

Teacher Information for:

Who Moved My Cheese? for Teens by Spencer Johnson, M.D.

Pre-Introduction Vocabulary

1. **Proverb:** a traditional saying, e.g. “People in glass houses should not through stones.” Other examples from Spanish and Chinese are:

Spanish:

“de tal palo, tal astillo” = like father like son

“El nino que no llora no mama” = the squeaky wheel gets the grease

“El que se fue a Sevilla, perdio su silla.” = Possession is 9/10 of the law.

Chinese:

“Love your neighbors bud don’t pull down the fence. =

Fences make good neighbors.”

“Man fears an evil man, but heaven does not.” =

You’ll get your reward in heaven.

2. **Parable:** a brief story that illustrates a moral attitude or a religious principle. Both Jesus and the Buddha taught by parables. The bible’s story of “The Good Samaritan” is a world-famous example. Another parable from Buddhism is called “Releasing the Cows. (*See attached.*) Another type of story related to a parable is the fable. The fable also illustrates a moral attitude, but in fables the characters are usually animals which talk like humans.

3. **Parody:** a literary work that imitates the style of an author or another literary work for comic effect,

e.g.

1. Weird Al Jankovic’s “Eat It,” parody of Michael Jackson’s “Beat It”

2. Mad Magazine

The Parable of the Good Samaritan

Behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

He said to him, "What is written in the law? How do you read it?"

He answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself."

He said to him, "You have answered correctly. Do this, and you will live."

But he, desiring to justify himself, asked Jesus, "Who is my neighbor?"

Jesus answered, "A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who both stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead. By chance a certain priest was going down that way. When he saw him, he passed by on the other side. In the same way a Levite also, when he came to the place, and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he traveled, came where he was. When he saw him, he was moved with compassion, came to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. He set him on his own animal, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, and gave them to the host, and said to him, 'Take care of him. Whatever you spend beyond that, I will repay you when I return.' Now which of these three do you think seemed to be a neighbor to him who fell among the robbers?"

He said, "He who showed mercy on him."

Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

Releasing the Cows

(Told by Master Thich Nhat Hanh)

One day the Buddha was sitting in the wood with thirty or forty monks. They had an excellent lunch and they were enjoying the company of each other. There was a farmer passing by and the farmer was very unhappy. He asked the Buddha and the monks whether they had seen his cows passing by. The Buddha said they had not seen any cows passing by.

The farmer said, "Monks, I'm so unhappy. I have twelve cows and I don't know why they all ran away. I have also a few acres of a sesame seed plantation and the insects have eaten up everything. I suffer so much I think I am going to kill myself."

The Buddha said, "My friend, we have not seen any cows passing by here. You might like to look for them in the other direction."

So the farmer thanked him and ran away, and the Buddha turned to his monks and said, "My dear friends, you are the happiest people in the world. You don't have any cows to lose. If you have too many cows to take care of, you will be very busy.

"That is why, in order to be happy, you have to learn the art of cow releasing (laughter). You release the cows one by one. In the beginning you thought that those cows were essential to your happiness, and you tried to get more and more cows. But now you realize that cows are not really conditions for your happiness; they constitute an obstacle for your happiness. That is why you are determined to release your cows."

Appendix 7d

