

CHAPTER 13 CLASS HANDOUTS

Note: Your instructor may ask you to download, print out, and/or e-mail the following class handouts for this chapter:

A ZODIAC STORY: THE GIRAFFE AND THE ELEPHANT

INTERACTIVE PROBES FOR “A ZODIAC STORY”

A ZODIAC STORY: THE GIRAFFE AND THE ELEPHANT*

In an up-and-coming multicultural community in the Zodiac city, a **Giraffe** had a new home built to her family's specifications. It was a wonderful house for giraffes, with soaring ceilings and tall doorways. High windows ensured maximum light and good views while protecting the family's privacy. Narrow hallways saved valuable space without compromising convenience. The house was so well done that it won the National Giraffe Home of the Year Award. The home owners were understandably proud.

One day the Giraffe looked out the window while working in her wood shop in the basement. Coming down the street was an Elephant. "I know him," she thought. "We worked together on a Parent/Teacher Association (PTA) committee. In fact, we need to talk about an upcoming fund raising event for the school. The Elephant is an excellent woodworker. I think I'll ask him to see my new woodshop and maybe we can plan the school's fund raising event together." So the Giraffe reached her head out the window and invited the Elephant in.

The **Elephant** was excited; he had enjoyed working with the Giraffe in previous school committee meetings. He looked forward to swapping ideas with the Giraffe and also chatting about how to improve their children's under-equipped playground. Besides, he had heard of the state-of-the-art woodshop and wanted to see it firsthand. So he walked up to the basement door and knocked.

"Come in, come in!" said the Giraffe. But immediately they encountered a problem. While the elephant could get his head in the door, he could not go farther. "It's a good thing we made this door expandable to accommodate my woodshop equipment," the Giraffe said. "Give me a minute while I take care of our problem." She removed some bolts and panels to allow the Elephant in.

The two acquaintances were happily exchanging woodworking stories in the basement when the Giraffe's husband leaned his head down the basement and called to his wife: "Telephone, honey, it's your boss." "I'd better take the phone upstairs," the Giraffe told the Elephant. "Please make yourself at home; this may take a while."

The Elephant looked around, saw a half-finished children's wood project in the far corner of the shop and decided to explore it further. As he moved through the narrow doorway that led to the corner area of the wood shop he heard a loud scrunching noise. He backed out, scratching his head. "Maybe I will join the Giraffe upstairs," he thought. But as the Elephant started up the stairs, he heard the stairs begin to crack from his weight. He tumbled and fell back against the wall. The wall too began to crumble. As he sat there disheveled and dismayed, the Giraffe hurried back down the stairs.

"What on earth is going on?" the Giraffe asked in amazement. "I was just trying to make myself at home," the Elephant replied. The Giraffe looked around. "Okay, I can see the problem. It's easy to fix. The doorway is too narrow for you. You just need to get into

better shape. There is an aerobics studio nearby. If you'd take some classes, we could get you down a few sizes." "Maybe..." the Elephant replied, looking quite unconvinced.

"And the stairs are too weak to carry your weight," the Giraffe continued. "If you go to ballet class at night and cut down on your carbs, I'm positive you'd be light on your feet. I really hope you'll do it, and do it fast. For the sake of our children and the community, we need to start working on the school's fund-raising project together."

"Perhaps," said the Elephant. "But to tell you the truth, I'm not sure that a house designed for a Giraffe will ever really work for an Elephant unless there are some major changes."

*Source: Adapted from: R.Roosevelt Thomas, Jr. (1999). *Building a House for Diversity*. New York: AMACO-American Management Association.

