



Sholom and the Great Wall of Blocks

Ages 6-9
A story and 9 activities

Sholom and the Great Wall of Blocks

The wall of blocks is almost as tall as Sholom.

He and his cousin Yehuda have been building it all afternoon in the playroom. They've used every block in the bin, the red ones, the blue ones, the long wooden planks. It stretches across the whole carpet like the Great Wall of China.

"It's going to reach the window," says Yehuda.

"Then we'll put a flag on top," says Sholom.

They stack another layer. Another. Sholom holds his breath as he places the last block.

Then his little brother Duvi wanders in.

Duvi is three. He is holding a toy truck. He looks at the wall, and his eyes get very round and shiny.

"Wow," he says. "Big."

"Don't touch it," says Sholom.

Duvi nods. He takes one step closer. Then another. He reaches out one finger, just to poke it.

"Duvi, no!"

Too late. His finger taps the top, and the whole wall wobbles, tilts, and tumbles to the floor with a crash like thunder. Blocks scatter in every direction. A red one bounces off the radiator.

For a moment, nobody breathes.

Duvi's chin trembles. "Uh-oh."

Sholom's face goes hot. His fists curl. All that work, gone in one second.

"You wrecked it!" he shouts. "You always ruin everything!"

Duvi bursts into tears. He drops the truck and runs out of the room, wailing.

Yehuda stares at the pile of blocks. "That was a long time to build."

Sholom stands with his arms crossed and his face turns red. After a minute, the hot feeling begins to fade. He hears Duvi crying down the hall, small and hiccupy.

"He's three," says Yehuda quietly. "He didn't mean it."

Sholom looks at the blocks. He remembers how Duvi said Wow. He remembers the way the little boy stared at the wall, like it was the most beautiful thing in the world.

He feels something twist in his stomach, not anger now, but something softer.

"I yelled at him," he says. "That wasn't nice."

"You were upset," says Yehuda. "But you can fix it."

Sholom walks down the hall. Duvi is curled on the stairs with his thumb in his mouth.

"Duvi," says Sholom. "I'm sorry I yelled. I was sad about the wall. But it's okay. It's just blocks."

Duvi sniffles. "I broke it."

"You tapped it by accident. It was too tall. Do you want to help us build another one?"

Duvi's eyes light up. "Me?"

"You can be in charge of the red blocks."

Duvi hops up and takes his brother's hand.

They go back to the playroom. Yehuda is already stacking planks. He looks up and winks.

"This time," says Yehuda, "let's make it with a door in the middle, so Duvi's truck can drive through."

"Yes!" says Duvi.

They start again. Sholom puts the foundation down, and Yehuda adds the walls, and Duvi hands each red block one at a time with his tongue sticking out in concentration.

By supper time, they have built a bigger wall than before, with a tunnel and a flag made from a paper napkin.

Duvi drives his truck through, making a loud engine sound. "Vroom! Vroom!"

"Best wall ever," says Sholom, and he means it.



Activity 1 of 9

Remember the story

1. What are the cousins building?

2. Who knocks it down?

3. What does Sholom do first?

4. What does the new wall have for Duvi's truck?



Activity 2 of 9

Fact or guess? (circle one)

1. Duvi is three years old. Fact / Guess
2. Duvi knocks the wall down on purpose to be mean. Fact / Guess
3. Sholom says sorry. Fact / Guess
4. The flag is made from a paper napkin. Fact / Guess



Activity 3 of 9

Think and write

1. Why does Sholom yell at first?

2. What changes his mind?

3. How could you include a little sibling in your game?



Activity 4 of 9

Word search (find all 6)

Words: BLOCKS, WALL, TUNNEL, TRUCK, COUSIN, BUILD

D	V	J	B	T	U	N	N	E	L	L
M	D	P	P	G	G	E	I	H	B	D
B	T	W	W	N	Y	B	Y	Y	V	L
K	R	L	P	V	O	T	S	S	E	I
H	U	P	O	W	L	U	B	K	I	U
F	C	A	H	W	A	T	U	C	V	B
S	K	S	J	A	L	T	G	O	M	D
L	K	D	H	L	U	Y	B	L	N	B
W	U	P	D	L	E	F	V	B	A	U
V	C	O	U	S	I	N	J	V	C	I
C	A	N	I	F	Y	R	V	W	G	B



Activity 5 of 9

Scrambled words (from the story)

1. CKLOSB = _____

2. NTELNU = _____

3. TRKCU = _____

4. ISNUCO = _____

5. OMLYOPAR = _____



Activity 6 of 9

Say it out loud

Practice each line in a calm, steady voice:

"I'm sorry I yelled."

"Do you want to help us build?"

"Let's try again together."



Activity 7 of 9

My chart

My Try Again Chart

#	What fell down	How I felt	What we built next
Try 1			
Try 2			
Try 3			



Activity 8 of 9

Draw it

Draw the new block wall with the tunnel, the napkin flag and Duvi's truck.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the student to draw the new block wall, tunnel, napkin flag, and Duvi's truck.



Activity 9 of 9

Answers

Remember the story:

1. A wall of blocks
2. Duvi, the little brother
3. He yells
4. A tunnel

Fact or guess: 1 Fact; 2 Guess; 3 Fact; 4 Fact

Scrambled words: BLOCKS, TUNNEL, TRUCK, COUSIN, PLAYROOM

Think and write: answers will vary; talk them over together.