

Name: _____ Teacher: _____ School: _____

Grade 2: Lesson 9 *The Friendship Bridge*

The Friendship Bridge

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There once was a boy who lived in a fishing village. On fine days, he sat on the riverbank. He picked up smooth, round stones. He skipped them across the water.

One day, the boy was skipping stones on the water. His mother gathered berries nearby. "Who are those people who live across the river?" the boy asked.

His mother frowned. "Those people are like monsters. They have been our enemies forever and a day. Don't look at them. It's bad luck."

One day the mayor spoke to the people of the village. "We have been skillful fishers for forever and a day," he said. "Our river is filled with fish. They seem to throw themselves into our nets. We are lucky."

The mayor spoke again. "The Wise Leaders have told me about something new, something special. It is called a bridge. We will build a bridge over the river. Every man, woman, and child in the village can stand on the bridge to fish!"

That very day, workers gathered at the river. They brought tools and wood, and they began to build the bridge.

On the second day, the boy went to the river to skip rocks. He looked across the river. The people over there were building a bridge, too!

"Mother!" he cried. "Look across the river!"

But his mother would not look. "It's bad luck to look at our enemies across the river," she said.

All that day, workers cut boards and hammered nails. The bridge grew longer.

On the third day, the workers brought their tools, as usual. The bridge was long now, but they set to work. They wanted to make it even longer.

From the riverbank, the boy watched.

Suddenly, the workers on the bridge met workers on the other bridge. The bridges met in the middle!

For a moment, there was silence. Then, the mayor walked out upon the bridge. "Why has the work stopped?" he cried. "Is the bridge finished?"

And then something happened that had not happened in forever and a day. One mayor looked right into the face of the other mayor.

The boy held his breath and waited. What would these enemies do?

The boy's mayor turned to the Wise Leaders. "I was told that our enemies were monsters. But now I have seen the face of our enemy. He looks a lot like me! What should we do?"

The Wise Leaders gathered in a tight circle to talk. Everyone else waited without a word.

Finally, one of the Wise Leaders spoke. "A bridge is like a handshake," she said. "It brings people together in friendship. Those who were once enemies are now friends."

The mayor turned back to the other mayor. He held out his hand. "This bridge shall remind us of the friendship between our villages. It shall last forever and a day."

Then the mayors shook hands. Villagers on both sides of the river clapped and cheered.

The two villages have lived happily as neighbors ever since.

Independent Practice

Directions: Respond to the questions by writing the answer on a piece of paper. You need to write your answer in complete sentences. Remember, a complete sentence has a subject and a verb. It is a complete thought.

Prompt: The boy's mother says it is bad luck to look at their enemies. Does this end up being true? What lesson do the people learn? What is the moral of the story?