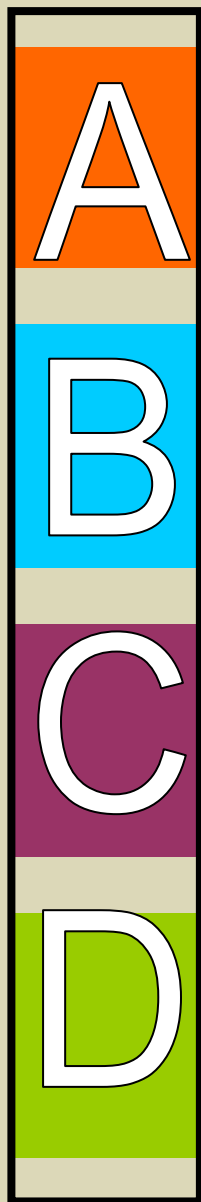


The ICB Character Education
& Community Building Book Series



MEET GOMA



**Series Book
No. 1**

The ABCD's of
A-B-C-D
INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY BUILDING

Meet Goma

The ICB Character Education & Community Building Book Series

Published by

ICB Productions, Inc.

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Miami, FL 33269

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Printed in the United States of America

Cover Graphic & Cover layout:

ICB Productions, Inc.



Meet Goma



Meet Goma

PREREADING EXERCISES

What would you like to do when you grow up? What are your dreams and how can they be realized? Do they include ways to reach out and involve others? How important is your community to you?

READING FOCUS

Let us introduce you to Goma. Goma is a good student who has goals to succeed in life, and he tries to find ways of achieving them. Just as everyone, he is constantly faced with important decisions, but he is open to learning ways to make right choices. Think about your own goals and aspirations. Think of the questions above as you learn about Goma, his values and how his experiences are helpful in shaping his character.

Meet Goma

An Introduction

G Stands for Goal

A *goal* is a purpose or aim toward an endeavor or effort is directed. A goal might also be seen as a dream or an ambition--something that you want to do in life. When Goma was three years old, his goal was to play peewee football. As he grew older, Goma wanted to become a professional football player. There was a problem; they thought he was too small, too slow and too weak. Goma decided to become a school teacher after his dream to play professional football were shot down. Now, Goma has a new goal, to be a community builder.

Community has many meanings. Community may be defined as the neighborhood where we live. For example, you might picture Goma as growing up in a community where most

of the people looked like him. Some children even call their community, “the hood.” In other cases, community refers to a social group or class of people with common or similar interests. For example, people who like the theater might form a group called the “Community Theater.” True communities welcome people of different backgrounds and show them love. This is called being inclusive. Love is the opposite of hate. When someone hates another person, they wish bad things for the person. Love, on the other hand, is concerned for the person’s welfare. Think of love as a way of sharing with and caring for others.

O Stands for Objective

Objective, like “community” and many other words, has many meanings. Objectives are the steps toward achieving the goal. Goma’s goal is

community. Goma's objective is unity! Before the goal of community, people must have objectives to help reach the goal, which is to bring people to a state of unity. When people are unified, they can work together. Unity, which means agreement is the opposite of division. During Goma's school days when the children separated themselves from Goma, he wanted the children to be as a community. Therefore, as a goal to establish a community among the children, he must first bring the children to unity.

GOMA's goal is an inclusive
community where people care for



M Stands for Method

If Goma is to reach his goal, which is community building, he must first help unify the people. The process used to reach his goal is

called the method. Think of method as a plan or strategy. When thinking of a method, the focus is on how the goal can be achieved.

When Goma was a baby, he used to cry a lot. His mother experienced many sleepless nights wondering how she could get him to stop crying. One night, she forgot to turn off the night light in Goma's room. That night, Goma slept all night and so did his mother. From that night forward, she would leave the night light on. This became her method or strategy to stop Goma's crying.

To build an inclusive community, Goma needs a method to help unify the people. The people must come to respect each other if they are going to work together in a manner that will result in a feeling of community. All positive relationships are built on respect. Respect is a rich word with both positive and negative aspects and meanings. All relationships are built on one of these forms of respect. One example of a positive form of respect

can be seen in Goma's admiration of his favorite teacher. Goma's graduation speech was entitled, "The Person I Admire Most in School.". In his speech, he highly esteemed his favorite teacher. In a word, Goma respected his teacher. When you respect someone, you value that person and his/her opinion. Respect is the method Goma uses to help unify the people to reach his goal of community.

Some people want respect, but they try to bully others into giving them respect.. Bobby grew up as a large child for his age and was known as the bully of the neighborhood. They were very protective of Bobby and were particularly sensitive about his size.

They taught Bobby not to allow anyone to pick on him. In order to please his dad and his desire to be viewed as worthwhile, Bobby resorted to bullying--he tried to force other children to do what he wanted. His bullying resulted in false

respect. This form of respect leads to many negative behaviors. What Bobby called respect is a false sense of recognition based not on a caring, sharing, loving attitude, but rather on qualities similar to hate. When a person is forced to like a person whose actions are bad, a negative respect is formed. It is actually disrespect. This means that the person feels at the mercy of the person that he or she respects. When false respect is present, there is also sadness and disrespect.

A Stands for Attitude

Attitude is a word used a lot by school children. When a person does not appear to be friendly, right away, the students usually say, “He/she has an attitude.” Attitude is an outlook or how one views a person, object or idea. Attitude is a way of thinking. Thoughts are displayed through our expressions and behaviors.

When a person has a positive attitude toward others, it is a way of honoring them. Honor is used as a principle. A principle is a code or standard that judges behavior. For example, the school that Goma attended had an honor's society. Students who performed well, academically, in school were asked to become members of the group.

The group members had to abide by an honor code. The code spelled out both right and wrong behaviors. Cheating, fighting, stealing, cursing, and destroying property are all violations of the code. When students were found violating the honor's code, they were suspended from the honor society. They were no longer considered honor students.

Here are sample questions that may trigger discussions around the concept of GOMA and the his motivating principles.

Goal --> Community

Objective --> Unity

Method --> Respect

Attitude --> Honor

Questions for Discussion

1. How do you think Goma felt when the children at school picked on him? Tell me a story about someone you know who has been picked on.
2. Help us to understand what you learned from the discussion on GOMA'S goal. What does a goal mean to you?
3. What did you learn about community?

1. Demonstrate *love* and *hate* in two creative expressions. You may draw pictures, write a poem, write a short story or use another artistic medium.
2. Write your own Community Moment by sharing a brief description of an experience where your attitude changed. Use the following community moment frame to write about your experience:

Once when I was _____

_____, I felt _____

because I thought _____

_____. After

_____, I

began to see I was wrong. I realized that just

because _____

_____, it doesn't mean _____

_____.

This experience has also taught _____

_____.

NOTES

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