



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT™
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

**PROJECT
CORNERSTONE**
A YMCA of Silicon Valley Initiative

PRESCHOOL/TRANSITIONAL KINDERGARTEN LESSON #5

Giraffes Can't Dance

By Giles Andreae

ASSET FOCUS: Positive Identity

This developmental asset category focuses on *personal power*. Positive personal power is found within young people. It helps them to meet challenges and experience each day to the fullest. This internal asset is built by caring adults who support and affirm preschooler's experiences, skills and competencies and exploration of their world.

1. Personal Power-The child can make choices that give a sense of having some influence over things that happen in her or his life. (#37)
2. Self-Esteem-The child likes her or himself and has a growing sense of being valued by others. (#38)

INTRODUCTION

- Smile and greet the students. Welcome them to Project Cornerstone time. Say, "I see my friends." Sing, "Good morning, good morning, its Project Cornerstone time!"
- Say, "Now I want you to sing back to me. Good morning, good morning, it's PC time!"

WARM UP

- Ask students to show you they are ready to listen to the story. Remind them to get into a listening position: Eyes forward looking at you, hands in lap, and legs in criss-cross applesauce. Listening ears on, ready, set, start!
- Ask the students, "What are our rules? Let's say them together: "We listen. We take turns speaking. We are nice to each other."

BOOK

Show students the cover of the book and read the title with lots of enthusiasm. Say, "This book is about a giraffe that learns he can do anything he wants because he learns to *tap into his personal power*. This power comes from inside him. It gives him special *I can powers*."

Read the story.

During the story, ask:

1. How did Gerald feel at the Jungle Dance in the beginning?
2. After he listens to the cricket and starts to dance, how does Gerald feel?

At the end of the story lead the group in a discussion:

1. Who was Gerald's friend? What did he tell Gerald to make him feel better?
2. Do you have a special friend that helps you?
3. Have you ever wanted to do something that was hard to do?
 - a. What did that feel like?
 - b. How did it feel when you learned how to do it?
4. What are some *I can** words you can say to yourself to give yourself personal power to do something hard? (I can do it, I am special, I have the power, I'm a big boy/girl etc.)

**I can* is talking about *positive self-talk* and are an ABC common language term. *Positive self-talk* is about personal power. It is tapping into the voice inside you that says: "*I can do this.*", "I am strong and capable.", "I know the right thing to do." Explain that *positive self-talk* is a tool that uses empowering words/phrases to protect us from hurtful actions and words. Everyone needs to develop their own *positive self-talk*. This will help *fill our buckets!*

ACTIVITY

The I Can Do It Dance:

1. Say, "Gerald found he could dance by believing in himself and saying *I can do it*. I want each of us to practice *I can powers* like Gerald."
2. Say, "Everyone please stand up. Spread out so there is a little room in between each of you." (Dim the lights.)
3. Say, "Everyone close your eyes. We are going to find our *I can power*. Look inside yourself. It is deep inside. Nod if you can feel it. Open your eyes." (Dim the lights more.)
4. Say in a soft voice, "Now with our new power, we are going to imagine that we are Gerald. Listen to the swaying grass, etc... Imagine that the lovely moon is playing just for you. Start moving your feet, sway your body and head, move your arms. Dance, dance!"
5. As they start doing the Gerald Dance, play music. Play different types of music. (Slow, fast, upbeat music.)
6. Slowly turn the music off and say, "Time to stop the dance. Slowly stop. Take a deep breath. Breathe in and out. Sit down."
7. Ask, "Did you feel your *I can power*? Listen to their responses."
8. Say, "Remember you can tap into your *I can power* every day. It is always inside you. It can help you do many things. When something seems hard, remember to find your *I can powers*."

TEACHER EXTENSIONS

- Teach the *Can you clap or I am Special* song.
- Teach the students some of the dances mentioned in the book. Hold your own school dance just like the animals in the jungle. Invite adults to come and teach some of the formal dances like the tango, waltz, square dancing, etc...
- Watch the video clip from the movie Madagascar to get everyone up and dancing <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9osbpEHvQVE&feature=related>
- Create an *I Can* club or book. Have the students draw things that they can do. Have them dictate a sentence about it. Post the pictures on a bulletin board or make into a class book.

- Start a *Positive Self-Talk* ceremony. Help the students learn to use *positive self-talk*. On a cape write phrases that the students can remember. Examples are: *I can do it, I can try, I am good at _____, and I have special powers*. Have the students stand up in a circle. Call one student into the middle of the circle. Have the student put the cape on and say a *positive self-talk* phrase. Examples are *I can tie my shoes or I am good at drawing*. Have the students clap or do a special dance as the student in the middle says their *positive self-talk* phrase.
- Divide the class into partners. You can pair them according to their birthday month, or first letter of their name, so they are with someone they do not know that well. While in their pairs have them ask a few simple questions such as, "What do you like about you?", "What is your favorite game and why?" or "What do you do to cheer yourself up?" Then call the group together and have the pairs introduce each other and say one thing they learned about their partner.
- Make the giraffe headband. See "Giraffe Headband" for the ears.



- Have students draw a picture of something they can do. Have a variety of materials to draw with including a variety of skin tone colors. When complete, have the students sign their name. Display the drawings on an *I CAN* bulletin board.
- Provide plastic wild animals in the block area for children to create habitats or recreate the story.