

## VIDEO TEACHING GUIDE

FOR USE WITH  
PROGRAM 2

# “GROARK LEARNS to WORK OUT CONFLICTS”

In the Youth Guidance Video Series



with the Popcorn Park Puppets™

### THIS PROGRAM TEACHES CHILDREN:

- \* That conflicts between people are normal.
- \* How to prevent minor disagreements from escalating into serious fights.
- \* Steps for working out conflicts fairly and peacefully.

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**Use in classrooms, libraries, youth groups,  
or show it to your kids at home.**

**T**his delightful series of video programs teaches young children valuable lessons that will help them get along well, work out conflicts peacefully, and prevent violent behavior.

In each episode, Groark, an affable, childlike dragon puppet, gets into a tense situation with some of his puppet friends. But after he discusses the problem with a group of real elementary school children, he applies what he has learned and succeeds in bringing about a peaceful, positive solution.

You can greatly enhance the effectiveness of this video by following it up with group discussions, writing assignments, learning activities, and by enlisting parental support. This guide is designed to help you in your efforts.

**This video is highly effective at triggering group discussion.** Please refer to page 4 for questions to ask your young viewers both before and after showing the video.

While this discussion guide may appear to be written for classroom teachers, any group leader or parent will find it a useful tool for getting the most out of this video program.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

p. 2	How to Use This Video
p. 3	The Story
p. 3	How to Work Out Conflicts
p. 4	Discussion Questions
p. 5	Group Activities
p. 6	Writing Assignments
p. 7	Home Assignments
p. 8	Parents' Page
p. 9	About Groark & McGee
p. 10	License Agreement

## THE STORY

Groark has a disagreement with his friend over a robot they are building as a school project. Their behavior toward each other quickly leads to a serious rift and the project comes to an unpleasant halt. Frustrated and angry, Groark turns to a group of real children for a lesson in working out conflicts. He learns how to stay calm, talk about the disagreement with the other person, listen to each other's point of view, and look for a solution that makes them both happy. Equipped with this new approach to problem solving, Groark and his friend resolve their conflict, and the robot is saved.



## HOW TO WORK OUT CONFLICTS (Fairly and Peacefully)

1. **STOP . . .**  
before you lose control of your temper and make the conflict worse.
2. **SAY . . .**  
what you feel is the problem. What is causing the disagreement? What do you want?
3. **LISTEN . . .**  
to the other person's ideas and feelings.
4. **THINK . . .**  
of solutions that will satisfy both of you.

If you still can't agree, ask someone else to help.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### *Questions to ask before showing the video.*

1. Have you ever started working on a project with a friend and gotten into a disagreement? What caused the disagreement?
2. How did you feel? What did you say or do?

### *Questions to ask after showing the video.*

3. Why did Groark and Essie get so angry at each other?
4. Did getting angry make things better or worse?
5. Were they listening to each other? What happens when people who disagree don't listen to each other?
6. What could Groark and Essie have done to keep their disagreement from getting out of control?
7. Who do you think was really to blame for the conflict? Why?
8. How did Essie feel? How did Groark feel?
9. In the end, did they both get what they wanted? How were they able to do that?
10. Why is it important to settle conflicts peacefully? What can happen if you don't?
11. Are there some conflicts that can't be resolved?
12. Did the kids in the discussion part of the program say anything that you strongly agree or disagree with?
13. What did you learn from this video?

## GROUP ACTIVITIES

1. Write the steps for working out conflicts (see page 3) on the board. Discuss each step.
2. Ask the children to describe a variety of conflicts that commonly occur at school. List these on the board. Select two or three of these and discuss how the steps for working out conflicts could be applied to each situation. Have the kids role play some of these situations, either as themselves or with puppets. Afterward, have a group discussion to evaluate the outcome of each role play.
3. Introduce the concept of using words to express feelings instead of blaming someone else or using physical force.

Use a "why" message to state what's bothering you and ad of arguing all the time."

A "blaming" message says what's wrong with the other person.

*Example:* "You are ruining our projecwhy.

*Example:* "It really bothers me that you aren't willing to work this out together instet. You're a jerk. You never do anything right."

A "why" message is constructive and points to a solution. A "blaming" message puts the other person on the defensive and leads to more conflict. "Why" messages usually work better.

Referring to the list of conflicts on the board, have students role play with puppets or as themselves using "why" messages instead of "blaming" messages.

## WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

1. Read a story aloud to the class. Have the kids identify the conflict. Students can then draw a picture showing how the conflict can be resolved or write their own ending.
2. Write a group story with students contributing ideas for characters, conflict, and how to resolve the conflict. Have the class draw illustrations and create a book which can be kept in the classroom to be read by the students.
3. Have students identify several conflict situations that often occur between people their age. Divide a sheet of paper in half or create two lists on the board. On one side write "blaming" messages for the situation. On the other side write "why" messages that could be used instead.
4. (For older kids) Write a short story about a conflict. Make up two endings. In one ending the conflict is resolved peacefully and fairly, and in the other it isn't.

## HOME ASSIGNMENTS

To enlist the involvement of parents, make copies of the Parents' Page (opposite) and send them home with the children. Tell the children to discuss the video with their parents, and to perform the following activities.

1. Take home Groark's "How to Work Out Conflicts" (page 3) and post it in a place where family members can learn and practice the steps.
2. Ask family members or friends to describe conflicts they have experienced. Discuss how the steps for working out conflicts could have helped.
3. Draw a picture showing Groark and Essie working out their conflict. Tell your family about the conflict and how it was worked out.
4. When someone uses a "blaming" message in a conflict with you, ask that person to use a "why" message instead. Try not to use "blaming" messages yourself.
5. Watch how the characters in a TV show or movie handle their disagreements. Do they lose their temper or control their anger? Do they blame each other? Do they work out their differences fairly and peacefully, or do they fight it out? Could they do better by using the four steps for working out conflicts? Discuss these things with your family members.

*Note to the teacher or group leader: It might be a good idea to think of some way for the children to share the outcomes of these activities with each other. Perhaps they could give written or oral reports or discuss their experiences in small groups.*

(Copy this page and send it home to the parents.)

**DEAR PARENT,**

Your child is learning some valuable skills which will help him or her get along well with others, solve conflicts peacefully, and avoid violent situations.

The current lesson is about working out conflicts. We have shown your child a video entitled *Groark Learns to Work Out Conflicts*, which presents a puppet show and discussion about how to resolve conflicts without fighting.

**Here are some things you can do to help your child learn to work out conflicts fairly and peacefully.**

- ✎ Ask your child to tell you about the video program and what he or she learned from it.
- ✎ Ask your child to explain the four steps for working out conflicts that he or she has learned at school. Post them where everybody can refer to them and use them to resolve family disagreements.
- ✎ When conflicts arise with siblings or friends, call "time out" so they can cool off. Help them use the four steps to work out their conflict.
- ✎ Ask your child to explain the difference between "why" and "blaming" messages. Try to use "why" messages as often as possible and avoid "blaming" messages.



## ABOUT GROARK & MCGEE

Randel McGee found Groark in 1978, and they have been inseparable ever since. Through the magic of ventriloquism and puppetry, Randel and Groark mesmerize audiences of all ages, and Groark's child-like personality and dragon antics open kids up to the world of their imaginations. Though Randel and Groark are multi-lingual, singing and punning in many languages, their performances transcend language and cultural differences and bring people together through the common ties of laughter, learning, and song. Their delightful presentations encourage kids to be kind and thoughtful, to respect themselves and others, to make ethical choices, and to work out their conflicts peacefully and fairly. As Groark likes to say, *"there's no need for fussin' and fumin', whether you're dragon or whether you're human."*

Randel McGee received a B.A. in children's theater in 1979. He has worked as an artist-in-residence, a literature consultant, university instructor, and storyteller. In 1991 and 1992 he was selected as U.S. representative to international puppet festivals in Japan and Korea, and he and Groark have toured those countries as well as most of the U.S. In addition to his puppetry, Randel performs in costume as Hans Christian Andersen, telling stories while cutting paper designs. He lives in central California with his wife and five children.



Randel and Groark may be reached at 1-800-359-5437.

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**GETTING ALONG  
with GROARK™**

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(available on DVD)**

Video 1: Groark Learns To  
**CONTROL ANGER**

Video 2: Groark Learns To  
**WORK OUT CONFLICTS**

Video 3: Groark Learns To  
**LISTEN**

Video 4: Groark Learns About  
**BULLYING**

Video 5: Groark Learns About  
**PREJUDICE**

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