



HOOPOE LITERACY CURRICULUM TEACHER'S LESSON PLAN

Teaching-Storiestm: Learning that Lasts Grades 6 - 8

Hoopoe Literacy Curriculum Teaching-Stories: Learning That Lasts



For Grades 6-8

Neem the Half-Boy

by **Idries Shah**

HOOPOE BOOKS Los Altos CA

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For more information on the Teaching-Story and its use as an educational instrument, please download the free booklet *Learning that Last*s from our website www.hoopoekids.com



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- B. CALIFORNIA CONTENT ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT
- C. CALIFORNIA CONTENT VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS
- D. HISTORY CONNECTION IDEAS TO IMPLEMENT HOOPOE IN THE CALIFORNIA SOCIAL STUDIES CLASSROOM

The worksheets in this guide can be used for many of the activities. Worksheets include: bookmaking instructions; paper bag puppets; finger puppets; felt-board characters; prepared drama script. See www.hoopoekids.com for more ideas and color copies of instructions.

OTHER HOOPOE BOOKS

The Boy Without a Name
The Clever Boy and the Terrible, Dangerous Animal
The Farmer's Wife
Fatima The Spinner and the Tent
The Lion Who Saw Himself in the Water
The Magic Horse
The Man and the Fox
The Man with Bad Manners
The Old Woman and the Eagle
The Silly Chicken

Other Teacher's Activity Guides

Activity Guides for PreK-1

The Clever Boy and the Terrible, Dangerous Animal
The Farmer's Wife
The Lion Who Saw Himself in the Water
The Old Woman and the Eagle
The Man with Bad Manners
The Man and the Fox
The Silly Chicken

Lesson Plans for Grades K – 2

The Clever Boy and the Terrible, Dangerous Animal
The Lion Who Saw Himself in the Water
The Man and the Fox
The Man with Bad Manners
The Old Woman and the Eagle
The Silly Chicken

Lesson Plans for Grades 3 – 5

The Boy Without a Name
Fatima The Spinner and the Tent
The Lion Who Saw Himself in the Water
The Magic Horse
The Old Woman and the Eagle
Neem the Half-Boy

Lesson Plans for Grades 6 – 8

The Boy Without a Name Fatima The Spinner and the Tent The Magic Horse

Lesson Plans for Grades 9 – 12

The Boy Without a Name Fatima The Spinner and the Tent The Magic Horse

For information about these and other educational materials, please visit **www.hoopoekids.com**



"Through repeated readings, these stories provoke fresh insight and more flexible thought in children."

NEA TODAY - The Magazine of the National Education Association

INTRODUCTION TO TEACHING-STORIES FROM HOOPOE BOOKS

Where schools are rare, education comes primarily from stories. For many, many centuries, the peoples of Afghanistan, Central Asia, and the Middle East have told stories among themselves and to their children. Idries Shah, who came from Paghman, Afghanistan, spent 30 years of his life collecting, selecting, and translating stories from this tradition. Those he selected were Teaching-Stories created specifically to help people of all ages better understand themselves and their world. Reading or telling these stories, even today, offers much more than entertainment – though, of course, they are entertaining – and much more than a simple moral.

Shah is the author of Hoopoe Books' collection of these ancient tales written especially for young people. Teaching-Stories contain, in the movement and thoughts of characters, in what happens to them, and in the challenges they face, information that informs and prepares us for similarly structured events in our own lives.

Students will take what they can from each tale according to their stage of cognitive development. At first, a student may respond only to one character or event in a story, or may understand only the most obvious meaning, but he or she will grasp a little more each time, bit by bit finding more meanings, concepts, and insights.

Through repeated exposure to these tales, children and adults, too, learn to understand their lives and reflect on how people think and act in various situations. These tales help us all learn to distinguish effective from ineffective patterns of thought and action. For students, these stories illustrate qualities such as self-reliance, the ability to overcome irrational fears, peaceful negotiation rather than violent confrontation, and much else.

USING THE TEACHING-STORIES

You will be able to accomplish many things by using the Hoopoe Books Teaching-Stories in your classroom including:

- To allow and encourage students to absorb each Teaching-Story so that it can help them understand and prepare for analogous situations in their own lives.
- To encourage students to enjoy and appreciate stories from the cultures of Afghanistan and other parts of Central Asia and the Middle East that have been told for many generations.
- To guide discussions of the stories in ways that each story will help students learn to think more effectively.
- To use the language patterns and vocabulary of the stories in ways that will help students learn to read and use language effectively themselves.
- To give students opportunities to think about the meanings of the stories in ways that will enrich their lives.
- To strengthen your relationship with your students by reading these works of literature with them.
- To give students ways of sharing the stories with their families and build stronger home/school communication.

HOW THIS GUIDE CAN HELP YOU

This guide gives you lesson plans for classroom use with one of the Hoopoe books. Students will get the most out of this story if you remember these points:

- Students need to hear a Teaching-Story several times in order to become familiar with it and begin to understand its meanings before they try to read it themselves. This guide will give you ideas for reading the stories to students, having them read the stories with you, and then having them read the stories with each other when they are able.
- Students understand and remember a story better if they discuss it with you and their classmates and relate it to their own experiences. This guide will give you ideas for engaging students in discussions so that they can express the meanings the stories have for them.
- Students enjoy a story more if they are able to respond to it in interesting ways such as drawing a scene, retelling the story, acting the story out, or writing in response to the story. This guide will give you ideas for enjoyable activities that are connected to the story.
- Students learn different reading and language skills from stories that help them improve their literacy. This guide will give you ideas for using the stories to teach reading and writing skills.

• Students will enjoy the stories even more if they share what they are learning with their families. This guide will give you ideas for having students share the stories and what they are learning at school with their families.

HOW THESE LESSONS ARE ORGANIZED

There are two days of read-aloud lessons designed so that students will hear the story and deepen their understanding. The third reading allows students to read the story independently. For those who don't read as yet, they can listen to the CD and turn the pages with the aid of the bell prompt. Additional readings are included with some activities. At least three readings are recommended so that students will be able to make the story their own. There are also a series of activities that give students the opportunity to respond to the story in a variety of ways.

There are also a series of activities that give students the opportunity to respond to the story in a variety of ways. These activities can be introduced on the days you are reading the story aloud as well as on other days. If you do an activity on a new day after the reading, you may want to refresh the student's memory of the story by playing the CD or reading the story at the beginning. You may choose the activities you want to do according to the abilities of your students and the time available. Each activity has an estimation of time needed. These activities include skills and strategies that will help your students improve in all areas of language and literacy, including listening, speaking, reading and writing.

SKILLS AND STRATEGIES IN THIS GUIDE

The skills and strategies in the Hoopoe Teacher's Lesson Plans cover all of the skills below, but not every strategy is covered in every guide. See page 6 for suggestions on how to use the activities in this guide to improve cognitive and affective skills as outlined by Bloom's Taxonomy. The skills and strategies in this guide include:

Personal Response

Students will develop their use of spoken, written, and visual language to communicate effectively. They will become engaged in the story activities, generating and exploring their personal responses. Students will have opportunities to think about the meanings of the stories in ways that will enrich their lives, thus "making the stories their own." They will acquire new understandings to respond more productively to the needs of society: at home and school and eventually in the workplace, as well as for personal fulfillment. Skills include:

discussion

drawing

• Readers' Theater

retelling

Vocabulary

Students will develop and increase their vocabulary. Skills include:

 developing understandings of denotations and connotations of words and phrases

Comprehension

Students will apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend and interpret the text, drawing on their knowledge of word meanings, prior experiences, and interactions with other readers. Skills include:

- synthesizing
- sequencing
- determining important ideas
- making inferences
- visualization

Word Study

Students will develop their skills in the area of phonics, etymology, structural analysis, and context clues, as well as vocabulary and dictionary skills. Skills include:

- using context clues
- phonics
- structural analysis
- etymology
- parts of speech
- spelling

Thinking

Students will respond to questions and complete activities that will deepen their ability to reflect on their reading and on their own thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Skills include:

- generating analogies
- making predictions
- reflecting
- comparing and contrasting

ASSESSMENT

We have provided an informal assessment for one of the key strategies or skills for each lesson at the end of each activity. This rubric will allow you to observe and determine how your students' skills are improving. We do not include an assessment for every skill and strategy being taught. If there is a particular skill or strategy that you would like to assess and we have not provided it, you may wish to use this rubric as your model. Below you will see how each rubric is organized. Each activity concludes with a performance rubric.

RUBRIC SAMPLE:

Assessment: Name of Skill

Level 1: Indicates: Proficiency is not yet developed.

Level 2: Indicates: Some proficiency is evident.

Level 3: Indicates: Adequate proficiency is evident.

Level 4: Indicates: Above-average proficiency is evident.

LESSON PLANS FOR USING THIS TEACHING-STORY IN THE CLASSROOM

We recommend at least three readings of the story. The lesson plans are designed for you to read the story aloud at least twice (although not in the same day), and for your students to read the story independently. You will find activities to do before and during reading (HEARING THE STORY or READING THE STORY) and activities for after reading (RESPONDING TO THE STORY). For some of these, your students may wish to hear the story an additional time (either read aloud or by playing the CD). There is one more reading activity (THE READERS' THEATER) that is an ideal way to complete the class use of this story.

You may have a few things to prepare for a lesson. A day or two before you teach a lesson, look over the plan to make sure you understand the steps and make any necessary preparations.. (A table outlining suggested Lesson Plans is below.)

We hope you and your students enjoy working with this Teaching-Story!

LESSON PLANS FOR NEEM THE HALF-BOY

These lesson plans are designed for a first read-aloud, followed by a second reading and finally a third "independent reading" of the story. There are many activities throughout these plans in the "Responding to the Story" sections that you can choose from depending on the abilities of your students and the time allotted. For one or two activities, we will recommend a further telling (or reading) of the story.

FIRST HEARING OF THE STORY	Hearing the Story Read Aloud		
(Read-Aloud)	Responding to the Story		
SECOND HEARING OF THE STORY	Hearing the Story Read Aloud (Audio		
(Read-Aloud)	CD)		
	 Responding to the Story 		
INDEPENDENT READING OF THE	• Reading the Story Independently with		
STORY	or without the Audio CD		
	 Responding to the Story 		
OTHER READINGS AND ACTIVITIES	Responding to the Story		
	• Do the Readers' Theater		

RESEARCH: A Scientific Understanding of the Teaching-Story

Bloom's Taxonomy: Cognitive and Affective Domains

In 1956, Benjamin Bloom, published a set of classification levels of intellectual behavior relevant in learning. Bloom's studies showed that most questions that students were required to answer used only the simplest level of thinking skills: recalling information.

In addition to the skills and strategies that are taught using these lesson plans, students are also moving through all levels of the Bloom's hierarchy of cognitive and affective skills. Working with these stories allows students to examine, explore, and enhance cognitive and affective attitudes.

Educators should also look for verbs (see sample lists below) with each one of Bloom's thinking or affective skills within the lesson plans. Many of the Hoopoe Teaching-Stories lessons meet multiple levels of Bloom's Taxonomy.

Bloom's Cognitive Domain¹

Bloom identified six levels within the cognitive domain: Knowledge, Understanding/Comprehension, Application, Analysis, Synthesis, and Evaluation. The simplest levels of the taxonomy include recall and recognition of facts. The more complex levels of the taxonomy include more intricate and abstract mental levels.

Although other systems and hierarchies have been created, Bloom's taxonomy is easily understood and has been widely applied throughout school districts in the United States.

As educators, we want to teach students that different types of questions require us to use different complexities of thinking. By asking students questions that require simpler and more complicated level thinking skills, we are stimulating thought processes.

The following is a list of the levels of Bloom's taxonomy and includes examples of verbs that represent the intellectual activity on each level:

Simple Thinking Skills and Sample Behaviors:

- **S1. Knowledge**: define, memorize, repeat, record, list, recall, name, relate, collect, label specify, cite, enumerate, tell, recount, duplicate, list, recognize, order, repeat
- Example: Student will define vocabulary from the Teaching-Story.
- **S2.** Comprehension: restate, summarize, discuss, describe, recognize, explain, express, identify, locate, report, retell, review, translate, select, translate

Example: Student will retell the Teaching-Story during the museum walk lesson.

¹From Benjamin S Bloom, *Taxonomy Of Educational Objectives Book 1 / Cognitive Domain*, 1/e. Published by Allyn and Bacon/Merrill Education, Boston, MA. Copyright © 1984 by Pearson Education. Adapted by permission of the publisher.

S3. Application: exhibit, solve, interview, simulate, apply, use, demonstrate, dramatize, practice, illustrate, operate, calculate, show, experiment, write, schedule

Example: Student will dramatize the Teaching-Story by participating in the Readers' Theater.

Complex Thinking Skills and Sample Behaviors:

C1. Analysis: interpret, analyze, arrange, classify, differentiate, group, compare, organize, contrast, examine, categorize, inventory, question, discover, text, inquire, diagram, experiment Example: Student will compare and contrast character behaviors within the story.

C2. Synthesis: compose, setup, plan, prepare, propose, imagine, produce, generalize, design, predict, arrange, create, collect, construct

Example: Student will design his/her own tessellations.

C3. Evaluation: judge, assess, decide, evaluate, infer, deduce, choose compare, predict, revise, choose, conclude, recommend, select, determine, argue, support

Example: Student will justify his/her predictions regarding "what will happen next" in each Teaching-Story.

Bloom's Affective Domain²

Bloom's affective domain includes the manner in which we deal with things emotionally, such as feelings, values, appreciation, enthusiasms, motivations, and attitudes. The five major categories are listed from the simplest to the most complex behavior:

Bloom's Affective Skills and Sample Behaviors:

A1. Receiving Phenomena: Awareness, willingness to hear, selected attention.

Key Words: asks, chooses, describes, follows, gives, holds, identifies, locates, names, points to, selects, sits, erects, replies, uses.

Example: Student listens to the Teaching-Story being read. Student listens to the opinions and interpretations of others with respect. Student remembers the names of characters in the story.

A2. Responding to Phenomena: Active participation on the part of the learners. Attends and reacts to a particular phenomenon. Learning outcomes may emphasize compliance in responding, willingness to respond, or satisfaction in responding (motivation).

Key Words: answers, assists, aids, complies, conforms, discusses, greets, helps, labels, performs, practices, presents, reads, recites, reports, selects, tells, writes.

Examples: Student actively participates in class discussions. Student participates in Readers' Theatre presentation. Student questions new ideas, concepts, models, etc. presented in the Teaching-Story in order to fully understand them.

²From David R. Krathwohl, Benjamin S. Bloom, Bertram B. Masia, et al. *Taxonomy Of Educational Objectives, Book 2: Affective Domain.* Published by Allyn and Bacon/Merrill Education, Boston, MA. Copyright © 1984 by Pearson Education. Adapted by permission of the publisher.

A3. Valuing: The worth or value a person attaches to a particular object, phenomenon, or behavior. This ranges from simple acceptance to the more complex state of commitment. Valuing is based on the internalization of a set of specified values, while clues to these values are expressed in the learner's overt behavior and are often identifiable.

Key Words: completes, demonstrates, differentiates, explains, follows, forms, initiates, invites, joins, justifies, proposes, reads, reports, selects, shares, studies, works.

Examples: Student is sensitive towards individual and cultural differences (values diversity) and is able to examine and articulate a variety of points of view presented in the stories. Student is able to come up with a variety of possible solutions to problems explored in the lessons.

A4. Organization: Organizes values into priorities by contrasting different values, resolving conflicts between them, and creating an unique value system. The emphasis is on comparing, relating, and synthesizing values.

Key Words: adheres, alters, arranges, combines, compares, completes, defends, explains, formulates, generalizes, identifies, integrates, modifies, orders, organizes, prepares, relates, synthesizes.

Examples: Student is able to use systematic planning in order to complete an activity such as writing a "thoughtshot." Student is able to prioritize time effectively in order to meet the needs of the assignment and working with a group. Student learns to accept responsibility for her/his actions and explore options for different reactions to events when examining in the Teaching-Story.

A5. Internalizing values (characterization): Has a value system that controls their behavior. The behavior is pervasive, consistent, predictable, and most importantly, characteristic of the learner. Instructional objectives are concerned with the student's general patterns of adjustment (personal, social, emotional).

Key Words: acts, discriminates, displays, influences, listens, modifies, performs, practices, proposes, qualifies, questions, revises, serves, solves, verifies.

Examples: Student is able to make analogical connections between events in the story and his/her own life. Student shows self-reliance when working independently. Student cooperates in group activities (displays teamwork). Student uses an objective approach in problem solving. Student is able to revise judgments and changes behavior in light of new evidence learned in the stories. Student learns to value people for what they are, not how they look.

Story Synopsis

"Shah's adaptation of this traditional tale will encourage children to contemplate the meaning of psychological 'wholeness."

Bookbird: A Journal of International Children's Literature



Neem the Half-Boy

To help the Queen of Hich-Hich, who longs for a son, the fairies consult a wise man, who gives certain instructions. Because the queen follows the instructions only halfway, she gives birth to a half-boy, whom she names "Neem." To help Prince Neem become whole, the fairies again consult Arif the Wiseman, who says that Neem must obtain a special medicine from a dragon's cave.

Prince Neem makes a bargain with Taneen the Dragon. They help each other and the Dragon is able to change his behavior so that he no longer frightens the people.

That Neem is able to make himself complete through negotiation and cooperation teaches students more than the expected lesson of bravery. This entertaining Teaching-Story provides an opportunity for readers to explore universal human behaviors and characteristics, including the sense of psychological incompleteness that some students might feel as they enter adolescence.

I. 1st HEARING OF THE STORY

A. Making Predictions

Reading books aloud to students is one of the most important things you can do. When done with skill, on a regular basis, reading stimulates development in all areas of language and literacy: listening, speaking, reading and writing. This easy-to-do activity builds a range of important cognitive and



communication skills. This basic activity addresses many objectives. Reading together is also a social activity, creating a bond between the child and the reader. We often think that students in this age group are "too old" to be read aloud to. Nothing could be further from the truth. Older students, as well as younger ones, enjoy hearing stories read aloud, and you are helping to build habits that students will take into adulthood.

You are also helping to build the habits that good readers have when you stop and ask prediction questions to encourage students to engage with the text.

This story, with its unexpected twists, invites speculation at turning points, an activity that improves children's thinking and comprehension of the story.

SKILLS AND STRATEGIES

<u>Personal Response</u>

discussion

Vocabulary

 developing an understanding of the denotation and connotation of words and phrases

Thinking

• making predictions

Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive and Affective Domains

 See page 6 for suggestions on how to use this, and other activities in this guide, to improve cognitive and affective skills as outlined by Bloom's Taxonomy

When read straight through without interaction with your students, this story takes 10-12 minutes of reading time. The activities in this session will take 40-50 minutes of uninterrupted time.

TO PREPARE FOR THE LESSON

- Practice reading the story aloud a few times before you read it to your students so that you will know the story and will read smoothly. Read with expression! By reading well, you demonstrate to students how to read the story effectively when they are ready to read it on their own. You may decide to use different voices for different characters. Students love it when you do this!
- Before you read the story, decide on three or four places to pause during the reading and have students discuss what they think will happen next in the story. Asking them to make predictions like this (without knowing for sure what is going to happen) is a very good way of developing their thinking abilities. Also, it is a way of giving them reasons to listen carefully to the story. They will want to find out if their predictions are correct! A good place to pause is when there is a "turning point" in the story—when there is some suspense about what will happen next. We have suggested places to stop and invite predictions in the "during reading" section. You may wish to use these or choose your own places to stop.
- You may want to research some of the elements illustrated in the book to help students learn the features and names of them. For instance, research Afghan (or Islamic) architecture, clothing styles, ancient cooking stoves, etc.
- Make sure that you have a copy of the book for each student. You will give these
 out after you have read the story and done the prediction activity with the
 students.

Before Reading

1. This story was designed to help improve student's thinking and comprehension. It has distinct patterns of language and events that invite participatory listening and that lead to predictions about what will happen next. Hold up the book so that the students can see the cover. You may want to walk around so that every student can get a close look at the cover. As you are showing the book, introduce it by telling a little about the story and the author. Say something like this:

This story has been told for many, many years in Afghanistan. It is called a "Teaching-Story" because you can learn about yourself and others by hearing the story and thinking about it, as we will be doing.

There are many versions of this story. The author of this version is Idries Shah. He was a highly accomplished man who came from Paghman, Afghanistan. During his lifetime, he wrote many books for adults as well as for children. Many of them contain Teaching-Stories such as Neem the Half-Boy.

2. To get students started in making predictions when they hear the story for the first time, read the title, show them the jacket illustrations and say:

What do you think is going to happen to the boy in this story? Why do you think so?

What do you think a half-boy is? Why do you think so?

How do you think he became a half-boy? Why do you think so?

Let's read the story and find out more about Neem the Half-Boy and what happens to him.

Tell students that all predictions are good because they involve good thinking and that it is all right for them to disagree on what will happen next. Tell students that good readers make predictions all of the time (in their heads) as they are reading. Then, as the events in the story occur, good readers adjust their thinking and alter their predictions as they read ahead.

I am going to read the story to you now. Listen carefully and look at the pictures as I read. Sometimes, I will stop and ask you what you think will happen next. You will probably not know for sure, but think about what has already happened and what might happen next. Listen carefully so that you can figure out what will happen next!

When I finish, I will show you the pictures again and you can tell us what you remember about the story.

During Reading

3. Hold the book so that all the students will be able to see the pictures as you read. Read slowly, with expression, and pause before turning the pages to give the students a moment to think about what they just heard and to look at the illustrations. You may want to walk around the room as you read to let everyone see the illustrations up close.



4. Each time you pause to have students make predictions, ask these questions:

What do you think will happen next in the story? Why do you think so?

What details from the story are you using to make your prediction? (A prediction is a statement of what you think will happen in the future, based on what you already know. Remember, good readers are always making predictions in their heads as they read or listen to a story.)

Remember that all predictions are good because they involve good thinking and that it is all right for students to disagree on what will happen next. Call on different students to give their predictions. When one student gives an idea, ask the others if they agree or disagree and ask them to give their reasons. Encourage students to debate their ideas. Allow enough time for discussion so that several students have a chance to make

predictions and for the class to discuss the ideas. Then continue reading to the next stopping point.

Here are some suggestions for places to stop and invite predictions:

The story begins:

Once upon a time, when flies flew backwards and the sun was cool, there was a country called Hich-Hich, which means "nothing at all."

What kind of a time is this? Is this like our time? What kind of country is Hich-Hich? Why do you think so?

When the fairies go to the wise man for the first time:

"I'll tell you how the queen can have a little boy for a son," said Arif the Wise Man, with a smile.

What advice do you think Arif will give the fairies? Why do you think so?

When the queen drops the half-eaten apple:

And she dropped the apple, only half eaten.

What do you think is going to happen now? Why do you think so?

When the fairies again ask the wise man for help in making Neem whole:

"...he is only a half-boy, and he wants to be a whole boy. Can you help him?"

What advice do you think the wise man will give the fairies this time? Why do you think so?

When Neem confronts the dragon:

And Prince Neem said, "I am going to drive you away because you keep breathing fire all over people and they don't like it."

What do you think will happen next? Why do you think that?

After Reading

5. When you finish the book, tell students they did a very good job of listening and making predictions about what might happen next and that now you want them to think about the story. **Ask students:**

What is the most important part of this tale to you? Why is that part especially important?

What does this story make you think about?

What questions do you have about the story?

- **6**. Give each student a copy of the book and have them look through the book looking carefully at the illustrations, examining the details and designs.
- **7. Start a list of their observations** on chart paper or the board so that you can add to it each day you read the story. There are many interesting elements pictured in the book. Give the students a chance to look carefully at the illustrations (examining the details and designs) and to learn the names of the various things pictured, some of which may be unfamiliar to them.

I. 1st Hearing of the Story/Making Predictions

Tell students that they may take their books home with them and encourage them to read the books with their families. Tell students that they will need their books in class, so remind them to bring them back to class each day while you are working with the story. Encourage them to read the story aloud to someone in their family.

ASSESSMENT: Making Predictions

Levels of mastery 1-4

Level 1: Student is unable to make predictions when invited or makes predictions that are not logically related to the available information.

Level 2: Student is able to predict an outcome that follows logically from the available information and gives a reason to support the prediction. Student may or may not remember the prediction when reading on and does not always recognize when new information relates to the prediction.

Level 3: Student is able to predict an outcome that follows logically from the available information, gives a reason to support the prediction, recognizes when new information relates to the prediction, and keeps or revises the prediction accordingly.

Level 4: Student is particularly astute in using available story information in making and justifying predictions and in using subsequent information to keep or revise the predictions.

"Educating the whole child is not a new idea. It is rooted in the writings and teachings of many ancient cultures. Yet, achieving the kind of balance that encourages all children to learn, work and contribute to their fullest potential has been a continuing challenge as our world has grown more complex and our communities more fragmented."

 Maurice J. Elias, "Academic and social emotional learning," Educational Practices Series-11, International Academy of Education (Brussels) & International Bureau Education (Geneva), 2003.

B. Developing Reading & Speaking Vocabulary

Students tend to use the same words over and over again in speech and in writing. An ABC Word List is a terrific way to encourage students to build vocabulary and avoid using the same words repeatedly. Students will be able to have access to many more words if they organize their words in alphabetical lists. Class word lists can be developed on chart paper and left up in the room for students to use during writing and/or speaking. During peer editing, students can refer to the lists to find suggestions for substitute words. Students can also keep their own ABC Word Lists in three-hole notebooks and add to them whenever they have free time.

After a while, they begin to "own" all of these words. Using the ABC format gives the students a challenge and is a great way for them to organize their words. This word list will be used for students to write words from the story as they are reading it. There are many other ways to organize words for their ABC Word Lists.

SKILLS AND STRATEGIES

Vocabulary

• developing an understanding of words and phrases

Word Study

• learning and using words in writing

This sequence of activities should take about 30-40 minutes of uninterrupted time.

TO PREPARE FOR THE LESSON

- Tape a piece of chart paper up on the board and write the letters of the alphabet in two vertical lines, leaving enough space between letters to write words (see example provided in this guide). Place the paper low enough for students to write on. Alternately, write the letters of the alphabet in two vertical lines on the board at a height for students' reach.
- Have available three-hole lined notebook paper, a binder* or a composition book for each student in the class to use for an individual notebook.
- If students have already made an ABC Word List for another book, have them add pages for *Neem the Half-Boy* in their binders.

^{*}If a binder is not available, the student can place their papers inside an $11'' \times 17''$ folded piece of construction paper and fasten with clips or brass fasteners.

- **1.** Have the students write the alphabet on an $8 \frac{1}{2}$ " x 11" sheet of lined paper, skipping one line between each letter. Have them put the letters A M on one side of the paper, and the letters N Z on the other (see example below).
- **2.** Have the students look through the book to find words they want to use and remember and write them in their ABC Word List opposite the letter of the alphabet in which they belong.
- **3.** After 10 minutes, form the students into pairs (or into groups) and have each student take turns sharing a word with their partner and discussing why they added the word to their ABC list. (Students must know what a word means before adding it to their lists.)
- **4.** After a few minutes of discussion, have students take turns writing one their words onto the class list beside the appropriate letter. Go around the room until everyone who wants to has contributed one or more words. Students can add all of these words to their own lists as well.
- **5**. **Making Other Word Lists:** Some students may want to find and list other kinds of words. For example, they could look for and write down words from *Neem the Half-Boy* which describe actions or movement, such as "hopped" or "flew" (i.e., verbs). Or they may want to list descriptive words, such as "little boy" or "wise man" (i.e., adjectives or adjectives and nouns).
- **6.** Tell them they are welcome to add as many words to their list as they want for *Neem the Half-Boy*, and that they will have more chances to do so on other days. Tell them that they can make word lists for any book they read. Keep the Class ABC Word List up and add to it through all activities using this book.

Example of A B C Word List for some words from Neem the Half-Boy

A	apple, annoying, another	Ν	nothing
В	breathe, bored, become	0	only
C	clever, cooking-stove, country	P	prince, palace, pleased
D	dragon, dropped	Q	queen, quickly
Ε	eaten, everywhere	R	replied
F	fairies, fetched	5	sighed, special, something
G		T	trotted, thinking
Н	hopped, happily, half	U	until
I	important	٧	
J		W	wherever, wonderful, whole
K	king, knows	X	
L	language	У	
M	Majesty, medicine	Z	

- **8**. Reinforcing Understanding of Vocabulary and Parts of Speech: You may want to use words and phrases from the story to reinforce students' understanding of various parts of speech. Here are some activities you may want to use for that purpose:
- **a.** Have students use the following pairs of words from the story in sentences to reinforce their meaning. The sentences need not be the actual sentences from the story. Examples of pairs are:

wonderful medicine rode quickly wise man whole apple

special medicine fire-breathing dragon

Examples of sentences using these pairs are:

You may also wish to have students look for other such pairs of words from the story and use them in new sentences in the same way.

b. Select sentences or short passages from the story, leave out specific words, and have students choose from a list the words to complete each sentence. You may want to explain to students that the exercise will give them practice in using different parts of speech. For example, you might say: "Remember that adjectives are descriptive words, verbs are action words, adverbs describe how, when and where..." and so on. Here's an example of a word list:

Words to choose from:

whole dragon backwards another medicine breathing thinking wonderful

"The	scared people because	he was breathin	g fire on them."	' [choose a noun from
the list]				

"The flies flew _____ in a country called Hich-Hich." [choose an adverb from the list]

ASSESSMENT: Word Study

Levels of mastery 1-4

Level 1: Student is unable to recognize words that have been read or discussed or to use them in vocabulary activities.

Level 2: Student is able to use some words in vocabulary activities.

Level 3: Student is able to use many words correctly in vocabulary activities but cannot think of other kinds of words to use on his/her own.

Level 4: Student is able to use many words in an alphabetical list and identifies other types of words to use as well.

[&]quot;The boy drank the special and wonderful medicine from the dragon's cave."

[&]quot;The boy rode quickly on his bicycle to win the race."

C. Creating a Book – For Personal Response Journal

Students can gain an appreciation of books and understand how they can become an instrument of communication. Books are an art form unto themselves. The form that a book takes influences how we view the contents. When students make a book by hand, they learn about the art of book-making and gain an appreciation of books as an art form. They also experience how to make a book for their own use.

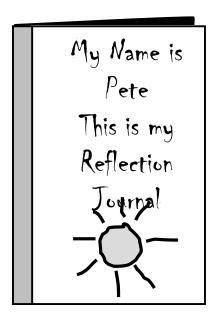
This sequence of activities should take about 50-60 minutes of uninterrupted time.

TO PREPARE FOR THE LESSON

- Have all materials available for students. (More detailed instructions are included in this guide.) You will need:
- Stiff felt, glue, paste spreaders, pencils, white drawing paper (large), white cardstock for book covers, several hole punches, fade-resistant construction or art paper (12"x 18" 12 sheets per book), yarn or string, and newspaper for protecting the workspaces. Drawing and painting supplies such as markers, crayons, colored pencils, paints for decorating the book covers.
- Cut ahead of time a 3" x 18" strip of stiff felt (spines) and 2 covers from cardstock for each book to be made, at least 10"x 14".
- Draw a light guideline 1" from the edge of the front side of each cover. (This will mark the gluing area.)
- Read through the instructions so that you are familiar with all of the steps. You may wish to make a book ahead of time to ensure you are familiar with the procedure.
- 1. Lay out all the materials where students can get to them easily. It may be best to make one book ahead of time to show what the end product will look like. Demonstrate the construction and assist those students who need help. You may want to make several copies of the instructions for students' referral.
- **2.** Have the students make the covers first, then the inside pages. The process could take two sessions, so be prepared to store the parts at school until the books are made. Have students draw or decorate the covers after all assembly is completed and the books are dry.
- **3**. Once the books are completed, students may use their books for their personal responses to this story. They may write directly in the books, and also may glue work that they have created onto the pages in the book.

Remind students that their personal response journals are private and that they don't have to share any of their entries with the class. If you are collecting these to look at, you can have students put a star on pages that they do not wish you to read. You would then only read those pages without any star on the top.

4. If possible, have the students keep the books in the classroom until after the "Personal Journal Writing" exercises are finished.



"A form of literature little-known in the West but common in Afghanistan can help develop thinking skills and perceptions..." says Robert Ornstein, Ph.D., neuropsychiatrist, educator and author.

"...Reading Teaching-Stories activates the right side of the brain much more than does reading informational text. The right side of the brain provides 'context,' the essential function of putting together the different components of experience. The left side provides the 'text,' or the pieces themselves. Familiarity with these stories can expand context: enabling us to understand more about our world and our place in it."

From a lecture at Library of Congress on "Teaching-Stories and the Brain"

(go to http://hoopoekids.com/sources.htm to view the complete lecture)

II. RESPONDING TO THE STORY

Drawing Parts of the Story

Students can stimulate their creative imagination and refine their thinking with this enjoyable activity. This activity will encourage students to become more observant and creative, pay more attention to detail, and increase their visualization skills.



SKILLS AND STRATEGIES

Thinking

• compare and contrast

Comprehension

• visualization & sequencing

This sequence of activities should take about 30-45 minutes of uninterrupted time.

TO PREPARE FOR THE LESSON

- Have a variety of drawing instruments such as crayons, markers, and colored pencils available and well placed for students to use.
- Have blank or graph paper available for students to use.
- Have a CD of the story set up to play, or the class copy of the book for you to read.
- If students are going to use the journals they created, remind students who kept their books that they will need to bring those books to class if they wish to use them for this activity.
- You may wish to read through these directions so that you are familiar with the steps to follow.
- Make a list of suggested scenes indicating the beginning, middle and end of the story. (See suggestions are on next page).

By listening to and imagining a story, we make it more our own than when we listen to and see a story. An excellent way for students to remember the story is to have them listen to and visualize it. They can then draw the story from their imagination. You might say something like this:

For thousands of years this story was told by campfire and candlelight to people of all ages. They had no illustrations, no TVs, no pictures at all. So people made pictures up in their heads – they imagined what the scenes in the story looked like, just like the illustrators did for the pictures in this book.

I would like you to do the same thing: I am going to read/play the story again, and I would like you to listen. Then I will give you a section of the story to illustrate. Your picture will not have to look like the illustrations in the book. It can be entirely your own creation.

Here are some steps for this activity:

- **1.** Play the CD of *Neem the Half-Boy* or read the story and have the students listen. They may like to close their eyes while they do this.
- **2.** To make sure that the entire story is illustrated, divide the class into three areas, and give one area the beginning, one the middle and one the end of the book to draw from. Below are some suggested scenes. You may want to write these scene descriptions on pieces of paper (or note cards) and distribute a set to each area of the room. Students can then decide among themselves who will draw the various scenes, working individually or with a partner on the pictures.

Suggested Scenes

The Beginning of the Story:

- The time when flies flew backwards and the sun was cool in Hich-Hich.
- ❖ The queen discussing with the king about wanting to have a little boy.
- ❖ The fairies asking the wise man how the queen might have a little boy.
- ❖ The wise man telling the fairies what the queen must do to have a little boy.
- ❖ The fairies taking the apple to the queen.
- ❖ The queen forgetting to eat the entire apple.
- The queen has her new son, Prince Neem.

The Middle of the Story

- ❖ Neem becoming dissatisfied with not being more complete.
- ❖ Neem asking the king and queen how he might become whole.
- ❖ The fairies going to the wise man to ask him how Neem might become whole.
- The fairies telling Neem what the wise man advises.
- ❖ Neem meeting Taneen the Dragon and telling the dragon he must drive him out.

The End of the Story

- ❖ Taneen telling Neem why he has to breathe fire and asking for a stove to cook his food.
- ❖ Neem taking Taneen a cooking-stove for him to prepare his meals.
- ❖ Neem changing his name to Kull and everyone lives happily for evermore.
- ❖ Neem taking the medicine Taneen gives him to become whole.
- ❖ Neem becoming a whole-boy.
- **3**. Hand out paper, drawing and/or painting tools such a pencils, crayons, markers and watercolors and let students draw or paint their pictures. Have a book available for each group to use for referral. You may also encourage the students to talk to one another about the story and about what they are drawing or painting. Students might also choose to work in their personal response journals.
- **4.** When students have finished their drawings or paintings, do one or more of these activities:

Retell the Story:

Start with students who drew the initial part of the story and have them organize their drawings in sequential order to follow the story. They may want to hold their pictures in this order in front of the class. There may be more than one drawing of the same scene which is okay. Have any student from this group volunteer to retell their part of the story by pointing to each drawing during the retelling.

Do the same for the middle and the end of the story, so that all your student illustrators have had a chance to show their drawings and have them incorporated in the retelling.

Have a "Museum Walk"

Post the drawings on the wall of the classroom (if there is not enough room, do this in groups) in sequence of the story. On a volunteer basis, have students take turns standing beside their drawings (or holding up their drawings in the created books if done that way) and talking to the class why they chose the scenes and what was important or interesting about the depiction to them and/or have them answer questions from the class about their drawings. Once all the students who would like to speak have had a turn, have the students move around the "museum" as a group to view the art. You may want to organize the movement in one direction for traffic-flow purposes, or organize the students into groups and have each group take turns doing the "Museum Walk." Additionally, you may want to go to a library and check out an art book from a well-known museum and show the students how other museums display their art.

Make a Class Book

Collect all the students' artwork, organize the pictures in story sequence, bind together with fasteners or clips, and have the students design and make covers for the book (see below). You may also want to make more than one book if there are a large number of pictures. Keep the book(s) in the classroom library and invite students to retell the story

in small groups or to the whole class by going through the book and telling about the scenes depicted in the drawings or paintings.

Make Book Covers for the Class Book

Have the students form into three groups to help design and create covers for the Class Book. Explain to them that this will be a project that the whole class will be participating in, and that every group has an important job to do. The first group (the "engineers") can determine the size and the type of paper or material and the "binding" mechanism (yarn, fasteners, etc.); the second group (the "designers") can determine what pictures to put on the cover and the title and text; and the third group (the "art department") can work together creating the drawings and writing, taking turns with each other on drawing and/or writing, based on the other groups' plans.

ASSESSMENT: Visualization & Sequencing Skills

Levels of mastery 1-4

Level 1: Student is unable to interpolate and draw what he/she thinks is important or interesting to him/her and is unable to retell a part of the story.

Level 2: Student is able to make a modest drawing of a part of the book, but is unable to tell why it is interesting or important to him/her or how it fits in the story.

Level 3: Student is able to think of important or interesting parts, understands the part of the story and is able to draw them.

Level 4: Student is able to think of many interesting parts, relate importance to them, and create unique drawings and retell the story accurately.

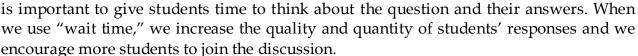
"When academic and social-emotional learning both become a part of schooling, students are more likely to remember and use what they are taught. They also incorporate into their education a sense of responsibility, caring, and concern for the well being of others, as well as themselves."

- Herbert J. Walberg, Vice President, International Academy of Education (IAE)

III. 2nd HEARING OF THE STORY

A. Developing Comprehension

Discussing the story allows students to internalize the story by thinking about it in a variety of ways. Students can reflect on the story and use it to help them under-stand new situations and experiences. Students will gain competency in their comprehension by making inferences when answering questions about the story. When asking questions, it



SKILLS AND STRATEGIES

Personal Response

- discussion
- drawing & retelling

Vocabulary

 developing an understanding of the denotation and connotation of words and phrases

Comprehension

- determining important ideas
 - making inferences
 - synthesizing

Thinking

• reflecting

This sequence of activities should take about 30-40 minutes of uninterrupted time.

TO PREPARE FOR THE LESSON

- Read through the lesson and decide which factual, comprehension and reflection questions you wish to ask.
- Make sure you have available a copy of *Neem the Half-Boy*.
- Students may want to use their ABC Word Lists.

When you have finished reading the story, engage the students in a discussion. You may want to pair the students with a partner for discussion.

During the discussions, let the students know that you have no interest in quizzing them and that you do not know all the answers; that instead you want to wonder and search with them and that you are interested in big ideas and you know they are, too.

Explain that you are going to wait between the time you ask a question and the time you call on a student (or a pair) to allow everyone some time to think about the answers. After each question, have students discuss with their partner what they would say to answer the question. Give the pairs at least 30 seconds to discuss their thoughts with each other, longer if needed.

Do not insist on a response from any student who does not wish to answer; this should be a safe time for them to think about the story without fear of being "put on the spot." However, invite all of the students to speak up, and be sure to encourage those who do not usually raise their hands, in case they are ready to participate.

Students may refer to their books during discussions. They may want to add words to their ABC Word Lists or write more observations on the list started in the first reading.

Here are some examples of questions that you might ask students to help develop their comprehension of the story and encourage them to recall key events. Not all questions need to be asked.

Factual Questions:

Use questions such as the following as a "warm-up" for the discussion to ensure that students understand the facts of the story and the vocabulary.

- ❖ What was different about the flies in that country?
- ❖ What does "Hich-Hich" mean?
- ❖ What did the queen want?
- ❖ Why was Neem born a half-boy?
- ❖ What did Arif the Wise Man tell the fairies that the queen should do?
- ❖ Why did the Queen only follow half the wise man's instructions?
- How did Neem get around?
- How did Neem feel about being a half-boy?
- ❖ What do Neem's parents say when Neem asks how he can become whole?
- ❖ Who finally knows how Neem can become whole? Have we seen this character before in this story? If so, do you remember when and what happened?
- ❖ Who goes to the wise man to ask his help? Have we seen these characters before in this story?
- ❖ What does Neem have to do to become whole?
- ❖ Why did Taneen breathe fire all over people?
- What did the dragon suggest they could do to solve both their problems?

* At the end of the story was Neem called something else? Why was that?

Questions for Higher-Level Thinking (Inferential Questions):

You can also help students develop skills in identifying and understanding main ideas and relationships and in making inferences. Students will develop their ability to identify with the characters in the story, their feelings and the situation. Here are some suggestions for comprehension and reflection questions you might ask to initiate the discussions:

- ❖ What kind of time is it when it says: "...when flies flew backwards and the sun was cool"?
- Do you think the Queen realized that Neem was born a half-boy because she had only eaten half the apple – why or why not?
- ❖ How old do you think Neem was when he went to drive the dragon out? Why do you think so?
- ❖ Do you think the dragon was clever why or why not?
- Were you surprised that the dragon came up with the solution to both their problems why or why not?
- ❖ What is the most important part of this story to you? Why is it important?
- **❖** What questions do you have?

ASSESSMENT: Making Inferences

Levels of mastery 1-4

Level 1: Student is unable to make reasonable inferences; often misinterprets key ideas and does not provide reasonable support even with teacher support.

Level 2: Student is able to make some simple inferences; may be somewhat vague or confusing or goes somewhat beyond what can be logically supported by the text. Student provides limited support; is often vague or incomplete.

Level 3: Student is able to make simple inferences and provides adequate support; is often somewhat general.

Level 4: Student is able to make inferences with some insight; may show some complexity. Provides effective support and is often specific.

B. Using Words & Phrases - Playing Charades

Once students have heard and discussed the story, and you have made a vocabulary list of words that they did not know before, they will probably be ready to learn how to use these words in speech and writing.

SKILLS AND STRATEGIES Vocabulary

• developing an understanding of words and phrases

This sequence of activities should take about 30-40 minutes of uninterrupted time.

TO PREPARE FOR THE LESSON

- Look over the lesson plan so that you are familiar with the steps to follow, including how to play Charades.
- Prepare short phrases or sentences on note cards or small slips of paper using words from the class vocabulary list and phrases or sentences from the *Neem the Half-Boy* book, underline the vocabulary word, and place the cards in a basket or bowl. If you have students who have difficulty reading, you may wish to add pictures to the cards to clarify meanings.
- **1**. Tell students that they will be learning to recognize words in context using words from the story you have been reading with them. Tell them that they will be playing a game of Charades and that everyone will have a chance to play the game.
- **2.** Review the phrases/sentences that will be featured in the game with the students. (Use short items, such as "Arif the Wise Man knows everything," so students can remember them better.) Tell the students you have written the items on note cards and are mixing them up in a basket. They are going to draw one out of the basket randomly and act out what's on it so that their team can guess what it is. They may not use audible words when they do the acting out, they must be silent. If their team can guess the underlined word (for instance, as above, "everything"), they get 1 point; and if they can guess the entire phrase or sentence, they get 2 points.
- **3**. Since some students may be unfamiliar with the game of Charades, show the students how to play the shortened version of the game below by drawing one of the phrase cards out of the basket yourself and acting it out for the entire class. Have the students guess what the word or phrase is.
- **4.** When you are certain that students know how to play the game, divide the class into Team A and Team B preferably of equal size. Have both teams sit next to each other (or

opposite each other) on the floor in the front of the room, if possible. The player will be standing when "acting" out the words.

5. Select a timekeeper and a scorekeeper for each team. The timekeeper for Team A keeps time whenever Team B is playing, and vice versa. The team scorekeeper keeps his/her team's scores by writing down their team's points on a scorecard. You can have different students do this during the game if more than one wants to be the timekeeper or scorekeeper.

Charades

Place the basket(s) of cards on a table near the teams so that when one is drawn out, only the player will be able to read it. Tell the timekeeper to allow 2 minutes for each player, but to give the player at least 15 seconds to plan what he/she is going to do. Each round of the game proceeds as follows:

 A player from Team A draws a card from the basket. After the player has had a short time to think and plan, the timekeeper for Team B tells the player to start. Team A then has two minutes to guess the word or phrase. If they figure out the underlined word in time, they get 1 point and if they figure out the entire phrase, they get 2 points, and Team A's scorekeeper notes this on their scorecard. If they do not guess either in two minutes, they get no points and the player reads the card so they all hear what it was.

- A player from Team B draws a card from the basket, and play proceeds as above, with Team A's timekeeper telling Team B's player when to start.
- Normally the game continues until every player has had a chance to "act out" a phrase.
- The score for each team is the total points earned. The team with the highest score wins the game.

Gestures: To act out an item, one usually starts by indicating how many words are in the item by holding up fingers for the number of words. If you are using three sets of phrase slips for the beginning, middle, or end of the story, have them indicate which basket they choose from by pointing to it. From then on, the usual procedure is to act out the words one at a time (although not necessarily in the order that they appear in the phrase). In some cases, they may wish to act out the underlined word first, then the rest of the phrase.

Keep the basket of word phrases handy for student pairs or groups to play on their own, if there is time and space. Periodically add new words and phrases to it.

Additional Activity: Picture-ades

Students may want to play a different form of Charades where they draw a picture or scene that incorporates the words or phrases, and their team must guess what it is. Make sure the rules of this game indicate only pictures can be drawn and no words are allowed in the drawings. This activity can be played with as few as 2 players.

ASSESSMENT: Vocabulary

Levels of mastery 1-4

Level 1: Student is unable to recognize words that have been taught, cannot use them in phrases, and is unable to express their meanings.

Level 2: Student is able to understand words being taught, can use some in phrases, and is able to express their meanings with some assistance from the teacher.

Level 3: Student is able to understand words being taught, can use some in phrases, and uses appropriate gestures to express their meanings.

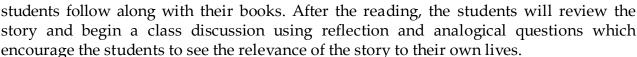
Level 4: Student is able to understand words being taught, can use them in phrases, and uses exceptionally inventive gestures to express their meanings.

IV. INDEPENDENT READING OF THE STORY

A. Developing Reflection & Analogical Thinking

Teaching-Stories are designed to teach us through analogy, so students should be encouraged to think about and relate the characters, their actions and thoughts to their own lives, thoughts and behaviors.

For this third experience with the story, students will read the story independently, or you may want to read the story aloud, or play the CD while



SKILLS AND STRATEGIES

Personal Response

discussion

Comprehension

- determining main ideas
 - making inferences

Thinking

- reflecting
- generating analogies

This sequence of activities should take about 45-55 minutes of uninterrupted time.

TO PREPARE FOR THE LESSON

- Make sure that you have a copy of *Neem the Half-Boy* book for each student.
- Have a CD and CD player if you are using the audio CD for the read-aloud.
- If you are going to use the journals created earlier, remind students who kept their books that they will need to bring them to class if they wish to use them for this activity.
- Read through the lesson and look at the reflection and analogical questions. Choose a few from each category, you do not have to use them all. Remember to allow wait

time when asking questions. Using pause time improves the quality and quantity of students' responses.

1. Before Reading

With this reading, students can refine their comprehension of *Neem the Half-Boy* by reading independently or hearing the story read and reviewing the story. You will begin discussions through question and answer sessions to engage their thinking about its relevance to themselves. You may tell those students who would like to read independently that they may do so (make sure these students have a quiet corner to do their reading). Students who need to use the CD for reading can use earphones or be placed where the recording will not be too loud for others.

Remind your students that this is a "Teaching-Story" created in order to help people learn about themselves and others. By hearing the story and thinking about how each of the characters act, what happens to them because of the way they act, we can all gain insights into our own behavior and the affect on our lives. Tell your students that after they read or hear the story, they will start to think about this.

During the discussions, once again let the students know that you have no interest in quizzing them and that you do not know all the answers; that instead you want to wonder and search with them and that you are interested in big ideas and you know they are, too.

When your students have had a chance to read or listen to the story, you may wish to have the students review the events in the story by taking turns summarizing the events in order, using the illustrations in the book as prompts. After the reading and review, begin asking reflection questions. Remember to use wait time.

2. Developing Reflection

Asking questions that invite students to interpret and reflect on events in the story will help develop their ability to identify with the characters in the story, their feelings and the situation. Here are some suggestions for reflection questions you might ask. Choose a few to engage the students' reflections, you don't have to use them all.

- ❖ What is an important part of this story to you? Why was that part important?
- Neem was very clever but couldn't make himself whole. Are there people who are clever but cannot do everything?
- ❖ What does the wise man tell the fairies that Neem should do? What do the fairies actually tell Neem that he has to do? Who turns out to be right?
- * Why do you think the fairies assumed that Neem would have to drive Taneen the Dragon out of his cave?
- How do you think Neem felt when the fairies told him that he had to drive the dragon away?

IV. Independent Reading/Reflection & Analogical Thinking

- How do you think Neem felt when he learned that Taneen was sad about breathing fire over everyone and really didn't want to do it?
- Neem had only half a body in this story. Do you think there are some ways that people are often only half or only part of what they could be?
- * Even though it was important for the queen to eat the apple, she started thinking about something else and didn't finish it. Completing the Wiseman's instructions was obviously very important for her, so why do you think that happened?
- ❖ What are some other examples of people forgetting about doing important things, just like the queen did? Why do you think this happens?
- What questions do you have?

3. Generating Analogies:

Analogical questions allow a student to think about the story's characters, their thoughts and actions, and what happens to them "as if it were me." In this way students can increase their understanding of the meanings contained in a Teaching-Story and how these relate to themselves and their world.

You may wish to have students form pairs to discuss the analogies they think of together and then have students share their discussions in the larger group.

Using characters from the story, here are some suggestions that you might pick to encourage analogical thought in your students.

THE QUEEN - You might say to the students:

It is the careless behavior of an adult – a queen, no less – that leads to very sad consequences: her son is born a half-boy. Moreover, she seems to have no idea that Neem is half because she followed only half the instructions that lead to his birth.

We do not always know the effects of our actions. And, if we do, we do not always internalize that knowledge enough to change our behavior. Like the king and queen of this story, we sometimes do not realize that we are responsible for our own behavior and its consequence. Can you think of examples of this very common pattern of thinking and behaving?

NEEM – You might say to the students:

Neem feels bad about being half, and he asks everyone to help him to become whole, but no one knows how. We all sometimes feel this sense of incompleteness, don't we? And we often feel that no one can help us or understand us.

Neem is fed-up with his limitations and is sad: having to hop, having to go by horse. He says later: "I want to be a whole boy very much!" He overcomes his fear and goes to face the dragon because he wants so much to be whole! This isn't easy for him to do.

Just like Neem, we all sometimes feel we are dissatisfied with who we are and we desire to grow or change in some way—in other words, to become whole. Can you think of examples

of this? (Suggest that students think of examples of people they have read about or characters they have seen in films and television as well as examples from their own first-hand experience.)

Neem needs courage and determination to face Taneen the Dragon. But when he does face the dragon, he finds that he doesn't need to chase him away or act violently towards him. Taneen and Neem negotiate an arrangement whereby they both get what they need.

Just like Neem, we sometimes behave aggressively, or roughly, in thoughts and deeds towards people whom we might be able to help rather than attack. And we sometimes think that we need more willpower to make ourselves do something or change something about us, when what we really need first is more understanding about it. Can you think of examples of this? (Suggest that students think of examples of people they have read about or characters they have seen in films and television as well as examples from their own first-hand experience.)

TANEEN THE DRAGON – You might say to the students:

Taneen is breathing fire all over the place – he can't control it. He is hurting people and himself by behaving in this way and he knows it. He needs someone to help him. He sees that Neem needs his help to become whole, and, once he is whole, Neem will be able to help him by fetching him a cooking-stove so that he can contain his fire.

We all sometimes need something like a cooking-stove to help stop ourselves from "breathing fire all over the place," in other words, not behaving as well as we could. What might that "cooking-stove" be for you? For example, sports may help someone discharge excess energy and emotion and, thus, enable him/her to attend to other areas of life in a calmer way.

There are times when we don't realize that people need our help. And there are times when we behave badly towards people, when, instead, we could try and understand their actions and talk with them to come up with a different kind of solution. Can you think of examples of this? (Suggest that students think of examples of people they have read about or characters they have seen in films and television as well as examples from their own first-hand experience.)

We sometimes miss opportunities to help people and we sometimes think more about people helping us, rather than about opportunities we have to help others. Can you think of an instance where you could have behaved more like Taneen at the end of the story, but instead you "breathed fire all over the place" (i.e., got irritable, or angry, or lost your temper)?

THE FAIRIES – You might say to the students:

The fairies always know where the wise man is and are able to ask him for help. Is there a part of ourselves that knows how to reach the wisest part of us in order to understand how we might "become whole"?

In this story, fairies do not always get it exactly right, though. They assume that the wise man meant that Neem had to drive out Taneen, but that isn't what he said, nor is it what happened

Sometimes our assumptions about something make it hard for us to listen carefully, or think afresh — just like the fairies. Can you think of examples of this? (Suggest that students think of examples of people they have read about or characters they have seen in films and television as well as examples from their own first-hand experience.)

THE WISE MAN – You might say to the students:

Sometimes we are lucky enough to find someone who is wiser than we are at a particular time and so he or she can help us in our effort to understand more about ourselves and our world. And sometimes we may be our own "wise man."

We can use the examples in this story to see how carefully we need to listen and follow the advice and instructions of people who know how to do something that we want to learn. Can you think of examples of situations where people needed the help of a wise man and were fortunate enough to get it? (Suggest that students think of examples of people they have read about or characters they have seen in films and television as well as examples from their own first-hand experience.)

ASSESSMENT: Generating Reflection & Analogical Thinking

Levels of mastery 1-4

Level 1: Student is unable to connect anything in the story to anything in his/her own life, even as a one-to-one relationship.

Level 2: Student is able to make a one-to-one connection between objects or characters in the story and objects or characters in his/her own life but is unable to make inferences (e.g., he/she read a story about a dragon once).

Level 3: Student is able to make a one-to-one connection in the story to events in his/her life that demonstrates an event in the story.

Level 4: Student is able to make an analogical connection to something in his/her life and can elaborate on these feelings.

"... Even young children without any formal training have a natural capacity to reason by analogy. By allowing students to juxtapose situations, characters and events that occur in Teaching-Stories with those that occur in their own lives, we enhance their ability to understand, through analogy, aspects of their lives that may otherwise perplex or confuse them. When children start to think in this way with these stories, they begin to experience social and emotional growth."

-Keith J. Holyoak, Paul Thagard, Mental Leaps: Analogy in Creative Thought, MIT Press, 1996.

B. Personal Response Journal

Good readers engage with what they are reading by thinking about the events, asking questions, reflecting and readjusting their thinking as they read. Keeping a personal response journal enables students to maintain a record of their responses and thoughts over time. This practice helps them develop good reading and thinking skills.



SKILLS AND STRATEGIES

Personal Response

- discussion
 - writing

Comprehension

- determining important ideas
 - making inferences
 - synthesizing

Thinking

reflection

This sequence of activities should take about 30-40 minutes of uninterrupted time.

TO PREPARE FOR THE LESSON

- If the students have made their own Personal Response books, have them use these books for this activity. If they have not made them and they wish to, refer to those instructions and proceed with this activity after this is completed. Or, they may want to use spiral-bound notebooks, composition books or a section in their notebooks identified as "Personal Response Journal."
- If they want to add more words to their ABC Word List, make sure they have them available.
- Make sure students have their own copies of *Neem the Half Boy*.
- Read over the lesson plans so that you are familiar with the steps to follow.

Reading with a Personal Response Journal

- **1**. Tell students that they will be reading the story on their own and writing their thoughts in a personal response journal as they read.
- **2**. Have students use the books they created or give out composition books, or have students create a section in their notebooks where they will keep their personal response journals.
- **3.** On a flipchart or on the board, draw a line down the center of the page, dividing it in half. On the left side write "Notes from the Story" and on the right side write "My Thoughts."
- **4.** Give students an example of how they might write in their personal response journals. A few ideas you can share are on the next page.
- **5**. Let students know that this personal response journal is only for them. Tell students that you will be asking for *volunteers* to share some of their writing, but it is not mandatory.
- **6.** Ask students to look in the story book and find a suggestion for an entry they might want to write in their personal response journal. Make sure they all understand that they will be writing the notes from the story on one side and adding their personal response to that entry on the other side.
- **7**. Once the students understand how to proceed, have them write at least one entry in their journals and then ask volunteers to share their examples.

ASSESSMENT: Synthesizing

Levels of mastery 1-4

Level 1: Student is unable to make any connections to personal experience or prior knowledge.

Level 2: Student is able to make surface connections to personal experience.

Level 3: Student is able to make logical and/or empathetic connections to personal experience.

Level 4: Student is able to make multiple and insightful connections to personal experience and/or other subjects and other people's experiences.

EXAMPLE OF PERSONAL RESPONSE JOURNAL

Notes from Neem the Half-Boy	My Thoughts
The queen became distracted when she was eating the apple. She only ate half of it. This caused the boy to be a half-boy when he was born	Sometimes I say I will do something and then get interrupted by something exciting or different and don't follow through,
Taneen the Dragon is breathing fire all over the place and annoying everyone. Neem learns that the Dragon can't help	although people may be relying on me. Sometimes I assume that people are behaving in a way I don't like on purpose. It
ít, because the fire goes everywhere when he cooks his food. He hasn't got a cook-stove and Neem gets him one.	might just be that they can't help it, and I may be able to help them once I understand why they are behaving like that.

C. It's All About Change

Students can refine thinking and observation skills when they explore the world around them and the changes that they observe and how these changes affect them.

TO PREPARE FOR THE LESSON

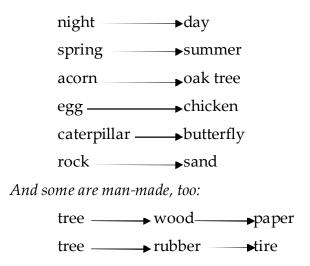
- Have chart paper and markers for the changes list in step 2.
- For the art pieces in step **3**, have available a choice of art supplies such as art paper for painting or drawing; paint; drawing utensils; old magazines; leaves, seeds, sticks and other small items from nature; play dough for sculptures; sand; glitter; pipe cleaners; plastic beverage bottles; styrofoam cups; strips of newspaper or newsprint; paste (see recipe); wax paper or extra newspaper to cover work areas; and pie pans for paste for papier-mâché sculptures.
- For the mobiles, have available writing and drawing (or painting) utensils, 8 ½ x 11" white paper, several pairs of scissors, old magazines, glue, hole puncher, cellophane tape, stapler, yard, construction paper, and coat hangers. (Some local libraries may be happy to get rid of old magazines; and local cleaners may gladly give out hangers to schools.)

Each of these activities should take about 30-40 minutes of uninterrupted time. Some items require overnight drying.

1. Suggest to the students that the story of *Neem the Half-Boy* is about a boy who wants to change: he wants to become whole. This will give you the opportunity to have the students think about the many things in the world that change. You may want to introduce this activity by saying something like this:

Some things change in a short time and other things change over a much longer time.

- ❖ There are changes in the natural world (an acorn becomes an oak tree).
- ❖ There are changes that people make that help us in our world (wood becomes paper).
- ❖ Some changes we can see (day becomes night).
- \diamond Some changes are so slow, or so small, that we don't see them (rock becomes sand).
- **2.** Have the students form small groups to think of examples for each of the categories of change above. To encourage your students to think about changes that happen in the world, show some examples, such as those below. Write the words on chart paper or the board, and draw a line from one word to the word that shows the change. As each group thinks of an example, have them share their ideas with the rest of the class while you write them on chart paper or the board.



3. Have the students make an art piece about change. It can be a two-dimensional piece such as a drawing or painting; or a mixed-media piece, such as a collage, a sculpture, or a mobile. Here are some ideas:

Collage Art: Have students collect leaves, seeds, acorns, small sticks, small pinecones, sand, shells and other items from nature. Hand out art paper and glue and have the students glue the pieces on paper in a design that would show how seeds grow and change into larger plants or trees, or how shellfish go from small eggs (which they can draw) to larger shells, etc. They may want to add their own drawings or glue on pictures cut from old magazines, or sprinkle sand over wet glue for a textured effect.

Rubbings: Place a thin sheet of paper over leaves, beans, seeds and other small natural objects arranged in a pattern, and rub crayons over the paper to show the pattern. Use different colors on the same rubbing for a multicolored effect. Students may want to draw other figures on their rubbings to show change. Or they may want to cut out some of their rubbings and glue onto a collage of pictures cut from old magazines, or attach leaf rubbings onto a small twig to make a "tree branch" to show how a tree's leaves can change colors in different seasons.

Play Dough Sculptures: Have students form play dough (see recipe below) into shapes that show how something changes. For instance, they may want to form an egg and a chicken; or a caterpillar and a butterfly. They may want to paint their sculpture after it dries with poster or tempura paint.

Traditional Play Dough

1 cup flour

1 cup warm water

2 teaspoons cream of tartar

1 teaspoon oil

1/4 cup salt

To make colored play dough, add colored gelatin.

❖ Papier-mâché Art: Cut or tear newsprint or newspaper into 1" x 6-8" strips. Mix the paste and pour in pie pans (see recipe below). Dip the strip into the paste, and apply to a form such as a small inflated balloon, polystyrene (foam) cups, plastic beverage bottles. Cover the form completely with strips. Once the item has dried (overnight), it can be painted with poster or tempura paints, sprinkled with glitter and/or sand. When the paint is dried, glue on buttons, beads, and other body parts (such as butterfly wings), add ribbons, pipe cleaners, etc. (see the example).

Traditional Paste

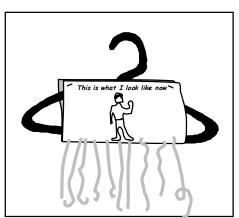
Option 1: 3/4 white glue to 1/4 water

Option 2: COOK METHOD: 1 part flour

to 5 parts water...boil about 3 minutes and let cool

Option 3: 1 part flour to 1 part water. Stir together.

♦ Mobile Art: a. Fold a sheet of 8.5 x 11" paper in half. On one side **with the fold at the bottom**, draw a picture of the



thing(s) before the change, flip it over and on the other side draw a picture of the thing(s) after the change, also with the fold at the bot-

Example of Papier-mâché
Chrysalis/Butterfly



Wrap strips of pasted newsprint around a plastic bottle. Allow to dry before painting. Adding an inch or so of sand in the bottle will help stabilize it.



For a head that can be removed and replaced as desired, wrap strips of pasted newsprint around a small styrofoam cup. Once the strips are dry, the cup can be removed, and the head painted/decorated.



Place cellophane wrap around the painted bottle for the chrysalis. Remove. Then add the head and attach cut-out paper wings with tape to the back side to make a butterfly.

tom. For instance, on one side there's a drawing of a boy, and on the other side there's a drawing of a man. Let the students choose what to draw on both sides. Instead of drawing, they may want to cut out pictures from old magazines that help demonstrate change and glue on the sides of the paper. They may want to write

some words explaining their drawings, or write a title to their drawings.

- **b**. Once the drawings are finished, place a coat hanger between the folded halves, and staple or tape it at the top (see illustration).
- **e**. Suspend yarn or cut strips of paper as streamers and tape or glue to the bottom as decorations.

V. RESPONDING TO THE STORY

A. Determining Important Ideas

When students learn to determine important ideas, they deepen their comprehension and develop good reading skills. These skills will transfer to other reading activities in which they engage. With this reading, you will help them focus on determining the important ideas in the story.

Neem the Half-Boy is a story about solving problems. This story can help students understand various aspects of problem solving. It will encourage them to consider problems in their own lives as challenges to be overcome and as opportunities for growth, rather than as obstacles.

Remember that for this activity students should freely think and express their thoughts. To do this, they need to feel psychologically safe and know that all their responses will be accepted and that there are no "correct" answers.

SKILLS AND STRATEGIES

Thinking

• compare and contrast

Comprehension

• determining important ideas

This sequence of activities should take about 30-40 minutes of uninterrupted time.

TO PREPARE FOR THE LESSON

- Each student will need a copy of *Neem the Half-Boy*.
- If students are listening to the CD, make sure it is available and the CD player is working.
- Have available chart paper or the board for the class discussion.
- Make sure the students have their Personal Response Journals.
- **1.** Lead a discussion about the problems that the various characters have to solve and how they go about doing so. You might say something like:

This story is about solving problems. Let's think about the characters in the story, their problems and how they go about solving them.

The Queen:

Problem - She wants a son and does not know how to get one.

Action - She asks everyone how to get a son.

Solution – *Finally, she gets a solution from a reliable source.*

Result – *Since she ignores half of solution, she has only half a son.*

Effect – *Neem is born with a problem, he is only half.*

What can we learn from the Queen's behavior?

Discuss with your students what the queen's behavior might show us. For example:

- that you need patience to solve problems
- that seeking the correct solution from all available sources is a good idea
- that others may help you find the solution to your problem
- that one has to solve one's problems oneself
- that solutions have to be carried out in their entirety or the result may be unexpected and cause unhappiness not only for oneself but for others as well.

Neem the Half-Boy:

Problem – Neem is half and wants to be whole.

Action - Neem asks everyone how to become whole

Solution - Neem finally gets a solution from a reliable source.

Result – The messengers this time do not convey the message accurately so the action required to solve the problem is misunderstood.

Effect – Neem thinks he has to confront the dragon and drive him away. He doesn't.

What can we learn from the Neem's behavior?

Discuss with your students what Neem's behavior might show us. For example:

- that you need patience to solve problems
- that seeking the correct solution from all sources is a good idea
- that others may have a solution to your problem
- that people may be very pleased to help you solve your problem
- that problems may seem as if they will be harder to solve than they are really
- that when you solve your own problem you can help others too.

Taneen the Dragon:

Problem - He's breathing fire over all the people and they don't like it.

Action - He sees that Neem can help him.

Solution - Neem gets him a cooking-stove to contain his fire.

Result – He can cook his food without hurting anyone.

Effect – Everyone lives happily together.

What can we learn from the Dragon's behavior?

Discuss with your students what Neem's behavior might show us.

For example:

- that some of our problems are caused by our behavior
- that our behavior affects ourselves and others, too
- that sometimes we know the solution to our behavioral problem, but need other people to help us implement it
- that sometimes we may solve our problem by thinking about and helping others
- that we may need to be patient to solve this kind of problem
- that we can change our behavior
- that changing our behavior in a positive way can help ourselves and others, too.
- **2.** After discussion, have students make two columns in their personal journals and list what they think are problems they need to solve (see example below). Then, have them refer to what we learned about problem solving from the book and see if any of these points are helpful in suggesting a solution:

PROBLEM

I want to go straight home after school and do my homework before I hang out with my friend. That way I don't forget to get it done. But I am worried my friend won't understand and will stop inviting me to join him after school.

SOLVING THE PROBLEM

(Like Neem) I am thinking this will be difficult and I might lose my friend.

(Like Neem and Taneen) If I explain things clearly and my friend understands that I need his help, it will be fine.

If he doesn't at first, I can ask him if he would like to come with me and we can help each other do our

- **3**. Tell the students that there are many insights to be gained by reflecting on the ideas contained in Teaching-Stories like this. Suggest that they reflect on other ideas and passages that we have not covered in class and think about how they might relate these to their lives.
- **4.** Encourage your students to write their thoughts in their journals any time they want to. You might suggest the following to get them started, but again, they need only share them with the class if they wish to:

JOURNAL ENTRY: BECOMING WHO I CAN BECOME

1. You might tell your students:

This story is in part about fulfilling our potential, in other words, becoming all we can become. Neem is born incomplete, but he is not satisfied with this state and wants to find out how to make himself complete.

We all sometimes feel a bit like Neem.

But what becoming whole means for each of us can be quite different, and it can be quite different at different times in our lives. I'd like you to take a few minutes to think about what becoming all you can become means for you today. And to think about what you would need to learn, and what, if anything, you would need to change?

2. Have students write their ideas in their journal. Those who would like to can discuss them, but certainly don't have to. You might also suggest to your students that they return to this idea from time to time by saying:

From time to time, you might return to the ideas you had today about what becoming complete or whole means to you and see if your thoughts about what this means for you have changed and, if so, how they have changed. Thinking about yourself in this way can help you to focus on what really matters to you. And recording these thoughts in your journal helps you remember to do this.

3. Remind them that their personal response journals are private and they can share only when they want to.

ASSESSMENT: Determining Important Ideas

Levels of mastery 1-4

Level 1: Student is unable to determine any important ideas expressed in the story when asked to do so and sees no significance or relevance to his/her own life.

Level 2: Student is able to determine one or two important ideas but is unable to infer any relevance or significance.

Level 3: Student is able to determine a number of important ideas and is able to infer relevance and significance (e.g., the student says that the story examines ways to solve problems that may help her arrive at positive outcomes to problems in her own life).

Level 4: Student is able to determine important ideas with a depth of insight and to infer relevance and significance to his/her own life. (For example, the student says that the story helped him/her think about ways to solve personal problems. Or, that the feeling of psychological incompleteness is one that the student has experienced and the story helps "normalize" and think about this feeling.)

B. Dialogue Writing

NEGOTIATION VS. CONFRONTATION

Students can refine their thinking and comprehension of the story with this activity. This activity will encourage students to write creatively and to express their understanding of this aspect of the story and what it means to them.

SKILLS AND STRATEGIES

Personal Response

- retelling
- <u>Thinking</u>
- reflection

Comprehension

- synthesizing
- determining important ideas

This sequence of activities should take about 30-40 minutes of uninterrupted time.

TO PREPARE FOR THE LESSON

- Have paper and a variety of writing and drawing implements such as pens, markers, and colored pencils available and well placed for students to use.
- Have the student's and the class ABC Word Lists and list of observations available for reference.
- Have a copy of the book *Neem the Half-Boy* for each student or groups of students.
- If students are unfamiliar with writing dialogue, you may want to have some examples on chart paper or the board.
- If you are going to use the books created earlier, remind students who kept their books that they will need to bring those books to class if they wish to use them for this activity.
- You may wish to read through these directions so that you are familiar with the steps to follow.
- 1. Remind students how Neem initially thinks he has to confront the dragon, (i.e., face the dragon defiantly) driving him out in order to get the medicine from Taneen's cave. Discuss how, with negotiation (i.e., talking together to come to an agreement), both Taneen and Neem get what they need from each other.

Discuss what steps Taneen and Neem took to negotiate their agreement:

- **a**. They needed to listen to each other.
- **b**. They both needed to say clearly what their problem was and what they needed.
- **c**. They needed to work together to come up with a solution that would solve both their problems.
- **d**. They helped each other.
- **e**. They found a solution that worked for everyone involved even the villagers could now live in peace.
- **2.** Tell the students to think about a situation, either imaginary or real, in which they have a choice to confront or negotiate an outcome to a situation and work with one or more people to achieve their goals. Ask them to think about the steps that happened in the book (1a-1e above).

Share some examples so that students understand the concepts of negotiation versus confrontation.

- **3.** Have students discuss their ideas with a partner. Then, if they wish, have students share their examples to the class.
- **4.** Have them write in their own words the dialogue between the characters involved. They may want to use their ABC Word Lists or refer to the list of observations started in the first lesson.
- **5**. Students may want to copy their written dialogues in the books they created, or you might gather them into a class book and keep it in the class library for students to read again. Students may also want to illustrate their writing so that there is both text and images, or they can create a comic strip with dialogue.
- **6.** Students may wish to share their dialogues with the class, or they may want to act out their written dialogue as skits. If students choose to create and perform skits, you may wish to videotape the skits for playback and discussion in class.
- **7**. Collect the copies of *Neem the Half-Boy* and keep them in the classroom until the rest of the lessons are completed. Remind the students, they will be taking them home very soon.

ASSESSMENT: Dialogue Writing (reflecting, synthesizing, determining important ideas)

Levels of mastery 1-4

Level 1: Student is unable to determine any important ideas expressed in the story and cannot synthesize dialogue.

Level 2: Student is able to determine one or two important ideas but is unable to infer relevance and significance.

Level 3: Student is able to determine a number of important ideas and is able to infer relevance and significance. (For example, the student says that the story contrasts using negotiation and confrontation as ways of solving a problem and says this makes him/her think about using negotiation instead of confrontation to solve issues in his/her own life.)

Level 4: Student is able to determine important ideas with a depth of insight and to infer relevance and significance to his/her own life. (For example, the student says that the story helps him/her examine the difference in outcome and quality of life when one negotiates solutions to problems and how empathy develops as a result of using conflict resolution. This is significant to him/her because it initiates thinking about how he/she sometimes reacts by using confrontation in a situation instead of thinking how to negotiate an outcome.)

"Constructing meaning is the major requisite to learning and the core of intellectual processing. When children make analogies, they are constructing meaning by relating something that is both emotionally and intellectually familiar to them with the new information. This is a very powerful way to learn."

-Yvette Jackson, Ph.D., National Urban Alliance for Effective Education, "Reversing Underachievement in Urban Students: Pedagogy of Confidence" in Costa, A., *Developing Minds: A Resource Book for Teaching Thinking*, ASCD, 2001.

C. Retelling with Puppets

Creating and working with puppets allow students to learn how to express themselves through a medium that both entertains and informs simultaneously. Students will create a simple hand puppet out of a paper bag and use the puppets to retell the story. Using puppets often helps students who are otherwise shy to express themselves in a non-threatening way. Students also learn cooperative interaction.

SKILLS AND STRATEGIES <u>Personal Response</u> • retelling

This sequence of activities should take about 40-50 minutes of uninterrupted time.

TO PREPARE FOR THE LESSON

- Collect all of the materials you will need for the paper bag puppet. Have materials ready for distribution. Have materials well organized and easily accessible to students. (A set of instructions is included in these lesson plans. You may want to make photocopies of these instructions and have them available at the work stations so students can refer to them.)
- Look over the directions for making a paper bag puppet. You may wish to try one
 on your own to show the students. (If you want to have the students use fingerpuppets or felt-board characters, please review the instructions included in this
 guide and prepare ahead of time.)
- Materials you will need for the paper bag puppets: lunch-size paper bags, colored pencils, crayons, markers, glue, paste spreader, disposable containers (for the glue and paste spreader), colored construction paper or cardstock, tape, scissors, newsprint or plastic sheeting to cover desks or tables. Optional: tissue paper, wax paper, pipe cleaners, foil, beads, buttons, fabric scraps, yarn, plastic eyes, etc.
- Have the book available to students for reference.

Tell students that they are going to make a paper bag puppet of one of the characters in the story and later they will use the puppets to retell the story of the boy without a name who was patient and finally earned his name.

1. Discuss the characters from the story with your students. Talk about the queen, the king, the fairies, the village people, Arif the Wise Man, Neem, Taneen. You might refer to descriptive words they have previously identified to describe these characters, and encourage them to come up with others. Tell the students that getting to know the

characters will help them create puppets that look like the characters and help them to act out their personalities and voices as they retell the story using the puppets they make.

- **2.** Remind the students that they are going to make a paper bag puppet of one of the characters in the story and later they will use them to retell the story. Using the instructions provided in this guide, demonstrate the drawing, cutting and assembly of the puppets to the students, as you are making one with them. Some students will make Nameless, while others will make another character, so adapt your instructions accordingly.
- **3.** Distribute a "lunch-size" paper bag, construction paper or other sturdy paper for each puppet to be made and place all the art materials within reach. Have students write their names on the back of their bags before assembly.
- **4.** Read the step-by-step directions or demonstrate the steps as needed, so students can follow along. (Having the book and several copies of the printed instructions nearby may be helpful for the students.)
- **5**. Allow the paper bag puppets to dry completely before use.
- **6**. Have students clean up and replace materials in storage.
- **7**. When students have completed their puppets, let them gather in groups of 2-3 and act out the story. If some students have made Neem and others have made other characters, group the characters together for retelling.
- **8**. You may also have students use the felt-board characters or finger puppets to retell the story. Students may want to use the puppets to act out their own written dialogues. (See the instructions included in this guide for making finger puppets and felt-board characters.)

Students may take their puppets home after they have had their puppet shows. However, you may want to keep the



puppets in the classroom where students can use them for skits and retelling.

ASSESSMENT: Retelling

Levels of mastery 1-4

Level 1: Student is unable to retell the entire story and remembers only one or two events, not the key events, and not in the correct order.

Level 2: Student is able to recall and retell when assisted by clues, such as illustrations in the book.

Level 3: Student is able to retell the key events (beginning, middle, end) in the correct order, leaving out only minor details.

Level 4: Student is able to retell the entire story, in the correct order, including all of the main events and the important details.

D. Writing & Retelling

Students can refine their comprehension of the story by writing about it in different ways. Students who wish to can re-read the story whole story independently or by listening to the CD. Students will retell the story as a poem, or a song, encouraging their creative, artistic selves. They may also write a poem or song about their lives that relates to the story analogically. The students may wish to put their writing in the books that they created. The students' writings may also be read as a part of the Readers' Theater, just before the intermission, or at the end of the performance, or during a "parent night" at the school.

SKILLS AND STRATEGIES

Personal Response

• retelling

Comprehension

synthesizing

Thinking

• reflection

This sequence of activities should take about 30-40 minutes of uninterrupted time.

TO PREPARE FOR THE LESSON

- Familiarize yourself with the different types of poetry and literary techniques that you wish to teach.
- Have paper, staplers, and coloring materials for making simple picture books available.
- If you are going to use the books created earlier, remind students who kept their books, that they will need to bring those books to class if they wish to use them for this activity.
- Have a copy of the book available to hand out to each student.
- 1. Teach the students about different types of poems and literary techniques which they can use in their writing, such as:

POEM:

Ballad: A ballad is like a folk tale or legend meant to be sung. The narrator tells a story, usually beginning with an exciting episode, and without self-reference. A ballad often has repeated refrain.

Epic: An epic is a long, serious poem, usually telling a hero's story.

<u>Haiku</u>: A haiku is a Japanese poem usually consisting of 3 unrhymed lines with 5, 7, and 5 syllables. A haiku usually refers to nature or a season.

<u>Free verse</u>: Free verse is a fluid form of poetry free of traditional rules of meter, rhyme, or versification.

LITERARY TECHNIQUES:

<u>Metaphor</u>: a metaphor expresses one concept in terms of another, using the verb "to be" (e.g., "You are a bud that sprouts in the night").

<u>Onomatopoeia:</u> using words that imitate the sound associated with the thing or action, such as "hiss" and "buzz."

<u>Alliteration</u>: repetition of initial consonants in neighboring words such as: "In the end, the eagle eluded the elderly woman by exiting."

<u>Simile</u>: a simile compares two things using "like" or "as" (e.g., "He is like wind on a moonless night").

- **2.** Have the students write a story, poem or song that is inspired by the story, refers to the story, or has something to do with the story. Make sure each student has access to the book for referral.
- **3**. Or, if the students choose to work with prose or poetry, rap, or anything else, suggest that they try rewriting the story in their own words. You may suggest that they rewrite the story from the point of view of one of the characters. If the students would like some ideas, you might say:

Imagine yourself as Neem the Half-Boy, and write a poem that he may write.

Or

Imagine you are the wise man. Write a poem from his perspective, in other words, "as if" you were the wise man...or some other character.

4. Alternately, ask the student to rewrite the story in their own words, in modern times. You might say to the students:

Can you think of a real-life situation, or one from a book or film or television program, in which someone was faced with a situation where the person was trying to "become whole"? Can you think of a situation in which someone acted like the queen and became distracted while doing something very important?

5. Hand out 10 - 15 pieces of blank or colored paper to each student. Have students turn their creative writing into an illustrated book. The writing may also be written and illustrated as comic book. Have the students fold all of the papers in half together and staple them down the middle to create a booklet in which they will write and illustrate their stories. Students may also put their writing in their personal response journals.

6. Those who choose to do so can read their writings aloud to the class. You may want to gather these into a Class Book for the classroom library until the end of these lessons, or make copies for displaying or reading at a "parent night." The writings can be incorporated into and performed during the Reader's Theater.

ASSESSMENT: Retelling

Levels of mastery 1-4

Level 1: Student is unable to retell the story, even with teacher assistance. Writing is lifeless.

Level 2: Student is able to retell elements of the story using poetry but the organization and structure are lacking and language is sometimes unimaginative; finds it difficult to express analogical use of the original story.

Level 3: Student can retell the story using poetry; can express the analogical use of the original story. Writing is appropriate and words are creative.

Level 4: Student uses exceptionally expressive language and form to retell the story using poetry; can express the analogical use of the original story. Writer may use humor, emotion, suspense or liveliness.

"Teaching-Stories are key to our basic cognitive development, leading the child and then the adult to learn more about what happens in the world and when and how events come together. It's as if we had the unassembled parts of a bicycle and knew, through analogy (the shapes perhaps), that there was a relationship between the handles and our hands, the pedals and our feet, and so on. We may even have an idea that these are a necessary part of what is known as 'a bike' and of 'riding a bike.' But to actually assemble the bike correctly, then to be able to ride it, when and where to ride it, etc., that requires contextual thinking: seeing each disparate part as part of a whole. That 'whole,' of course, expands with experience and understanding. A comprehensive study of Teaching-Stories provides what is, for all intents and purposes, a limitless whole...."

Robert Ornstein, Ph.D., "Teaching-Stories and the Brain," a lecture at Library of Congress

E. Creating Thoughtshots

Some students may wish to further develop their writing skills and learn to use their thoughts, reflections, feelings, and opinions to improve the quality of their writing.

"Thoughtshots" allow the writer to go into his/her own mind and reflect on his/her writing and the event being written about. The student learns to understand the writer's role better and how the writer uses language to give the reader a reason to be interested in the writing.

SKILLS AND STRATEGIES

Personal Response

retelling

Comprehension

- synthesizing
- determining important ideas
 - making inferences
 - visualizing
 - **Thinking**
 - reflecting

This sequence of activities should take about 30-40 minutes of uninterrupted time.

TO PREPARE FOR THE LESSON

- You may wish to write a Thoughtshot to share with students. (One is provided for the story at the end of this lesson.)
- Students may wish to use their journals they created for this writing. Remind those who took them home to bring them to class.

Tell students that they are going to be writing a "Thoughtshot." Explain to them that a Thoughtshot is taken from 2 words: "thought" and "snapshot." It is something writers need to do in order to go deeper into themselves as writers as well as getting inside the mind of the characters they write about. Thoughtshots explore the thoughts and feelings of the characters. Here are the steps for this activity:

- **1**. Using a sample Thoughtshot you create or the one below, have a discussion about the following elements:
 - What is the context of this event? Where does it take place?
 - How did this event influence/affect the character's life?

V. Responding to Story/Creating Thoughtshots

- How did the character feel?
- What was the character thinking?
- What changes have occurred at this moment?
- What do you think the character realizes now that he/she is looking back?
- What did the character learn or gain from this moment/event/experience?

Types of Thoughtshots

Here are some examples of Thoughtshot starters using *Neem the Half-Boy*:

Flashback (Reflecting on something from the past)

The queen remembered the first time she asked the fairies to help her get a little boy for a son. She recalled that, at the time, she hadn't put much value in the work of fairies, but she had been at her wits end. On her way to see the fairies, she recalled thinking that this was a waste of time, what would fairies know...

Or:

One evening, the fairies were remembering the day the queen came to them with a strange question. Before that time, no one had ever asked them such a question. They had thought the queen would be angry because they didn't know how to help her. They each began to think of ways to tell the queen that they just couldn't help. Finally, the smallest of them had said, "We could go and ask Arif the Wise Man."

Flash-ahead (Projecting ideas about something that might happen in the future)

The fairies told the queen what the wise man said. Excitedly, she started to eat the apple and began to imagine herself with her new son, taking him to playgrounds, school, on trips...

Or:

The king knew how much they wanted a little boy for a son. Someone in the palace said that the fairies might be able to help, but he didn't know how to talk to fairies. Perhaps the queen would know how to speak to them....

Internal Dialogue (Discussing with yourself about what is going on)

The wise man sees the fairies coming over the hill for the second time.

"Oh dear, here come the fairies from Hich-Hich. The queen can't have followed my instructions! I fail to understand why it is that so often, people come all this way to find me and to get a solution to a really vexing problem, but then fail to carry out my recommendations for a solution. All she had to do was eat the apple I gave the fairies. I knew how busy the queen was, so I gave her the simplest solution I could think of, but she has such a short attention span! Now it will be up to her son to help himself."

Or:

(The queen discusses with herself why she had a half-boy.)

"Why isn't he like other boys. Perhaps the fairies got it all wrong, and I was supposed to have planted the apple seeds rather than eat the apple. How could the fairies be so careless with such an important question! Or, perhaps the wise man made a mistake and picked up the wrong apple!"

See also an example of Thoughtshot for *Neem the Half-Boy* at the end of this lesson.

- **2.** Before writing, have students and their partners discuss what they are going to write about.
- **3**. Have the students write a full-page Thoughtshot.
- **4.** Have students exchange their writing with their partners and have partners offer suggestions to clarify their writing. Students can revise their work based on their partner's suggestions.
- **5**. If time allows, have students volunteer to read their writing aloud.
- **6.** You may want to gather these into a Class Book for the classroom library until the end of these lessons or make copies for display or reading at a "parent night."

ASSESSMENT: More Descriptive Writing (Visualizing and reflecting)

Levels of mastery 1-4

Level 1: Student is unable to demonstrate an ability to use reflective language to write in order to communicate to the reader the feelings and thoughts of the character(s) and the events that are being written about.

Level 2: Student is able to demonstrate adequately some ability to use reflective language, use words of feeling, and give some essential details that allow the reader to experience the thoughts and feelings of the writer, thoughts of the character(s), and events that are being written about.

Level 3: Student is able to use reflective language and adequately gives many essential details that allow the reader to understand what was learned and to think about what might be the possible outcome of the situation being written about.

Level 4: Student is able to elaborate on his/her thoughts and reflections, giving an understanding of what was reflected on and learned from the situation that is being described. Student synthesizes key elements.

EXAMPLE OF THOUGHTSHOT WRITING

(It's a good idea to skip lines for easy editing)

NEEM THE HALF-BOY

(These thoughts occur to the queen after the fairies return from Arif the Wise Man with the apple.)

"I am so excited! The fairies came back from the wise man, and they brought this apple with them. All I have to do is eat it, they said, and I will have a son! As easy as that! I thought it was going to be something really hard or painful to do; some strange or disgusting diet, or leeches on my tummy, or boiling hot compresses, or even some weird magical formula to learn by heart. But no – eating this apple is all I have to do. Amazing!

"It looks quite delicious, too, round, shiny and wonderfully red! Yumm! It tastes SO good, better than any apple I have ever eaten in my life! I wonder if the wise man would agree to give us some seeds from his trees for our own orchards. I must ask the fairies to go and inquire.

"Yes, this is definitely a wonderfully sweet and flavorful apple, and I can't believe how perfect it tastes; our apples tend to get maggots long before they get as sweet and juicy as this one, or the birds get them before the gardeners do. These gardeners are so lazy; they don't tend the fruit trees as well as they should. Instead, they sit under them all day long and tell stories to each other when they should be working. I have told the Minister of the Palace Garden a million times that we expect our staff to perform their duties, not evade them. But staff are always a problem! One rarely gets the help one deserves. I think I'll tell the fairies to ask the wise man to provide us with one or two of his gardeners. They might perhaps train ours to do a decent job.

"When I have this boy for a son and an orchard full of these apples, I will puree them and feed him this delicious fruit. I can just taste the goodness!

"Oh dear, the king is calling me – he sounds a bit upset. I'd better go instantly and find out what the problem is!" With that thought, the queen rushes off, leaving half the apple uneaten...

F. Prepared Readers' Theater

Readers' Theater is an excellent way to allow students to learn the story, while promoting reading fluency. Students learn to read with expression and to practice such attributes of fluency as pausing, inflection and intonation. Having students take on character roles helps them understand literary elements, such as motivation and characterization. Readers' Theater scripts also promote listening skills as students follow along silently and listen for spoken cues. The scripts provide a great opportunity for student cooperation, and they are an enjoyable way to teach reading fluency.



SKILLS AND STRATEGIES Personal Response

• Readers' Theater

This sequence of activities should take about 30-40 minutes of uninterrupted time.

TO PREPARE FOR THE LESSON

- Make a copy of the script for each student. (A prepared script is available in this guide.)
- Gather props and costumes (see script). You can make this as elaborate or as simple as your students wish. (You may want to make a mural for the stage, see next section.)

Using the Script

- **1.** Use the script as you would any reading material and make sure students are familiar with any new words. Your students should be familiar with the story and the vocabulary before they engage in this activity.
- **2.** Tell students that different combinations of readers will take turns reading the "play."
- **3.** Assign the first set of readers and give them time to practice their roles and feel confident. Encourage them to read with expression.
- **4.** When the first readers are ready, you may want to have them stand where all students can see them. They may also read from their seats. Coach the readers to look up

occasionally from their scripts and to make eye contact with the audience and other characters/readers as they read their lines.

5. Have other sets of readers take turns at reading the script.

Staging the Play

- **1**. When students have become familiar with the script from several readings, you may want to create a full stage performance with costumes, props, and an audience of students, parents, and teachers. It is always a good idea to allow more rehearsal time when applying extra touches such as costumes or movement.
- **2**. In planning a performance, encourage students to think about the expressions and movements characters might make. For example, have students think about how people look and move when they are mad, happy, angry, or nervous.
- **3**. Have students practice facial expressions. If the characters are the fairies, have students practice flying movements; if they are the half-boy, have them practice performing with only one side of their bodies. You might have a mirror around for the students to practice making their "faces."
- **4.** Encourage them to create a "voice" for their character.
- **5**. Encourage students to "ham it up," playing creatively with the script to increase the entertainment value of the performance, keeping in mind that the most important purpose of Readers' Theater is to give students a chance to build their reading fluency.
- **6.** Establish a "stage" area in the classroom, moving and using tables, desks, and chairs and using the floor as needed and as safety allows.
- **7**. Use these simple tips to keep the performance smooth and entertaining:
 - Make sure readers are positioned within view of all members of the audience. It is
 important that the audience can hear lines and see movements and expressions. If
 you choose to place all the readers in front of the audience at once, it is helpful to
 have them stand in a semicircle so that each reader can be seen by all the other
 readers and by the audience.
 - Suggest where readers should stand so that they do not block the audience's view of other readers.
 - Remind students that they should be looking at, talking to, and reacting to the
 other readers/characters. However, the narrator may face and speak to the
 audience.
 - As an alternative to having all the readers stand together in the performance area, you may want to direct the performance by having readers enter and exit off to the side before and after delivering their lines. Having readers move in and out of the performance area will require more rehearsal time.

Extras: Costumes and Props

The face and head command the most attention, so a hat, mask, or makeup can work as an entire costume. Make sure that students obtain permission before borrowing items from other people. It's best not to let them cut, paint, or modify any clothing items unless you bring in articles of clothing specifically for that purpose.

Students will have their scripts in hand while performing. So, when choosing props, keep in mind that objects which require two hands may not be practical. Encourage students to use their imagination as they transform everyday objects into props.

See next section for an activity for making murals and other props for performances.

Home Book/CDs & Prepared Script

After all classroom performances have been completed, the students can take their books and CDs (if available) home if they have kept them at school. You may want to have them also take home a photocopy of the prepared drama script for performing at home. (See more home/school activities later in this guide.)

ASSESSMENT: Reading Skills for Readers' Theater

Levels of mastery 1-4

	Mark	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
		Proficiency is not yet developed.	Some proficiency is evident.	Adequate proficiency is evident.	Above-average proficiency is evident.
Comprehension / Interpretation:	_/4	Characters are interpreted literally, superficially, or inappropriately.	Characters are interpreted appropriately, but conventionally.	Characters are interpreted appropriately and imaginatively.	Characters are interpreted creatively. Reading style deepens characterization.
Thinking / Communication:	_/4	Makes no recommendations for improvements to the production while planning and rehearsing.	Makes some superficial recommendations for improvements to the production while planning and rehearsing.	Makes some thoughtful recommendations for improvements to the production while planning and rehearsing.	Consistently makes insightful recommendations for improvements to the production while planning and rehearsing.
Personal Response Speaking / Performance:	_/4	Speaks inaudibly and rarely in the voice of the character.	Speaks audibly, and inconsistently in the voice of the character.	Speaks clearly and somewhat expressively, consistently in the voice of the character.	Speaks very clearly and expressively, communicates credibly in the voice of the character.
Overall mark:					

G. Props for Readers' Theater - Murals

Students may wish to create a mural to use as a backdrop for their presentation of *Neem the Half-Boy*. Having students make this an authentic project will make the Readers' Theater much more meaningful for them. They can invite other groups of students and their families to see the production. You can make this as elaborate or as simple as students wish.

This construction and painting of the mural should take 50 - 60 minutes of uninterrupted time. But it may take more than one day to complete to allow planning, sketching, and drying time.

TO PREPARE FOR THE LESSON

Materials:

water (washable) paints, paint brushes, foam brushes, sponges, plastic cups, paint cups & trays, art paper roll, pencils, chalk, rulers, stencils of various shapes or objects (flowers, etc.), finger paints

- Students may wish to use their drawings from the lesson on sequencing.
- Allow enough space in the room for several students to work at once on the large art roll (the mural can be as long as your "staging" area) that is taped to the wall (or laid out on the floor). Or, you may want to section off parts of the larger roll of art paper for several students or groups to work on at once. Or, cut sections of the paper roll for each student or group of students to work with at their desks or on the floor.
- Depending on your staging space, you may want to do several murals: One for the beginning scenes, one for the middle scenes, and one for the ending scenes. Allowing time during the performances for changing scenes is another possibility, but his takes coordination and rehearsal, so make sure your rehearsals include this activity.

THIS WILL TAKE MORE THAN ONE DAY TO COMPLETE. YOU MAY WISH TO DECIDE WHERE YOU ARE GOING TO KEEP THE MURAL SO THAT IT REMAINS INTACT AND CAN DRY BETWEEN CLASSES.

Here are some suggestions on making a mural:

1. Discuss some possible ideas for the mural they will be creating. Here are some suggested ideas:

The illustrations in the book include many design patterns; perhaps the students want to emphasize this element in the mural.

The elements of the story take place in several locations. Perhaps the students want to create a mural that replicates all of the places in which the story occurs.

Have students use their sequencing drawings which depict various scenes from the story for ideas.

- **2.** You may want to organize students into three groups: one group for scenes or designs from the first part of the story; one for the middle part; and one for the ending of the story. Have the students or group of students brainstorm ideas for a mural.
- **3.** Once they have decided on the idea for the mural, students or groups of students can lightly sketch their designs onto drawing paper at their desks. Using these sketches, ask student or group to show their designs to the class and have the class discuss the elements and where to add them to the mural. Let this be a cooperative effort. Make sure that all students have a part in the design of the mural, whether it's sketching, painting, planning.
- **4.** Allow 4-6 students at a time to take turns coming to the mural to sketch the design and later to paint. Older students may direct younger students.
- **5**. Some painting can be done with sponges, others with paint brushes. Let the students make these choices. One idea using sponges is having students dip them into one or more colors of paint and press them onto the paper, creating a different texture than brushstrokes. Students may want to create "stencils" by drawing a design (such as a flower) on thick paper, cutting out the design, and use sponges to stencil the design onto the mural.
- **6.** Ten minutes before class ends, have students help with the clean up.

Clean-Up

- **1**. Assign students to wash brushes.
- **2.** Assign students to collect the newsprint or plastic sheeting (re-use if possible).
- **3**. Assign students to cover paints, rinse out plastic cups or trays.
- **4.** Store mural or individual pieces of it so that it will dry without disturbing other classroom activities.

Other Ideas for Props

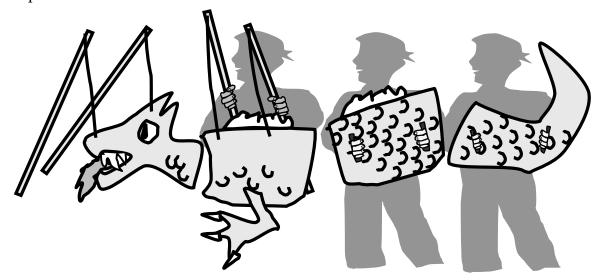
Some suggestions for making the set:

<u>Islamic Architecture</u>: Look up Islamic architecture on the internet. Go to your favorite search engine (such as Google.com) and type "Islamic architecture." If using Google, click on Google "Images" for some image examples. Supervision may be necessary for determining age-appropriate sites.

Making a Large Dragon Puppet: Students may want to make a hand-held or stick puppet for the dragon. Collapse several large appliance boxes. Have the students draw a dragon's head on one large piece, the dragon's top part of his body including the arms on another, the dragon's back body on a third piece, and finally the tail on another section. You may want to cut the pieces out using a utility knife or large scissors. Groups of students can take turns drawing and decorating the pieces to look like the dragon piece they have, such as cutting out pieces of color paper for the teeth, fire, claws, gluing on green paper for scales, etc. Allow the pieces to dry. To help students hold each piece, you may want to cut finger slits for them to grip the pieces with two hands. Have a student hold a piece of the puppet and move the pieces up and down as a dragon would move.

To make the stick puppet using these cutouts, you will need 8 wooden rods, or PVC pipes, or yard sticks. Tie clothesline or wire around the end of the rods (tape the tie into place). Punch 2 holes at the top of each cardboard dragon piece, and tie the other ends of the clothesline (or wire) through the holes. Each dragon piece should have 2 sticks for holding. Four students will be holding the 2 sticks and will line up with each other to form a whole dragon.

These large puppets make great props for the Reader's Theater or for advertising the play to other grades. Students may want to make a large Neem puppet to help retell the story. Instead of sticks, the strings can be attached to one long stick or clothesline and suspended as a mobile.



<u>Middle Eastern music</u>: Research Middle Eastern or Islamic music on the internet. You may wish to recite poetry or perform the songs you wrote about the story. Students may want to choreograph a dance or a mime performance using the *Neem the Half-Boy* CD.

H. Follow-Up

There will be opportunities to recall and use the story with your students. For example, when you notice a student in conflict with someone else, you might remind him/her of how Neem and the dragon worked things out together to resolve their conflict and remind the student of the five steps Neem and Taneen used to each get what each needed from the situation. You might also need to remind them of the usefulness of "compromise." You may want to say:

When I heard you right now, it reminded me of the story we read called Neem the Half-Boy. Can you guess why I thought that?

Do you remember the story of how Neem and the dragon were able to negotiate and come to an agreement that solved both their problems? Do you think that could be done in this situation? Why do you think so?

Go back to the story from time to time, weeks or months later, to see if your students can remember the story. Remember, these stories can be enjoyed and be useful for people of all ages.

"These Teaching-Stories can be experienced on many levels. A child may simply enjoy hearing them, an adult may analyze them in a more sophisticated way. Both may eventually benefit from the lessons within."

Lynn Neary "All Things Considered," NPR News, Washington

(An audio version of this entire program can be heard on www.hoopoekids.com.)

VI. HOME/SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

It is difficult to maintain communication with families as students get older and become more independent. Yet, as teachers, we know the importance of home/school communication. The best way to ensure family involvement is to invite families to celebrate their children's accomplishments. Teachers should seek ways to send home information and activities that will get families involved in learning together. At the same time, encourage families to send to school examples of those family activities so classes can celebrate the learning that happens at home.



Here are some suggestions for activities that will expand home/school communication.

Drawing and Retelling

Have students take their drawings home to show their families. Suggest that they summarize the story and then explain the part of the story they have drawn in their pictures.

Share Writing and Drawing

Send home students' writing and drawing projects for sharing with families. You may want to make copies of drawing and writing projects in the class books before students take them home. You can share the class books during a "parent night."

Retelling as a Performance

When students have learned to retell the story smoothly and are comfortable telling it as a performance, have them tell the story at home to their families. If families are able to, suggest students get together outside of school to act out the story for their families. Or, if possible, invite family members to the school to see a performance of the play.

Reading to Younger Children

Encourage students to read the story to younger children at home or at school and discuss it with them. This will stimulate their own comprehension and analogical thinking. They may want to use the puppets while reading the story to younger children.

Host a Parent/Family Night

Here are some suggested activities for this event:

- **1.** Show "The Magic of Reading" DVD and discuss its contents with the parents. Find out what was new for them, what they liked, what they would like clarified.
- **2.** If not already given out, hand out *Neem the Half-Boy* book and/or CDs, if available, to the students.
- **3**. Discuss with parents the importance of their completing and returning the questionnaires, if these are available.
- **4**. Read the story aloud to parents and students.
- **5**. Have students read their poetry or dialogues to families from the Class Books or from the books they created.
- **6**. Display students' artwork and created books, Class Books and students' writing at this event.

Family/Student Reading and Art Activity

Have parents/caregivers and other family members read the story together with the students, then draw something that represents the story of *Neem the Half-Boy* and that they'd like to share with others. Some suggestions are: drawing about a time when they needed to negotiate a problem with someone. Ask the students to voluntarily return the pictures for discussion and display. Invite family members to come in and talk about their drawings.

Parent Visitor/Speaker

Invite parents or other adults in the home to come to school and share other stories that remind them of this story or tell about a situation where they helped solve a problem with negotiation and dialogue.

Reading Club

Have students start a reading club. This can be done after school or before school or during lunch. Here are some suggestions for how to start a reading club:

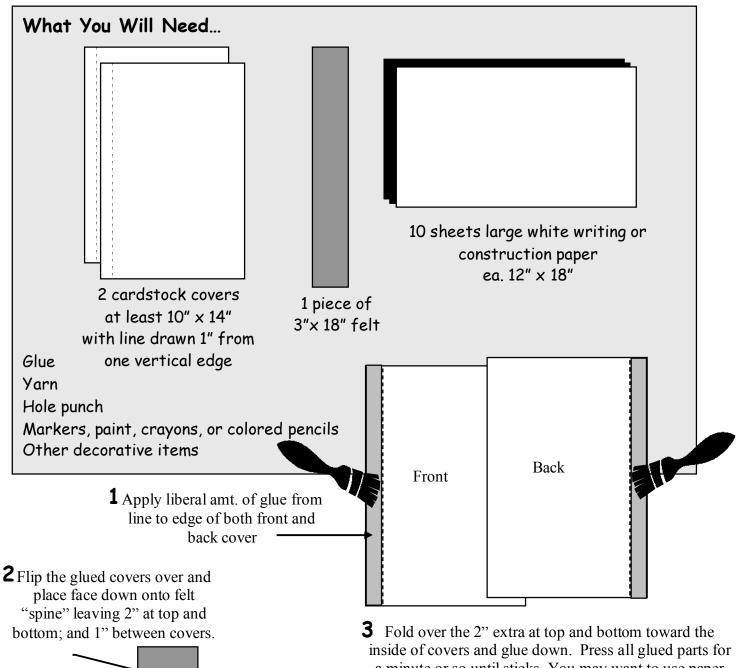
- 1. Ask students to volunteer to come once a week for a reading club.
- **2**. For the first several books, you may wish to pick the books and, after the students are more comfortable with the process, you can have them make suggestions for books to read.
- **3.** Choose three or four different titles, and, at the first session, give the students a short summary of what each book is about. Then have them vote on which book they want to read.
- **4.** Assign a section of the book at first so that students will have a benchmark for how much to read before the first discussion.
- **5**. You can assign roles for the club members. (Model each of these roles when you begin.)

- **6.** Have one person make a list of new vocabulary and discuss the connotations and denotations of the words.
- **7**. Have one person come up with five questions about the part of the story to discuss.
- **8**. Have another person come up with a favorite section to read aloud when you get back together.
- Have another person be the moderator at the book club meeting.
- **10**. Have someone else make literature-to-literature comparisons between this book and something else she or he has read.
- **11**. Once students are comfortable with the process they can meet on their own or you may want to ask a parent volunteer or senior citizen to meet with the group.
- **12**. You can also talk to the librarian at your school or public library if you need help with how to begin a reading club.

Home Interviews

- **1**. Suggest to the student that he/she tell or read the story of *Neem the Half-Boy* to a family member.
- **2.** Have the students interview someone in their family as if the student were a writer or reporter and wanted to write a story about something the family member experienced where they solved a problem using negotiation versus confrontation. Tell the students to ask their family member what happened, and make notes for the story to be written later.
- **3**. Have them compare what their family member did with what Neem did in the story. The family member may want to help with thinking of comparisons.
- **4.** The student and the family member can draw a picture together to show what they discussed in the interview.
- **5.** If students want to share the comparisons or pictures done at home with the class, have them first ask permission from the family member before sharing them with the class.

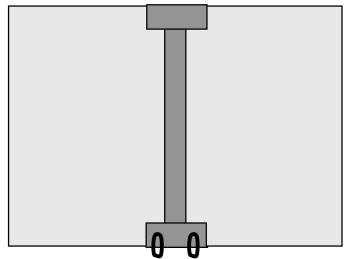
BOOK-MAKING INSTRUCTIONS

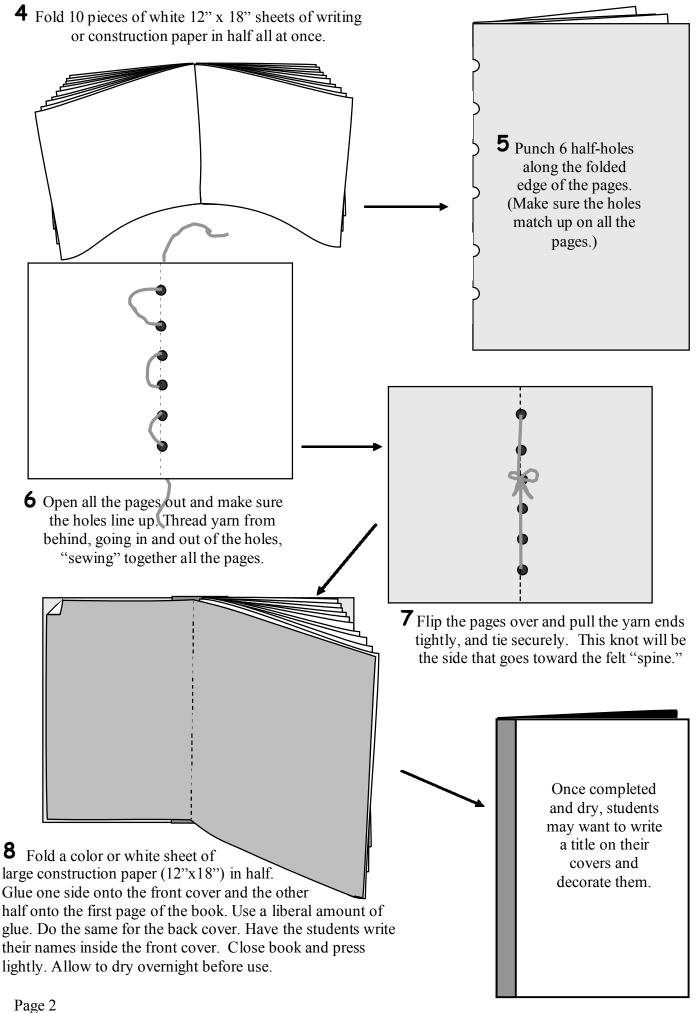


Front

Back

a minute or so until sticks. You may want to use paper clips to help secure the fold until dried.





Hoopoe Teaching-Stories*

Neem the Half-Boy Paper Bag Puppets



With bag over hand, move the puppet's mouth.

Materials you will need: lunch-size paper bags, colored pencils, crayons, markers, glue, paste spreader, colored construction paper or cardstock, tape, scissors, stapler, newsprint for desks or tables. Optional: tissue paper, wrapping paper, old shopping bags, wallpaper scraps, feathers, foil, beads, buttons, fabric scraps, yarn for hair, plastic eyes, etc.

1. With a piece of cardstock or construction paper about the same size as the flap of the bag, draw and color the top part

of whole-boy's face (eyes, ears (if wanted), cheeks, and nose). Or, glue on plastic eyes, colored paper eyes and cheeks, etc. Cut out face.

For the half-boy face: Choose another color construction paper, outline and cut out only the right side of his face. Set this aside. (*Hint*: before decorating the whole-boy's pieces, trace around them on the half-boy paper, then cut out only the right half of his face, cap & tunic.)

- 2. Outline whole-boy's cap on construction paper its width is as wide as the whole face and its height is about 2-3". Decorate the whole cap by coloring, making designs, or using feathers, glitter, or pieces of old fabric or colored paper. Make a half-cap out of the same construction paper as the half-face in Step 1. Do not decorate the half-cap piece.
- 3. Glue the decorated whole cap to the top of the whole face made in Step 1. Once it is dry, glue the entire face/cap (whole) to the top flap of the paper bag (make sure you don't glue the flap down). Allow to dry. Glue together the half-face & half-cap so that it will fit exactly over the whole piece, and set aside until later. Do not glue the half-face/cap to bag.)

4. For the whole-boy tunic & body: Using construction paper, wrapping paper or wallpaper that is roughly the size of the paper bag in length, draw and cut out Neem's tunic. Decorate by coloring and by gluing on a belt, adding beads, buttons, pompoms, decals, scraps of fabric, and so on. Allow to dry. Cut out 2 arms and 2 shoes from colored construction paper or color as desired. Glue these to the back of the tunic. Set aside while assembling the half-boy's body.

For the half-boy tunic & body: Using half-boy construction paper, cut out one-half the tunic. Draw and cut out 1 more arm and shoe from the half-boy paper (hint: trace around the whole-boy's left arm and left shoe as a pattern). Glue the arm and shoe to the back side of the half-tunic in the same spots as you did for the whole-boy

pieces. (The half-boy piece should cover exactly one-half of the whole-boy piece—see illustration on next page.)

5. Glue the whole-boy's body (tunic, arms and shoes) to the front of the bag, taking care not to glue down the flap or opening of the bag.

See next page for

more suggestions.

Puppet Theater Ideas

- Place a tablecloth or sheet over a table and students sit under table and extend their puppets out from under the cloth to do their dialogues.
- Cut a rectangular window on the front of a large cardboard box (such as an appliance box), and a "stage door" in the back. Have 1-2 students go inside box and perform their skits through the window.
- Place chairs facing each other and have students sit and perform their skits to each other. Have these puppets available for use whenever wanted.
- 6. Finish the paper bag puppet by drawing or gluing a red tongue on a black background under the flap. Draw and cut out other props, such as a sword, a magic medicine bottle, fairies, cook-stove, and so on. Create other characters, such as the queen, the king, and Taneen the Dragon. (See ideas below.)

Making the Whole-Boy a Half-Boy: Use paper clips (or Velcrotm strips, if available) to attach the half-boy's head to the top of the bag and the half-boy's body over the whole-body (see picture on previous page). When in play, these can be removed or replaced as desired.



Allow the puppets to dry completely before use. Sometimes an extra bit of glue, tape or stapling needs to be applied for stabilization. HAVE FUN!

Hoopoe Teaching-Storiestm How To Make Felt-Board Characters

Neem the Half-Boy

SUPPLIES:

- 1. Felt: black, bright-green, brown, green, light-orange, light-peach, maroon, off-white, orange, red, white and yellow
- 2. Good All-Purpose glue
- 3. Markers, fine-point: black and red
- 4. Scissors

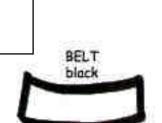
Optional: buttons

NEEM:

- Glue HEAD, each SHOE and each ARM to back of TUNIC
- 2. Glue each HAND to back of each ARM
- 3. Draw face or glue on color copy
- 4. Glue on **BELT** and **HEADDRESS**
- 5. Add buttons to TUNIC

APPLE:

- 1. Glue **STEM** to **APPLE**
- 2. Glue APPLE-INSIDE to APPLE
- 3. Draw apple seeds

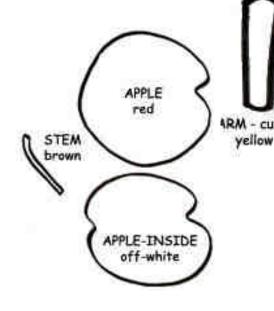




light-peach



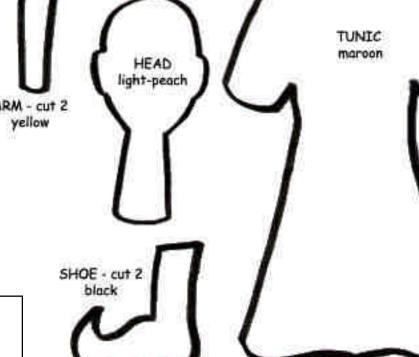
HEADDRESS-FRONT orange



ANOTHER OPTION:

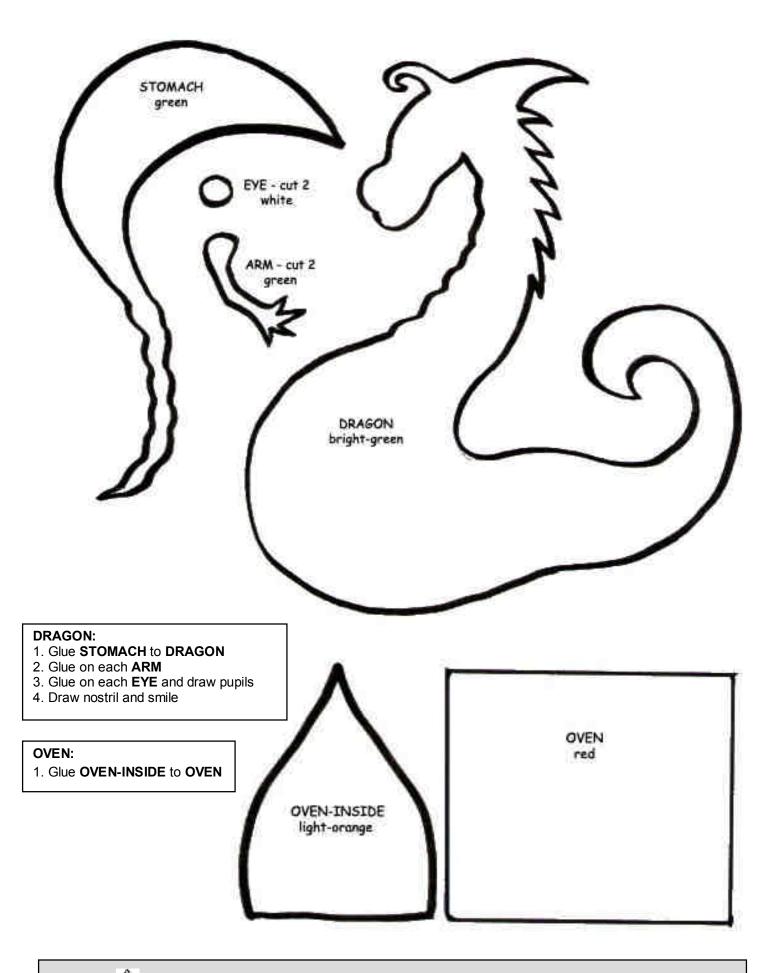
- Make color copies of characters from the book
- 2. Glue them to felt and trim

NOTE: Paper Craft Glue works best!



For color versions of these instructions, go to **www.hoopoekids.com**

Have fun!



ACAUTION: Avoid injury! Adult supervision recommended, if necessary.

This project includes cutting with scissors!

Hoopoe Teaching-Stories***

How To Make a Finger-Puppet

Neem the Half-Boy

Step 1:

- 1. Roll BODY around your finger so it's snug
- 2. Sew along open edge

Step 2:

- 1. Line up **HEAD** pieces and sew along the upper edge
- 2. Place stretched cotton ball inside **HEAD**
- 3. Sew rest of open edge around **HEAD** and neck
- 4. Draw boy's face or glue on a copy

Step 3:

 Line up HEADDRESS-FRONT and HEADDRESS-BACK and sew along upper edge attaching it to HEAD

Step 4:

- 1. Place **HEAD** along top edge of **BODY**
- 2. Sew to attach

Step 5:

- 1. Place body on top of TUNIC-BACK
- 2. Place **TUNIC-FRONT** on top, lining up front and back
- 3. Sew edges of **TUNIC**: shoulders, under-arms and sides

NOTE: Be careful not to sew arm holes closed

Step 6:

- 1. Place each **HAND** between two **ARM** pieces
- Sew around outer edge of ARM making sure to attach HAND
- 3. Insert each **ARM** into arm hole of **TUNIC** and sew to attach

Step 7:

- 1. Place **BELT** around waist and sew in back
- 2. Add buttons to **TUNIC**





Step 1





Step 2



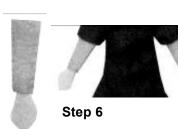
Step 3



Step 4



Step 5



Step 7

For color versions of these instructions, go to www.hoopoekids.com

ACAUTION: Avoid injury! Adult supervision recommended, if necessary. This project includes cutting with scissors, using a sharp sewing needle and sharp straight-pins!

Finger-Puppet Supplies & Pattern Pieces

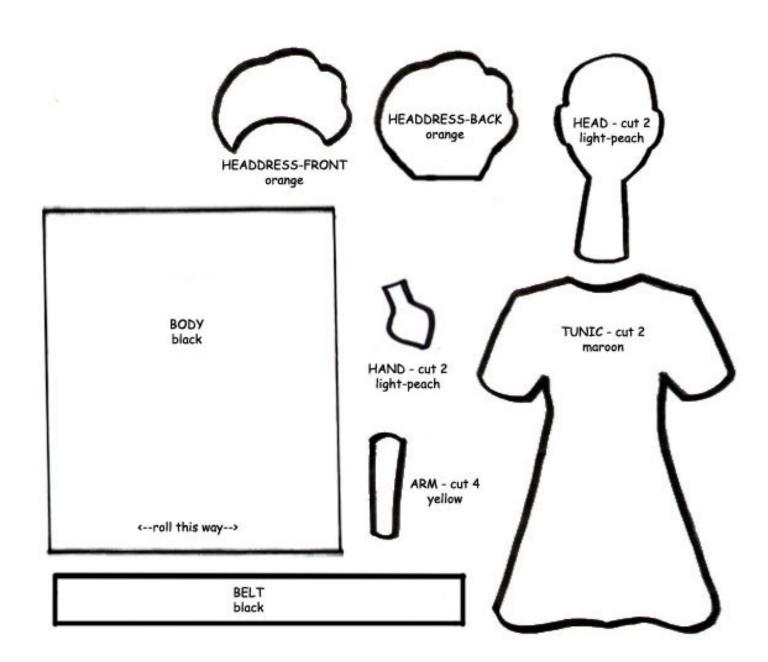
Supplies:

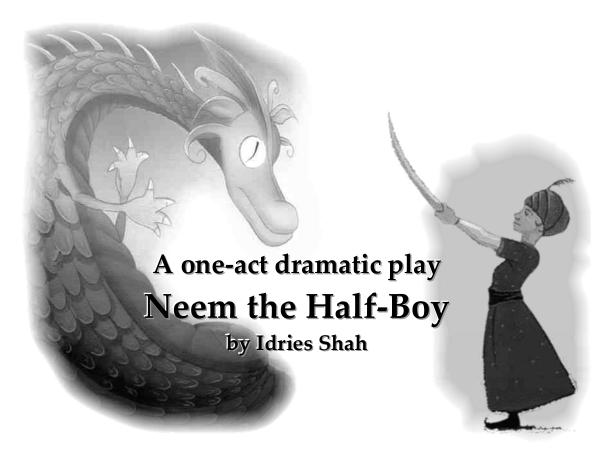
- 1. Cotton ball
- 2. Felt: black, light-peach, maroon, orange, white and yellow
- 3. Markers, fine point: black and red
- 4. Sewing needle
- 5. Scissors
- 6. Straight-pins
- 7. Thread

Optional:

- 1. Buttons
- 2. Photocopy of Neem's face
- Glue

NOTE: Paper Craft Glue works best!





CAST

Narrator 1 The Fairies

Narrator 2 Prince Neem, the Half-Boy, who becomes

Narrator 3 "Kull" later in the story

The Queen Arif the Wise Man
The King Taneen the Dragon

The Village People

(If there are not enough students to play the parts, have students play multiple roles, changing their costumes or adding a prop as appropriate.)

Allow the students to think about and create their own props, costumes and scenery. Some ideas on props and costumes are suggested below.

PROPS NEEDED

Apple Sword (made from cardboard)

Medicine Bottle (a decorated Cooking-Stove (a decorated cardboard

plastic bottle) box)

Other props: a cradle, a "horse" (a broom decorated as a horse), "Hich-Hich" town sign, images of upside-down flies, Taneen's cave (a sheet or blanket draped over a table, for instance), and Taneen's fire (see costumes below).

This script is based on the book *Neem the Half-Boy*, by Idries Shah. © 1998, 2007 by The Estate of Idries Shah. Published by Hoopoe Books – **www.hoopoekids.com**. Reproduction of this script is granted to educational organizations with the permission of the publisher. All other duplication, copying or reproduction is prohibited.

SUGGESTED COSTUMES

- Turbans and long jackets for the boys (the king's being most colorful)
- Veils or scarves for the girls' heads (the queen's being the most elaborate)
- Wings for the fairies (you might make these out of cardstock and tied on with yarn or ribbon, or by draping thin cloth or sheets of tissue paper over the arms and pinning or taping in place)
- Prince Neem: Pin thin material to his turban so that it covers half of his body (or have the actor stand so that only one side of his body is seen); have the actor practice using only one half of his body until becoming "whole" before the performance.
- Taneen the Dragon: make a long tail such as cutting a pant leg off an old pair of trousers. Tie one end of the pant leg closed using yarn or ribbon and stuff the pant leg loosely with crumpled newspaper until almost full. Students may want to decorate the "tail" with pieces of construction paper, glue and glitter, painting on scales, and so on. Attach the "tail" by safety-pinning onto student's clothing. For the "fire breathing," cut several strips of red tissue paper, or use red ribbon, bunch the strips together and secure only one end with tape or by stapling. The student will hold the secured end gently in his/her fist while blowing through the fist to make the tissue paper flutter. Or, allow the students to think of ways to make "fire-breathing."

In this story, many of the characters' names describe character attributes. Even the country's name is descriptive. Using symbolic or meaningful names is more common in some cultures than in others. The names chosen for this story are from the Central Asian region. (For example, *Hich* means *nothing*, *Taneen* means *dragon*, and so on.) Share these ideas and explanations with the children, so that when they are acting out the story, they can understand the significance of the various names.

The Script for Neem the Half-Boy

Narrator 1: Once upon a time, when flies flew backwards...

Narrator 2: ...and the sun was cool...

Narrator 3: ...there was a country called Hich-Hich...

Narrator 1: ...which mean "nothing at all."

Narrator 2: This country had a king, and it also had a queen.

Narrator 3: Now, the queen wanted to have a little boy for a son because she didn't have one.

The Queen (to the King): How can I get a little boy?

The King: I don't know, I'm sure.

The Queen (to all the people): How can I get a little boy?

Village People: We are very sorry, but we can't tell Your Majesty how to get a little boy.

Narrator 1: They called her "Your Majesty" because you always call queens – and kings too – Your Majesty.

The Queen (to the fairies): How can I get a little boy?

The Fairies: We could go and ask Arif the Wise Man.

Narrator 2: The wise man was a very clever man, and he knew everything.

Narrator 3: So the fairies went to the place where Arif the Wise Man lived.

The Fairies: We are the fairies from the country of Hich-Hich. That country has a queen, and she wants a little boy, but she doesn't know how to get one.

Arif the Wise Man (*smiling*): I'll tell you how the queen can have a little boy for a son. (*Picking up the apple and giving it to the fairies*.) Give this apple to the queen and tell her to eat it. If she eats it, she will have a little boy.

Narrator 1: So the fairies took the apple and flew back to the queen.

The Fairies (*giving the apple to the queen*): Your Majesty, we have been to see Arif the Wise Man, who knows everything, and he says that you should eat this apple. If you eat it, you will have a little boy for a son.

Narrator 2: The queen was very pleased. She started to eat the apple...

Narrator 3: ...but before she had finished it...

Narrator 1: ...she forgot how important it was and started thinking about something else.

All of the Narrators: And she dropped the apple, only half eaten.

Narrator 2: And she did have a little boy. But, because she had eaten only half of the apple...

Narrator 3: ...the boy she had was a half-boy.

Narrator 1: He had one eye and one ear, one arm and one leg, and he hopped wherever he went.

Narrator 2: The queen called him Prince Neem, because "neem" means "half" in the language of that country.

Narrator 3: As he grew bigger, Prince Neem went everywhere on a horse.

Narrator 1: As a half-boy, he could get around better on a horse, because he didn't have to hop.

Narrator 2: He became very clever at riding his horse, and he grew to be a very clever little boy in every way.

Narrator 3: But he got bored with being a half-boy, and he used to say...

Prince Neem: I would like to be a whole boy. How can I become a whole boy?

The Queen: I'm sure I don't know.

The King: I have no idea at all.

The Fairies (*amongst themselves*): Perhaps we should go and ask the wise man, who knows everything, how Prince Neem can become a whole boy.

Narrator 1: So the fairies flew through the air to the place where Arif the Wise Man lived.

The Fairies: We are the fairies who came to see you about the Queen of Hich-Hich who wanted a little boy, but he is only a half-boy, and he wants to be a whole boy. Can you help him?

Arif the Wise Man (*sighing*): The queen ate only half the apple. That is why she had only a half-boy. But, since that was so long ago, she cannot eat the other half. It must have gone bad by now.

The Fairies: Well, is there anything that Neem, the half-boy, can do to become a whole boy?

Arif the Wise Man: Tell Neem, the half-boy, that he can go to see Taneen, the fire-breathing dragon. He lives in a cave and is annoying everyone around by blowing fire all over them. The half-boy will find a special, wonderful medicine in Taneen's cave. If he drinks it, he will become a whole boy. Go and tell him that.

Narrator 2: So the fairies flew into the air, and they didn't stop flying until they came to the palace where the king and the queen and Neem, the half-boy, lived.

Narrator 3: When they got there, they found Prince Neem.

The Fairies: We have been to see Arif the Wise Man, who is very clever and knows everything. He told us to tell you that you must drive out Taneen the Dragon, who is annoying the people. In the back of Taneen's cave you will find the special, wonderful medicine which will make you into a whole boy.

Narrator 1: Prince Neem thanked the fairies, got on his horse, and trotted it to the cave where Taneen the Dragon was sitting, breathing fire all over the place.

Prince Neem: Now I am going to drive you out, Dragon!

Taneen the Dragon: But why should you?

Prince Neem: I am going to drive you away because you keep breathing fire all over people and they don't like it.

Taneen the Dragon (*in a sad tone*): I must breathe fire because I have to cook my food. If I had a stove to do my cooking on, I wouldn't have to do it.

Prince Neem: I could give you a stove to do your cooking on. But I must still drive you out.

Taneen the Dragon: Why should you, if I stopped breathing fire over people?

Prince Neem: I would have to get you to go because you have got a special, wonderful medicine in the back of your cave. If I drink it, I can become a whole boy, and I want to be a whole boy very much.

Taneen the Dragon: But I could give you the medicine, so that you would not have to drive me away to get it. You could drink it, and you would become a whole boy. Then you could go and get me a stove, and I would be able to do my cooking, and I wouldn't have to blow fire all over people!

Narrator 2: So Neem waited while the dragon went into the back of his cave.

Narrator 3: Presently Taneen came back with a bottle of the special, wonderful medicine.

Narrator 1: Prince Neem drank it all down...

Narrator 2: ...and in less time than it takes to tell...

Narrator 3 (as Neem begins to remove the material covering half of his body or turning to show his "whole" self): ...he grew another arm...

Narrator 1: ...another side...

Narrator 2: ...another leg...

Narrator 3: ...another ear and everything.

All of the Narrators: He had become a whole boy! And he was very, very pleased.

Narrator 1: He got on his horse and rode quickly back to the palace at Hich-Hich.

Narrator 2: There he fetched a cooking-stove and took it back to Taneen.

Narrator 3: After that, Taneen the Dragon lived quietly in his cave and never blew fire over anyone again...

All of the Narrators: ...and all the people were very happy.

Narrator 1: From then on, Neem, the half-boy, was called Kull...

Narrator 2: ...which means "the whole-boy" in the language of Hich-Hich.

Narrator 3: It would have been silly of him to be called a half-boy when he was a whole one, wouldn't it?

All of the cast: And everyone lived happily for evermore.

THE END



