

Mr Roger's Analysis

How to deal with difficult topics with children

Why should we deal with these kinds of topics? What do we learn about the needs of children?

In the documentary *Won't You Be My Neighbor?* the audience can get a very clear sense of who Fred Rogers was, how he dealt with difficult topics when presenting to children, and how he continues to inspire and influence kids today. His understanding that children should never be shielded from the truth about the world around them, just explained to in a more careful way is what made his show so easy for kids to put trust into. It's important for kids to learn about topics such as the Vietnam war or the Holocaust because it gives them powerful knowledge for their future about human interaction on a broader scale. If we can teach children why fighting and violence happens, they can understand on a smaller scale, what their place in this world means and the causes and consequences their actions have on the people around them. For example, learning about the kid named Jeff on Mr. Rogers could give other children understanding of his condition, and be less likely to be judgmental of someone in a wheelchair, or someone who looks different than them. Through Mr. Rogers we can learn that children need accurate stories on events, but it doesn't have to be as descriptive or violent as the real thing. The goal of telling these stories is not to give children nightmares, but to give them insight and a better sense of empathy. For example, a kid thought he could fly like super man and jumped off a roof and died, but when Mr. Rogers gave a lesson through that story on Tv, he made sure the character was okay, but still had the risk and moral as a part. Mr. Rogers has taught us many things about difficult real world situations and children, and it's with those examples we can learn how to pull lessons and present them to children effectively, and carefully.