K-5 Role-Playing

TEACHER - So do we all remember from yesterday how to subtract numbers?

*Silence, some nodding, some looking around.*

TEACHER - JaVaughn, are you good? Any questions? (*JaVaughn shrugs.*) Lucia? I see you have your hand up

LUCIA– Well, I don't really get it.

TEACHER - Okay, let’s try another one! Ethan, give me two two-digit numbers.

ETHAN – Anything? (*Teacher nods.*) How about 2 and 22?

TEACHER – No, two-digit numbers and not numbers that are all the same.

ETHAN – You said anything. Well, 37 and 82.

TEACHER– So, let’s do eighty-two minus thirty-seven. (*Teacher writes them vertically*.)

LUCIA – Why didn’t we do thirty-seven minus eighty-two, like Ethan said?

TEACHER – Remember the big number always has to go on top. What do we do first?

LUCIA- Well, 8 take away 3 is 5.

TEACHER – Wait, you have to do the ones first, remember. So, we can’t do 2 minus 7 because you can’t take a bigger number from a smaller number, so what do we have to do? When your mom runs out of sugar to make cookies, she has to knock on your neighbor’s door to borrow. So, the two is going to knock on the eight’s door and borrow 1 to make, what? (*Teacher crosses off 8 and writes 7, then crosses off 2, and continues writing as the rest of the conversation takes place.)*

SAMANTHA – Twelve. So, you get 5.

JAVAUGHN – Wait, why did you have to change it to 12, 7 take away 2 is 5…you get the same answer both ways.

TEACHER – Well, that’s not exactly why. See the 2 isn’t big enough. Let’s change it to 82 minus 36 then we can see that the answer isn’t 4. So, we will do what Samantha said and make it a 12. What’s 12 take away 6?

SAMANTHA – Six.

TEACHER – Agree? (*pause)* Anyone disagree? (*some shake heads)* Then, what’s 7 take away 3?

ETHAN – Four, so, 64.

TEACHER – You mean 46. You just said it backward. Good. Does that take care of everything?

(*pause, no responses. Teacher hands out a worksheet.)*

TEACHER –I want you to work alone and do all of the questions on the front side. (*pause)* So put on your thinking caps because not all of the problems are take away. The first problem is 35 + 29, so, you have to add instead. When you get 5+9, you bring down the 4 and then carry the 1. (*Teacher writes the problem on the board and puts a one on top of the 3 and finishes the problem herself.)*