

## The Handy Girls Can Fix It!

co-created by Mary Schwartz & Barbara Ciarlantini

### Summary

The Handy Girls are a group of neighborhood girls who fix things that are broken and help people in the neighborhood. When Angie's little brother Bobby and his friend Max get in the way by always hanging around the girl's fix-it shop, the Handy Girls go to work and solve the problem.

### Ideas for Classroom use

**Discussion questions** - encourage children to find examples from the story to document their answers.

*How did Angie help Bobby solve the problem of the broken cookie jar?*

*What's a Fix-It shop?*

*Why do you think Max and Bobby kept breaking their toys?*

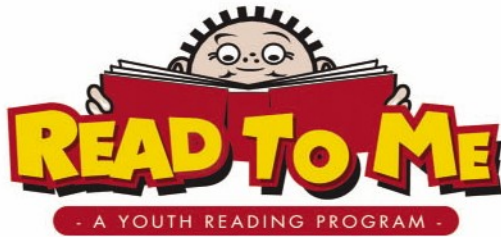
*How did the Handy Girls solve the problem?*

### Responding to the Story

#### Designing and Fixing things

##### ***"Fix-It Day" in the classroom or neighborhood\****

Many people are experts at fixing things. Extend an invitation to the parents of your children for anyone who can fix things to come in for "Fix-It" Day. Perhaps someone can come in to show children how to hammer a nail into a piece of wood (or thumbtacks or pushpins into cardboard). Someone might be able to show children how to sew a button that has fallen off a shirt. Another parent may be able to demonstrate how to glue a toy back together with simple white glue. The possibilities are endless. On the assigned day, set up stations around the classroom for children to rotate through, allowing children to move to each station. Thank all the guests at the end by celebrating with cookies and lemonade of course!



\*A neighborhood “Fix-It Day” may also work for those children who live in close proximity to one another and have the freedom to move throughout a neighborhood. Children could go from house to house instead of from center to center, learning skills from the parents in the neighborhood.

### ***Classroom Fix-It Center and Clubhouse***

What are your students good at fixing? Some may be experts at fixing dolls’ hairstyles or getting the tangles out, putting together Lego’s, sewing or repairing clothes, etc. Invite students to share some of their gifts and talents with their classmates at a classroom Fix-It Shop.

### ***To create a Fix-It Center/Clubhouse***

Using a large appliance box acquired from a neighborhood appliance store, invite children to design the outside of a classroom clubhouse, much like the one that the Handy Girls created for Bobby and Max. Encourage children to work together in small groups to paint and decorate the outside and to bring in simple things from home to furnish the inside. Hopefully, the clubhouse will be able to be set up and opened at least one day a week in the classroom. On that day, brainstorm ideas with your children about all the ways the clubhouse can be used, including, as a Fix-It Shop!

## **Language Arts**

### ***Designing a place of your own***

Invite children to imagine a small space of their own at home where they might go in order to read or build or draw. Would that place be a small space in their bedroom or in the basement or backyard? Encourage them to imagine the perfect space, to sketch it and write a short description of it. Invite children to share their designs with one another and to share them with their parents. Who knows? Perhaps some of the spaces can actually be created for children to have a space to call their own.

For suggestions on building an indoor fort or clubhouse, visit this website:

[http://www.ehow.com/topic\\_7745\\_indoor-fort-building.html](http://www.ehow.com/topic_7745_indoor-fort-building.html)

Creative ideas for children’s imagination spaces can be found here:

<http://www.thecoolhunter.net/article/detail/737/kool-kids-spaces>

♥*Lesson created by Val Hornburg, Portland, OR*