Sweety Stands Up

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Sweety Stands Up

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Original illustrations by Daniel Garcia

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Sweety lived in a tall forest, full of big trees, glittering streams, and delicious acorns that were spread all over the forest floor.

Autumn was Sweety’s favourite time of year.
The leaves twisted and turned in the cooling breezes, glowing red, orange and yellow.

The warm colours made Sweety want to snuggle up with her friends and eat acorns.

Sweety had lots of friends, too, because she was sweet, of course!
But when Big Tail moved into a nearby tree, everything changed.
It started with Big Tail asking Sweety, one of the youngest and most helpful squirrels, to collect some acorns for him.

“Sure!” said Sweety.

The next day he asked her to collect twice as many acorns.

“Er, sure!” said Sweety.
Before long, Big Tail had Sweety collecting acorns all day.

There was no time to play with her friends. By the time she arrived home, she was exhausted.

Her friends were worried.
“You’re too passive, letting him boss you around,” said Swift.

“What’s passive?” asked Sweety.

“Being passive means when you always do what other people want, not what you want,” said Swift.
“You should be assertive, and tell him that you won’t do it anymore,” said Misty.

“What’s assertive?” asked Sweety.

“Being assertive means firmly telling someone what you want to do, or what you believe. And not getting bossed around!” said Misty.
“If I were you, I would punch him right in the nose,” said Graynose. “That would teach him!”

“That’s being aggressive!” said Swift and Misty.

“What’s aggressive?” asked Sweety, feeling she was learning a lot of interesting words.

“Being aggressive means forcing your opinion, or even attacking someone,” said Swift.

“Don’t be aggressive, Sweety. It will only make it worse. Speaking aggressively is not a useful way to help someone understand what you want.”
“Can you help me to be assertive?” asked Sweety.

“Yes! Let’s role-play speaking assertively to Big Tail.”

“You be Big Tail, and I’ll be you,” said Swift.
“Collect more acorns, Sweety!” said Sweety pretending to be Big Tail.

“I’m sorry, Big Tail. I won’t collect your acorns anymore. I need to play with my friends and collect my own acorns for winter. I won’t change my mind,” said Swift firmly.

“Tell him you hope he enjoys collecting his own acorns!” said Misty with a smirk.
The next day, Sweety took a deep breath, stood up straight, and spoke clearly and assertively to Big Tail.

To her surprise, Big Tail simply replied, “Okay.”

Sweety was so proud of herself for standing up to Big Tail! She was calm and respectful, not aggressive, but she made her point clear. It worked very well.
Sweety knew that if she had remained passive, she would have been collecting acorns every day!

Now that she had been assertive, she had more time for her friends.
You can use these questions to talk about this book with your family, friends and teachers.

What did you learn from this book?

Describe this book in one word. Funny? Scary? Colourful? Interesting?

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