



#FontanaTogether

Pixar Shorts

You can use many of your favorite Pixar shorts to learn new ways to improve your social language skills. So why Pixar Short Films? First of all, they are SHORT! They typically run 3-4 minutes. They have a beginning, middle and end. They also have a conflict, are filled with figurative language and hidden messages, and have an ending resolution. Many of them rely solely on non-verbal language.



Materials:

- Access to Internet most shorts are easily accessible on YouTube or a Disney+ account

Instructions:

- Choose any or both Pixar short to watch from below, and answer these 3 social language skills:

What was the concept or the problem?

What lesson was being taught with the characters emotions? How did they feel?

Now What could you do differently or do if it happened to you?

Reflection:

Find your own Pixar short to evaluate and see if you can answer the 3 social language questions to learn a social emotional learning concept watching a Pixar Short...maybe you can show or discuss with someone else what they see.

Suggested Pixar Shorts:

1. Big Problem vs Little Problem

Example: Students with social language weaknesses often overreact or underreact to situations. Their reactions do not match the “size of the problem.” In the Monster’s Inc. film “Mike’s New Car” Mike shows up at Sully’s house to show off his new car. Sully climbs into the driver’s seat and starts pushing buttons. Mike loses his cool. He blows up at Sully while Sully sits there as calm as can be pushing all the buttons on the dashboard. Mike yells, slams doors and swings his arms around in a rage (that really is pretty funny). In the end, his tantrum results in a disastrous breakdown of his new car. On a scale from 1 to 5, How big is Mike’s problem? Did his reaction size match the size of the problem? Big problems call for a greater emotional response. Little problems call for a different kind of reaction and are more quickly resolved. This short helps you to SEE how overreacting to a situation can be detrimental.



2. Flexible Thinking

Example: “Mike’s New Car” can also be used to target Flexible Thinking, since Mike chooses to continue in his tantrum rather than solving his problem in a different way. Flexible thinking is about social problem-solving and finding different solutions to a single problem.



3. “Thinking of You” vs “Just ME”

Example: For this skill, I use the Pixar Short Film “For the Birds.” A group of small blue birds are perched on a wire. A large awkward bird shows up and wants to join them. The little birds laugh, taunt and tease the big bird. The small birds reject him and shove him off the wire. In the end, however, it is the little birds who learn their lesson when they are flung from the wire leaving the big bird left all to himself with the last laugh. “Thinking of You” and “Just ME” thinking teaches perspective. It includes seeing another person’s point-of-view and understanding “why” someone acts the way they do. What was the big bird wanting? How did the little birds respond? Who showed “Thinking of You” actions and who showed “Just ME” actions? How do you think this made the big bird feel? What could the little birds have done differently to be “Thinking of You” friends?

