Stimulate your brain and exercise at the same time by grabbing some friends and Jump roping, playing Cat's Cradle, learning some killer yo-yo tricks, or playing with a Chinese jumprope.
- Read books from the school library that go along with the habit, or a few of these books:
Wind in the Long Grass: a collection of Haiku edited by William Higginson
Owl Moon by: Jane Yolen
Henry Hikes to Fitchburg by: D.B. Johnson
Me I am! by Jack Prelutsky
The Mysteries of Harris Burdick by: Chris Van
Uncle Willie and the Soup Kitchen by: DyAnne Di Salvo Ryan
The New Kid on the Block by: Jack Prelutsky
A Light in the Attic by Shel Silverstein

Here are some activities to try at home with younger and older children

- Develop a Sharpen the Saw activity center in your home. It could include: art and craft supplies, learning games, puzzles, music, books, the possibilities are endless.
- As a family talk about how you could Sharpen the Saw in all areas. For ex. Body (playing outside, riding your bike), Brain (balancing reading with TV time, or making smarter choices with what you watch), Heart (making a list of what makes you happy and doing something on the list every day, spending time with good friends and family), and soul (attending religious services, or starting a journal).
- Read inspiring books
- For older children, encourage them to write in a journal every day, or to start a blog.
- Subscribe to magazines that have an education value, or to read good books.
- Maybe encourage them to read the newspaper everyday to stay informed. Online works too!
- And parents make sure you are modeling these same behaviors. Because when your kids see you doing it, they will join in too!
- Join a gym or start a regular exercise program.
- Pick an organization to volunteer with for you and your child.
- Visit a museum or try a new type of food- expand your horizons and try new things.

Gregory the Terrible Eater by Mitchell Sharmat