



OBJECT LESSON: teaching kids problem-solving and compromise

STEP 1: Set out 3 oranges on a cutting board with a knife. A juicer and zester (if you have them) can sometimes grab a child's curiosity about the activity as well.

STEP 2: Create two groups (there can be one child in a group!). Take each group aside **privately** and give them each **separate** instructions.

Group 1 - "You have to get the **juice** from three oranges in order to make a special treat. If you don't get that much juice, it won't taste as good. You can squeeze the oranges into this measuring cup or you can use this juicer."

Group 2 - "You have to get the **peel** from three oranges in order to make a special treat. If you don't get that much peel, it won't taste as good. Using this zester might make it easier. I can show you how to use the zester if you are not sure."

STEP 3: Bring the groups back together and say, "Before we start cooking, you'll need to figure out how to use the oranges. How can both groups get what they need? It's your job to problem-solve a good solution."

Side note: Watch their different styles, and how they respond to this challenge. This will give you insight into the skills and challenges of each child related to empathy, assertiveness, flexibility, and leadership. During the activity you can affirm any strengths you see. You can also make a mental note of possible "growth areas" for your child.

STEP 4: If kids quickly come up with the idea to divide the oranges equally (each getting 1.5) ask, "Are you *sure* you have the best solution?" "What questions might you ask each other to find a win-win?" "Is there one group who should get what they need before the other one?"

STEP 5: If they still come up with that same solution, suggest they ask each other these questions, "**What's important to you? What specifically do you need?**" Give as much guidance as needed until they discover how they can each get what is important to them by asking questions and listening. (Note: It is usually easier to zest the oranges *before* they are juiced...so you may want to guide in that direction.)

STEP 6: Celebrate by making the [orange cookie recipe](#).** As you eat the cookies ask, "What did each of you feel at different times when you were trying to figure this out? What did you learn?" Summarize what everyone learned, and encourage whatever went well.

Share [James 1:19](#) - "Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry..." and add - good problem-solvers are good listeners first!

Some ideas for success:

- Lower your expectations. Your kids might not have a profound life-changing experience but they *will* learn!
- Celebrate whatever goes well as you munch the cookies instead of focusing on what didn't go well. You've created an opportunity for them to see problem-solving and compromise in action while making lasting memories.

**To be consistent with the amount of juice and zest you said you needed, consider making a smoothie with any extra ingredients.