



TITLE
THE UGLY DUCKLING



AUDIOVISUAL RESOURCE
<https://bit.ly/3z0WLhf>

TOPIC
Self-esteem

SCHOOL CONTEXT
Bilingualism, school coexistence

RECOMMENDED AGE
From 3 to 6 years old

SUMMARY: Andersen's story tells the misfortunes of a duckling who is different from all the others. Rejected by geese, chicks, hens, turkeys and other animals, the duckling eventually becomes convinced that it is all his fault; that he is ugly and clumsy, big, and ridiculous. Finally, he finds a group of swans, realizing that he is one of them. Happy with his discovery, he will live in peace and with his family all his life.

In a swampy area of a faraway country, a duck began to nest its eggs. Little by little the shells were breaking, and beautiful yellow ducklings were born. They walked like ducks, made duck sounds ("quack, quack, quack") and swam like ducks. The mother duck was very proud of her little ones, so much so that she did not realize that one egg that was about to break was a big egg, different from the others. After a short time, the shell broke and the last of the ducklings was born. But instead of yellow it was gray, and its size was way bigger than that of its siblings. The other mother ducks were horrified. "He's so ugly," said one. "He's huge and ridiculous," said another. "I'm sure it's a turkey," said the oldest of the mother ducks. However, mother duck defended her baby. "Even though he is dark and big, he is my little boy and I love him very much." Next day, everyone went to swim to the lake. The ugly duckling was the last one to get into the water. He was afraid of everything because even his little siblings made fun of him; he even thought he would drown. Luckily, he swam as well as the others although his large size made him feel strange in the middle of the other little ducklings. His siblings kept laughing at him, so the ugly duckling got out of the water and hid in the bushes. When he was dry, he looked for his mother, who was still arguing with the other ducks. They

said, "Let him go! He's not like us. Get out of here!" The duckling took advantage of a moment when his mother was distracted to get away from the group. He felt so sorry and ashamed that he decided to run away and never come back. Walking and swimming, he came across a group of hens with their baby chicks. Seeing him so different, they began to pick at him and shout at him, "Get out of here! We don't want you here with us. You're a monster!" The duckling ran away clumsily, thinking, "I'm ugly; no one loves me, and I'm sure it's my fault. But I don't know what to do... I can't change my body!" This time he ran into a group of turkeys with their little children. But they also rejected him in the middle of pecks and teasing laughs: "You're ugly and stupid!" Once again he had to escape. And in this sad way time went by. He met other animals, like the geese, who also chased him away. Even a flock of wild ducks insulted him. The duckling was convinced that he was a monster. After all, everyone told him so, so it must be true, he thought.

"I will go to the furthest place in the world, a lonely place where no one will mess with me, and there I will live the rest of my days, until I die," he said to himself. Fall passed and winter came. Then spring came, and the duckling grew. One morning, he heard birds by a small lake near his shelter. Full of fear, he hid, but looked out of a hole to see them. They were so beautiful!

They had long, beautiful necks, and floated easily on the water. The ugly duckling, tired of hiding, decided to approach them. He no longer cared if they insulted or pecked him. But he felt the strange need to be with that group of birds, which seemed to him the most beautiful animals in the world. He approached them without fear. He waved to them, imagining that they would be frightened at the sight of him. However, not only did they not, but one of them said, "The one that was missing! We are all here." The duckling didn't understand. Only when he saw his image reflected in the water did he realize

that he looked just like them. He asked them, "Who are you?" "You mean who "we" are; how can you not know? We are swans, and you are one of us. Come, let's swim and play!" The ugly duckling stopped being a duckling and stopped being ugly and became a beautiful swan.

From then on, he lived happily with his family. But he would never forget the words the older swan had said to him on the first night: "Never be ashamed of what you look like on the outside. What matters is what you look like on the inside. You can change that: be good, be kind, be loving. If you do, you will be very happy."

[Adapted from a fairy tale by Andersen].

THEORETICAL BASIS: One of the ways to reinforce children's self-esteem is to guide students to reflect on the importance of the way they are rather than their external appearance. This is not easy, as their egocentrism prevents them from distinguishing "what is inside" from "what is outside." To advance in this process, teachers should focus on the positive aspects of what each person does, without reducing the importance of their external appearance.

PURPOSE: It is very likely that the students know the story, despite which, at these ages they enjoy it with the same intensity every time they listen to it. After reading the story, the teachers will use an activity in which everyone distinguishes how they are "on the outside" from their way of being "on the inside" (that is, the aspects of their personality), encouraging the children to praise others' individual characteristics. In a final game everyone will physically show their affection towards their teammates. The objective is that they show affection to all those who have previously been recognized with values.

LESSON PLAN

Stage 1

Read the story of the ugly duckling. If someone says they know the story, invite them to participate in the

storytelling. Then, ask if there is any word they did not understand, and explain its meaning.

Stage 2

Explain to the group that we are all different "on the outside" (referring to the different animals in the story). Give examples: taller or shorter, with blond, brown or dark hair, with blue or black eyes, etc. Encourage students to look for other differences. With the 3 year olds, the teacher can mention some external characteristics (e.g., "some wear glasses, others..."; "some are good at playing ball, others are good at..." etc.). And can give some specific examples: "Maria has brown eyes and Daniel has blue eyes." The teacher will make sure that all the comments refer to external aspects of the child. End this part by saying that everything that they are "on the outside" is good in everyone and in each one of them. In this part of the lesson it will be interesting for the teacher to comment, for example: "I really like the way Juan looks; don't we all like the way Juan looks on the outside?" Everyone will shout, encouraged by the teacher, "yes!" Afterwards, the group members will be asked to think of good things about themselves, but this time referring to what they are "on the inside." Give a variety of examples: nice? good friend? good brother? good sister? good student? happy? etc. Each time someone says something positive about themselves, they will receive a round of applause from the group. The teacher can put adjectives on the board that will help children in their answers.

Stage 3

The activity ends with a game:

- The teacher plays energetic music and invites the children to dance freely around the classroom.
- When they bump into someone, they must give them a big hug. From then on, they will dance hand in hand looking for physical contact with a third person.
- When they get to do it, the three of them will hug each other and form a small circle, which will rotate around the classroom. As they bump into each other, the circles will blend and grow.

- When a single circle has formed, the teacher will join it and they will all dance hand in hand. With groups of 5 or 6 year olds, one will stand in the center of each circle.
- The child in the center will turn around in one direction, while the rest of the children will turn in the opposite direction. The child in the center will be able to change the direction of his turn, forcing those around him to do the same.

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