ALL ALONE
Synopsis

This story is set in the French Alps where the local residents have a long tradition of not talking or helping each other. Two young boys, Marcel and Pierre, were responsible for watching their cows in the mountains, each to their own hill. But they begin to break the rules and start yodeling to each other. They chanced to meet when Pierre’s cows wandered over to Marcel’s area. As they meet at the pool where the cows drank a storm approaches and the boys and the cows stay together for safety. The two boys enjoy the company and wonder why the adults think it best to never be friendly with one another.

The morning after the storm, Marcel headed for home and the wrath of his father for helping another boy. But the storm had caused rocks to fall and block the path down the mountain. The two boys and their cows were stranded on the mountain pasture. They were stranded for over a week but finally people from the village came to rescue them. Marcel was still worried that his father would be angry for breaking the rule not to talk to anyone or help anyone out. However Pierre said that when he had announced that Marcel was safely there a cheer had gone up from the people. And thus the town was changed by the actions of a young boy who went out of his way to help another. The people of the town decided to change and work together for the improvement of all.
1. What did Marcel’s papa think would happen if he talked to the other shepherds?

2. What was Marcel’s chore?

3. Where does this story take place?

4. Why do you think the people in the village didn’t come out to talk to Marcel and his papa?

5. The motto of the village is, “Each man for himself”. How is that attitude shown in the story so far?

6. How would your classroom be different if that was your motto?

7. If everyone in your community never did anything together, or even talked to each other, how would your life be different?
1. Pierre and Marcel called back and forth to each other from their separate, lonely, mountain tops. What would Marcel's papa have said if he knew?

2. What real problem did Marcel have to watch out for on the mountain?

3. If Marcel's papa had found Pierre's cows instead of Marcel, what would he have done?

4. Do you think Marcel made the right choice to help Pierre's cows? Explain your answer.

5. What does Pierre think at first when he finds Marcel with the missing cows?

6. Why do you think Marcel feels differently about the village motto?
1. Why did the two boys stay at the water pool with their cows?

2. Marcel is concerned about staying at Pierre's pasture. What is his concern?

3. What does Marcel hope to change when he is an adult?

4. If you could improve something in your community when you grow up, what would it be?

5. Which point of view do you most agree with: A. Marcel's which is to share everything or B. Pierre's to never help another? Explain your answer.

6. Tell about a time when you worked on a project with someone else. How is that different from working by yourself?
1. When Marcel’s mother (maman) heard the story of why Marcel was at the water pool early she said, “A miracle! A miracle!” Why did she say that?

2. During the storm what had happened to the pasture at the Little Giant?

3. Why had rescuers not searched out the two boys right away?

4. In the village, people who had not talked to each other were now working together. Why did they change?

5. If the fathers had kept to their original idea of not helping one another, what might have happened to the boys?

6. Compare how you might feel in a happy talkative group compared to a group where no one wants to talk to you day after day?
1. The last chapters happened at what time compared to the rest of the story?

2. How is the village of Monestur different at the end of the story as compared to the beginning?

3. The mayor says a child showed the village how to change the people from being alone. What did the child do?

4. The village of Monestur was a farming village. What were the people able to buy when they put their money together?

5. Do you think children can make a place better in real life? Explain your answer.

6. Tell about an idea that you have had, that would make your community a nicer place for everyone to live.
LESSON 1
1. Papa thinks talking to others might get you in trouble. If you keep to yourself nobody can blame you for anything.
2. Marcel’s chore was to take the family cows up into the mountain pastures and stay with them all summer.
3. This story takes place in a small village surrounded by the French Alps of Savoie.
4. The people in the village had become jealous and suspicious of each other and so they no longer spoke to one another.
5. The village attitude of each man for himself is shown by the fact that none of the people talk to each other. They think talking to someone will cause them trouble.
6. Answers will vary.
7. Answers may vary. A theme to the answers might be that it would be lonely if no one in the community ever talked to each other.

LESSON 2
1. Marcel’s papa would have been angry with him for calling back and forth to Pierre.
2. Marcel had to be careful the cows did not fall off the edge of the mountain pasture and hurt themselves.
3. If Marcel’s papa had found Pierre’s cows he would have left them to their own devices.
4. Answers may vary but hopefully the most common answer is that Marcel was right to help Pierre’s cows. If he hadn’t the cows might have gotten hurt and then Pierre’s family would have lost some of their income. It is good to help someone else if we can.
5. Pierre thinks that Marcel had tried to steal his cows when he first saw Marcel with them.
6. Answers will vary. Maybe Marcel was just lonely, or friendly. Other people had not yet hurt him so he wasn’t expecting it.
LESSON 3
1. A storm is coming and the cows feel it. The animals might get lost or blown away so it was better to stay in the more protected area around the pool.
2. Marcel was afraid his papa would come up the mountain and find him with Pierre.
3. When Marcel grows up he wants everyone to do everything together.
4. Answers will vary.
5. Answers will vary.
6. Answers will vary.

LESSON 4
1. Marcel had gone down to the pool early because he had Pierre’s cows too, and it would take him longer to get there. Since that was not what he was supposed to do his mother thought it was a miracle that it had happened and because of it, his life was saved.
2. During the storm the pasture at Little Giant had been entirely wiped out in a landslide.
3. It took the rescuers a long time to get up to the mountains because the storm had washed out all the bridges and the water was too high to get across.
4. The thought that one or both of the boys was hurt brought the villagers together to help each other out in this worrisome time.
5. Answers may vary. If the fathers had not been willing to help each other, it would have taken longer for one person to get through the mountain of rock. The children might have starved before they were rescued.
6. Answers will vary.

LESSON 5
1. The last chapter happens a year after the rest of the story.
2. The village of Monestur has changed. In the beginning of the story, everyone kept to themselves and the people were hardly able to survive. At the end of the story, the villagers are all happily working together and they had become more prosperous.
3. The child that changed the village was Marcel. He had helped someone else even though he had been told not to.
Lesson 5 Continued
4. The people put their money together and bought a shiny new tractor with which they could farm their land together.
5. Answers will vary. I hope that they will be able to give examples of times where real children had made a positive difference in the lives of others.
6. Answers will vary.