

# Turtle Technique Unit

An outline for teaching the Turtle Technique in a large group, Circle Time activity. You will need the following materials:

- turtle puppet (preferably one that already belongs to the class)
- Turtle Technique Book
- four Turtle Steps on a laminated strip (images about 6"x6")
- four Turtle Steps, laminated as cards, on a ring



## Introduction

Introduce your helper or friend, presenting the turtle puppet and asking, "Does anyone know my friend?" or "Does anyone know my friend's name?" Inevitably at least one child will say "Tiny Tim."

## Song

Lead the children in singing the Tiny Tim song. Begin by showing them how they can make their own turtles by placing palm of one hand on back of other hand, fingers intertwined, with thumbs out as flippers. Use other hand gestures throughout song. Praise the group for their participation, giving special emphasis to targeted child(ren).

## Book

Read the Turtle Technique Book to the group as you would a typical book or story at circle time. Special considerations:

- Use the hand sign for "Stop" (edge of right hand across palm of left hand) when introducing Step 2, encouraging children to practice it with you.
- Encourage children to practice counting to three and taking three deep breaths during Step 3.
- Have children practice "going into your shell" by hunching over with their hands over their heads.
- Describe THINK-THINK-THINK as being like Winnie the Pooh, who says that as he pokes his temple with his index finger.

Praise the group for listening and participation, giving special emphasis to targeted child(ren).

## Visuals

Show the laminated strip of the four steps, describing that this will be on the wall in the classroom (i.e., in the "calm-down area") to help them when they need a reminder of what to do. Lead the group through the four steps, including

1. "Show me how your face looks when you're upset."
2. Hand sign for "STOP"
3. Practice going into your shell and deep breaths
4. Generate or provide examples of safe choices

Show the laminated cards on a ring, describing how "a teacher may bring it to you if you look upset or you may need help making safe choices. Praise the group for listening and participation, giving special emphasis to targeted child(ren). Conclude with, "I'll be watching for kids who are practicing the Turtle Steps, staying calm, and making safe choices."