

PART III

DEVELOPING RELATED SKILLS

RESOLVING CONFLICTS

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PART III: DEVELOPING RELATED SKILLS

Resolving Conflicts

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UNDERSTANDING CONFLICTS



AGENDA

- Starter
- So What?
- Conflict Webs
- They're Everywhere
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students will understand that recognizing and appreciating differences among themselves is a form of respect called “tolerance.”

Students will explore positive and negative aspects of conflict.

Students will define “conflict.”

Students will identify conflicts and the people involved.

Materials Needed

- A dictionary (Part II)
- News articles or letters to the editor, one for each group of four or five students. (Clip or print brief news articles focusing on different types of conflict; for example, include articles on a war, a debate in your city council, a protest, or issues involving your local community.) (Part III)

Starter (3 minutes)

Begin by telling students the story of the Lilliputian rebellion in Chapter 4 of *Gulliver's Travels* by Jonathan Swift. Explain that one day, the emperor of Lilliput decided that all people should break their eggs open on the smaller end instead of on the larger end when cooking. Many people in Lilliput hated this. These "BigEndians," as the book calls them, started six rebellions over how they broke open their eggs. These rebellions forced one emperor to lose his crown, forced another to lose his life, and killed 11,000 people.

Ask students if they would get into an argument with someone over which end of an egg they break open when cooking. Lead students to recognize that this really is not an issue to fight over. Point out that there are many different types of conflict, some with sources very difficult to imagine and understand. Some of these causes, however, are not worth fighting over.

Part I So What? (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students understand that recognizing and appreciating differences among themselves is a form of respect called "tolerance."

1. Students observe visible differences among themselves.

Divide the class into groups of five or six students. Have members of each group seat themselves in a circle. Say, "Every person in this classroom is unique in some way. There are differences that are obvious and differences that are not so apparent." Tell students that they are going to perform an experiment to see if what you said is true.

Ask for the tallest person in each group to raise their hand. Indicate that these students will begin a chain reaction within their groups by observing the person to their right and reporting one detail that is visibly different between them.

Model the activity before having students begin. Point to a student and say, for example, "My hair is long and yours is short."

Remind students to respect each other and not put anyone down. Have students begin. Circulate through the room as groups work, making sure that they are not focusing on personal or sensitive traits. Make suggestions if needed.

2. Students become aware of invisible differences.

When students have finished, tell them to now turn to the person on their left and share a possible difference that cannot be seen. Model this by pointing to a student and saying, for example, "I live in a yellow apartment building; do you?" or "I have two sisters; do you?"

3. Students define "tolerance."

When students have finished, begin a discussion about this activity by asking:

- Is it true that every person in this classroom is unique?
- Is it true that some differences are obvious and some are not? Give examples.
- What would this class be like if everyone were exactly the same?

Remind students that since each one of us is a unique individual, it makes sense that we look different, think differently, believe differently, have different likes and different strengths, and so on. Point out that these differences make us who we are and that the world would be a very boring place if we were all exactly the same.

Write the word “tolerance” on the board, and ask students to explain what it means. Help students to understand that “tolerance” means “respect for differences among people.” Say, “Tolerance allows us to appreciate one another, learn from each other, and work together.”

Part II Conflict Webs (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students explore positive and negative aspects of conflict.

1. Students create word webs.

Write the word “conflict” on the board and circle it. Ask students to raise their hands if they have ever been in a conflict. Point out that it seems that everyone (or almost everyone) has. Explain that this makes sense, as conflict is a natural part of life.

Invite students to suggest words or phrases that come to mind when they think about conflicts. Write each suggestion on the board, connecting it to the circle with a line in order to form a word web. (Students’ responses will most likely reflect negative words, such as “anger,” “quarrel,” “fighting,” “yelling,” “hitting,” and so on. Encourage students to also include positive words, such as “difference of opinion,” “debate,” “compromise,” “problem solving,” etc.)

2. Students draw conclusions from their webs.

Ask students to point out which words and phrases in the web might indicate tolerance. Have students discuss how tolerance impacts conflict. Discuss the idea that tolerance doesn’t necessarily mean agreeing with another person’s views, but does mean respecting their right to those views.

Ask students, “Does conflict always produce negative results?” Through discussion, guide students to realize that conflict is a natural part of life and that it does not always have to produce negative results. Point out that when conflict is handled in a constructive manner, it can produce positive results. Conflict has the potential to bring about much needed change. Explain that students will be exploring ways to handle conflicts constructively in this module.

3. Students define “conflict.”

Challenge students to develop a definition of the word “conflict” that makes sense to them. If students have difficulty verbalizing a definition, ask them to refer to the word web, use the word in a sentence, or consult a dictionary.

Write words, phrases, and examples on the board. Then, guide students to formulate a definition that reflects the idea that conflict is the struggle between two or more opposing forces or ideas. Point out that this definition reflects neither positive nor negative results—just the fact that conflicts involve disagreements or clashes.

Part III They’re Everywhere (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students identify conflicts and the people involved.

1. Students read an article about a conflict.

Divide the class into groups of four or five students, and give each group an article that you have clipped or printed from a news publication or magazine. Explain that each group should have a reader who will read the article aloud to the group and a recorder who will take notes about the group’s discussion.

Explain to students that they are to read their articles, discuss them, and identify what the conflicts are and the people involved in them. Tell students that they do not need to resolve the conflicts—they are simply to tell what the conflicts are about and identify the parties involved.

2. Students report their findings.

When students have finished, invite the recorders from each group to identify the conflict their group discussed and the people involved. After each recorder has responded, invite the other students to answer the following questions:

- Did you feel that you had enough information to identify the conflict and the people involved? Explain your answer.
- Did your article describe positive or negative behaviors? Give examples to support your answer.
- Do you think this conflict had or could have positive or negative results? Explain.

Point out that it is often difficult to answer these questions, since the issues in a conflict are not always clearly presented. Explain that when this happens, it is up to us to get the information we need before we pass judgment or get involved.

Conclusion *(2 minutes)*

Ask students if the people in the articles they discussed showed tolerance toward others. Encourage them to support their opinions with reasons. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- Tolerance is important because it shows respect for the differences among people.
- Conflict is a natural part of life.
- Conflict does not have to be negative; it can produce positive results.

Student Assessment

1. Define “tolerance.”
2. Define “conflict.”
3. List five possible positive results of conflict.
4. List three examples of conflict you have seen recently, either in the movies or on TV. Who was involved? What was the conflict about?

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Using Quotations

“Some people have foreign accents—until they laugh.” —Bill Keane

Have students discuss the meaning of this quote and draw their own cartoons depicting similar realizations about the common ground that exists among all people.

Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

Divide students into small groups. Provide each group with a large piece of butcher paper. Have each student draw pictures showing positive and negative conflicts on a portion of their group’s paper.

Display the papers around the room. Have students circulate through the room and view each group’s paper. Discuss what makes a conflict positive or negative.

Writing in Your Journal

Have students make lists of things they like and things they don’t like about their best friends.

Discuss why we tolerate weaknesses in people we care about. What can students learn from accepting and tolerating their best friends?

Using Technology

Play “War” by Edwin Starr and other protest songs for students. Explain that songwriters often write songs protesting war.

Ask, “Is war ever necessary?” Discuss this question with students. Identify the positive and negative consequences of recent wars or conflicts.

Homework

This week, have students note situations in which they hear people speaking rudely to each other (e.g., in stores, while waiting in line). Have them include the time of day, the place, the people involved, and what the conflict seemed to be about. Tell them that they should not get involved in the conflicts.

Have students present their findings to the class. Ask, “Did you find people to be mostly polite or mostly rude?”

Additional Resources

Show students a photo of *Guernica* by Pablo Picasso. Explain to students that this enormous work was painted in protest of Francisco Franco’s dictatorship in Spain. Picasso directed that it be returned to Spain when the country became a democracy, which happened after Franco died.

Discuss the painting with students. Have them make a list of adjectives that describe how the painting makes them feel.

IDENTIFYING EMOTIONS IN CONFLICTS



AGENDA

- Starter
- Under the Surface
- Scale of Emotions
- For Example
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students will recognize that many underlying feelings and emotions are involved in conflicts.

Students will recognize the relationship between emotions and behaviors.

Students will identify emotions and behaviors involved in a personal conflict.

Materials Needed

- One copy of the “Sometimes I Feel...” activity sheet for each student (Part I)
- One copy of the “Scale of Emotions” activity sheet for each student (Part II)

Starter (3 minutes)

Ask students if they know who Indira Gandhi was. Explain that she was the prime minister of India from 1966 to 1977. She was elected again in 1980, but was assassinated during that term. Tell students that she once said, “You can’t shake hands with a clenched fist.”

Write Gandhi’s words on the board and invite volunteers to explain what she meant. Have students make a fist. Focus on the image of a clenched fist, and explore the feelings that this image represents.

Say, “Emotions—and the behaviors they produce—are important elements of conflicts. Today, we’re going to talk about how emotions and behaviors contribute to conflicts in negative and positive ways.”

Part I Under the Surface (20 minutes)

Purpose: Students recognize that anger is a general word that describes many different underlying feelings and emotions.

1. Students consider an analogy.

Ask a volunteer to draw a picture on the board of an iceberg floating in water. If the picture does not show the portion of the iceberg that is below the waterline, have another volunteer add it to the picture.

Through discussion and adjustments to the picture, guide students to arrive at something that looks like a large inverted V, with about 1/8 of the image above the line that represents the surface of the water. Point out that the largest part of an iceberg, about 7/8 of it, remains hidden from view beneath the water.

Explain that conflict is like an iceberg, and that we often only see the anger and the blame that follow—the smallest part of the picture. At the top of the iceberg, write the words “anger” and “blame” on the board. Point out that these two emotions are usually the most visible elements in conflicts.

2. Students expand their vocabulary of feelings.

Ask students to think about times when they felt angry and to name underlying feelings that contributed to that anger. Suggest that they think of words that could complete the following sentence: “I felt angry because I was...” Without commenting, write student responses in the portion of the iceberg below the waterline.

Comment that the picture can get more complicated than what is shown on the board. Distribute copies of the “Sometimes I Feel...” activity sheet and give students time to read through the words. Suggest that as students read, they should place a minus sign by emotions that could intensify feelings of anger.

When students have finished, invite them to add more words below the waterline on the board.

3. Students draw conclusions.

Point out that all of the feelings listed on the board may give rise to anger when one is involved in a conflict. Ask volunteers to explain why it might be important to identify the causes of anger when involved in a conflict.

Affirm responses that point out that recognizing what causes anger can help people understand why they are angry. Say, “If you take the time to think about why you are feeling angry, then you can begin to understand the conflict that you are in and work toward resolving it in a constructive manner.”

Ask students if they have ever noticed how their moods can affect their reactions. For example, explain how someone might say something that bothers them one day, but if the same person were to say the same thing another day, it wouldn't affect them at all. Invite students to share similar experiences. Point out that it's important to understand that mood affects our perceptions and feelings.

Part II Scale of Emotions (20 minutes)

Purpose: Students recognize the relationship between emotions and behaviors.

1. Students identify behavioral cues.

Recall the image of the clenched fist that students discussed at the beginning of class. As students answer the following questions, ask them to demonstrate their responses:

- How would you expect someone with a clenched fist to look?
- How would you expect that person to sound?
- How would you expect that person to act?

Encourage students to brainstorm other ways that people might look, sound, and act when they become involved in a conflict. Afterward, point out that these behaviors are similar to those demonstrated by people when they are feeling stressed. Ask, “Why do you think this is?” (Students might respond by saying that conflict is stressful.)

Explain that feelings and behaviors are linked, and that together, they can cause us to communicate various verbal and nonverbal messages. Point out that if someone clenches their fist, we can tell immediately that the person is either angry or tense.

Ask students the following questions:

- What clues would tell you whether a person with a clenched fist is feeling angry or tense?
- What message would be sent if the person opened their fist?

2. Students identify emotions in different situations.

Distribute copies of the “Scale of Emotions” activity sheet to students. Tell students to think of the lowest note as a time when they are relaxed and calm, and to think of the higher notes as times when they are increasingly stressed and, finally, in conflict.

Have students fill in the activity sheet with words that describe feelings they typically have when involved in each of the four situations. Suggest that students use the “Sometimes I Feel…” activity sheet to identify a variety of feelings.

3. Students learn how emotions affect conflict.

Ask students to observe how the feelings they wrote became more stressful as they worked their way up the scale of emotions. Ask volunteers to share emotions they wrote for each situation on their activity sheets.

Point out that as emotions and behaviors become more heated, conflicts become more intense. Ask students if they recall the example about taking tests and feeling stress, which they discussed in “Lesson 3: Handling Stress” of Module Four: Managing Personal Resources. Remind them how they concluded that tests themselves aren’t stressful—it’s one’s personal reaction to the test that causes the stress.

Explain that conflict works the same way. Then, share the following information with students:

- In a conflict, we don’t necessarily oppose another person. Rather, we oppose something that has been said or done and then have an emotional reaction to it.
- Our emotional reactions are ours; only we can own them and only we can deal with them.
- We have the power to deal with our emotions and behaviors in a conflict, just as we can deal with emotions and behaviors in stressful situations.
- We have the power to get control of our emotions before a conflict escalates.

Assure students that they will be exploring ways to control their emotions and behaviors and ways to keep conflicts from getting out of control in later lessons.

Part III For Example (5 minutes)

Purpose: Students identify emotions and behaviors involved in a personal conflict.

1. Students accept an assignment.

Explain that students are to complete the following assignment as homework. Ask them to make a note of this assignment in their notebooks or folders for this class. Give them the following directions:

- Think about a conflict that you have recently been involved in or witnessed.
- Write about the conflict, briefly explaining what it was about and who was involved. You may change the names of the people involved.
- Identify the emotions involved and how the people sounded, looked, and acted. Remember that anger and blame are often the most obvious emotions involved in conflict situations. Look beyond the anger and blame, and identify feelings that may have been beneath the surface and contributed to the conflict.
- If you would like to, include illustrations.
- You may work on this assignment alone or with a partner.

Tell students that you will not be sharing their work with others, nor will you be asking them to share it. Answer any questions that students may have about the assignment, and then remind them that it is due for the next lesson. Suggest that students use the two handouts from this lesson to help them with their writing.

2. Students work on the assignment.

Allow students the remainder of the class period to begin the assignment. As students are working, circulate through the classroom to ensure that everyone knows the requirements of this assignment.

Conclusion (2 minutes)

Invite volunteers to explain why the picture of the iceberg represents conflict. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- Emotions and behaviors contribute to the intensity of conflicts.
- Our emotions and behaviors belong to us; only we can control them.
- Anger, along with the blame it produces, is only the tip of the iceberg in many conflicts; the feelings under the surface are the ones that really affect behavior.
- Recognizing the feelings that cause anger can help us understand why we are angry.

Student Assessment

1. How can recognizing the feelings that cause anger help you when you are involved in a conflict?
2. What are some emotions that might lie beneath the surface during a conflict?

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Using Quotations

“Remember, no one can make you feel inferior without your consent.” —Eleanor Roosevelt

Write the words “ignored,” “yelled at,” “scolded,” and “insulted” on the board. Ask students to describe their reactions to each of these actions. Discuss how certain reactions can impact the intensity of a conflict.

Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

Select a brief clip from a movie or TV show portraying a conflict between two people. Play this clip in class with the sound turned off.

Have students guess the emotions that the people in the scene might be experiencing. Then, play the scene again with the sound turned on.

Writing in Your Journal

Ask students to keep a daily chart for the duration of this module. Students will note each day’s weather (e.g., sunny, cloudy, rainy) and the general mood they experienced that day.

At the end of each day, students should note what their overall attitudes were for that day. They should assess if the weather affected their moods.

Using Technology

Divide students into groups. Have each group brainstorm songs to include on a short playlist that expresses one of these emotions: anger, love, conflict, joy, happiness, or sadness. Remind students that the lyrics of the songs they choose should be appropriate for school.

Have groups share their playlists with the class, or plan a day when students can play selections from their playlists.

Homework

Have students write about a recent disagreement they had with someone else.

Have students discuss the emotions they experienced before the conflict, during the conflict, and after the conflict.

Additional Resources

Display photos of some of Van Gogh's paintings, particularly the *Wheat Field* series, *Starry Night*, and *Cypresses*. Point out Van Gogh's bold and swirling brush strokes.

Ask students what they think Van Gogh was feeling when he painted these pictures. Ask, "How did Van Gogh's paintings make you feel?"

SOMETIMES I FEEL...

A

adventurous
affectionate
afraid
aggressive
amazed
annoyed
anxious
apologetic
apprehensive
ashamed

B

bashful
betrayed
bold
bored
brave

C

calm
cautious
cheerful
comfortable
competent
confident
confused
curious

D

decisive
depressed
determined
disappointed
disgusted
distressed

E

ecstatic
embarrassed
energetic
enraged
enthusiastic
envious
excited
exhausted

F

friendly
frightened
frustrated

G

grateful
greedy
guilty

H

happy
helpless
hopeful
horrified

I

impatient
incompetent
indecisive
indifferent
insecure
inspired
insulted
intimidated
irritated

J

jealous
joyful

L

lazy
listless
lonely

M

marvelous
mischievous
miserable
moody

N

negative
nervous

O

optimistic
overwhelmed

P

peaceful
perplexed
petrified
positive
proud
puzzled

R

regretful
relaxed
resentful
restless

S

sad
satisfied
secure
serene
shocked
shy
silly
skeptical
sleepy
sluggish
sullen
surprised
suspicious
sympathetic

T

tense
timid
tranquil
trusting

U

uncomfortable
undecided

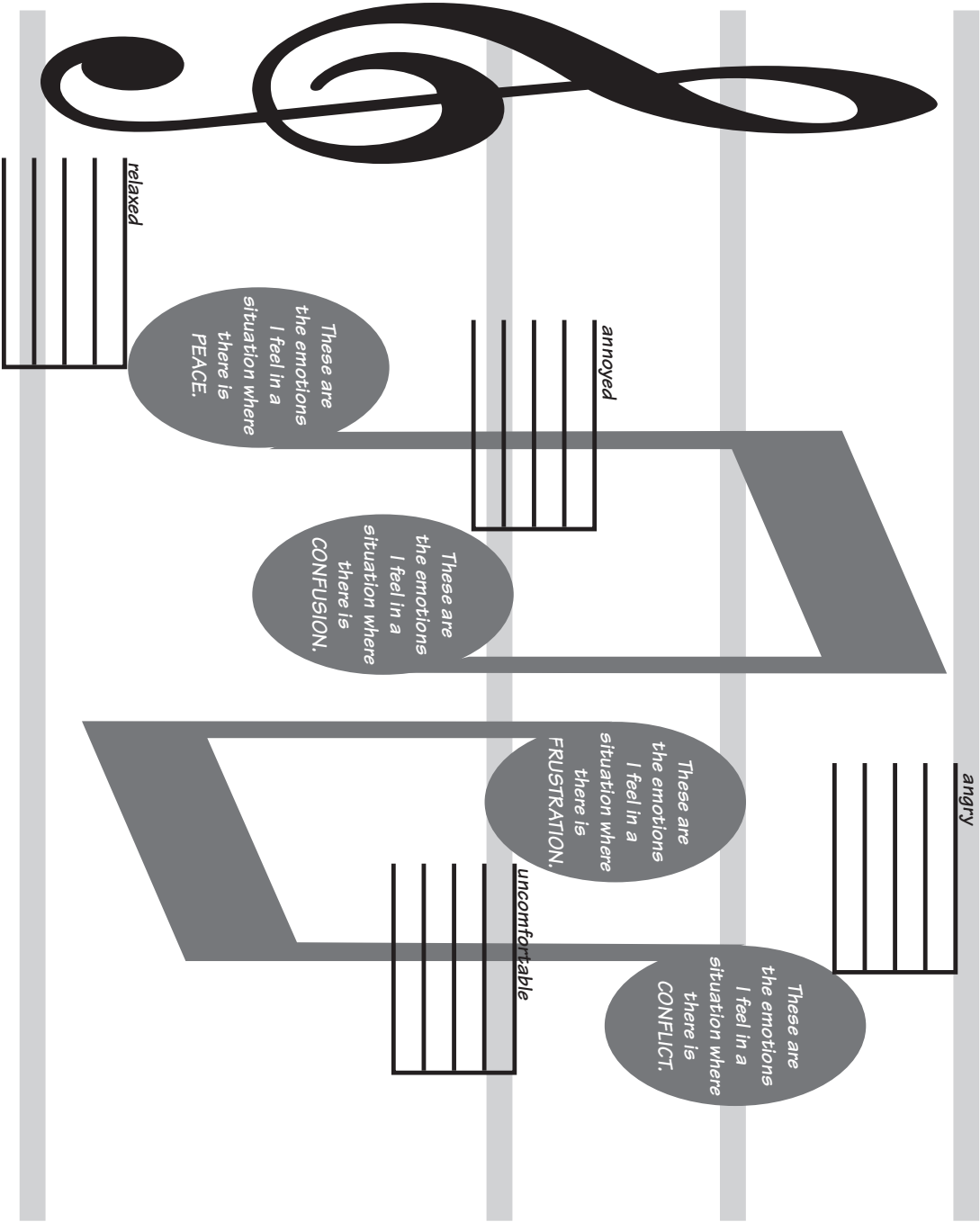
W

wary
whimsical
worried

Z

zealous

SCALE OF EMOTIONS



CONTROLLING EMOTIONS IN CONFLICTS



AGENDA

- Starter
- Personal Power Revisited
- Antidotes for Anger and Its Friends
- Change History
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students will recognize that they have the power to control their emotions and behaviors.

Students will identify ways to reduce the effects of anger and other negative emotions.

Students will apply methods of controlling emotions and changing reactions to conflict situations.

Materials Needed

- Students' homework assignments from the last lesson, in which they identified a conflict and the emotions involved (Part III)

Starter (3 minutes)

Begin class today by giving students conflicting instructions in quick succession. You might ask students to seat themselves alphabetically by their last names, change your mind and have them seat themselves alphabetically by their first names, and then change your mind again and ask them to take their usual seats.

Afterward, ask students the following questions:

- Were you getting frustrated or feeling stressed?
- Were you beginning to feel angry with me?

Explain that you wanted students to experience stress, anger, and frustration. Say, “Today, we’re going to revisit ways to handle stress, frustration, and anger—feelings that can lead to conflict.”

Part I Personal Power Revisited (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students recognize that they have the power to control their emotions and behaviors.

1. Students review personal power.

Ask students if they recall the lesson earlier in the course in which they discussed personal power (Confidence Building, “Lesson 6: Developing Personal Power”) and made symbols as reminders of their power. Invite students to recall what they learned in that lesson. Through questions and prompts, guide students to recall the following:

- Everyone has the power to make choices.
- The choices one makes will affect one’s own life and often the lives of others.
- Each individual is responsible for the choices that they make.

Point out that personal power can be exercised during conflicts, because conflicts always involve making choices and decisions. Tell students that they have the power to make choices about controlling their emotions and the behaviors those emotions produce.

2. Students listen to a scenario.

Have students listen carefully to this hypothetical scenario:

Andre tells you that Patrice said something about you that isn’t true. Andre says that someone in gym class told him about it. Andre also says that this person said that Patrice is calling you a spoiled brat. You go ballistic. You decide to get even by spreading rumors about Patrice!

Say, “I’m going to read the scenario again. This time, when I reach the point where your emotions and behaviors get out of control, call out, ‘Freeze!’” (Students should stop you after the sentence, “You go ballistic.”)

3. Students reflect on emotions, behavior, and choices.

Invite students to brainstorm emotions that are involved in “going ballistic” in this scenario. If necessary, challenge them to look beyond anger and explore feelings that are under the surface by asking, “But why are you feeling so angry?” (Students should respond: because I feel betrayed, insulted, annoyed, confused, disappointed, embarrassed, resentful, shocked, surprised, etc.)

Turn the focus of the discussion to choices by asking the following questions:

- As a result of these feelings, what did you decide to do in the scenario?
- What else could you have done?

Invite students to give as many suggestions as possible.

Part II Antidotes for Anger and Its Friends (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students identify ways to reduce the effects of anger and other emotions.

1. Students identify strategies for controlling emotions.

Explain that there are several strategies we can use to control our anger before we make decisions. Invite volunteers to identify strategies that they know about. Write their suggestions on the board. (Students might respond: slowly count backward from 10, take three deep breaths, write down what you are feeling, talk to a friend.)

If necessary, remind students what they learned about handling stress in “Lesson 3: Handling Stress” of Module Four: Managing Personal Resources, and have them find the “Stress Factors” activity sheet from that lesson in their folders. Through questions and prompts, have students review this activity sheet and discuss how the information applies to conflicts. Focus students’ attention on the center column, where they wrote ways to reduce or relieve stress. Invite volunteers to write suggestions that would apply to handling anger and other emotions.

Challenge students to think of other strategies that could help people to control their emotions and curb the destructive behaviors that intense emotions tend to promote. Add these to the list on the board. Your list might reflect the following:

- Slowly count backward from 10.
- Take three deep breaths as you bend over to tie a shoe or pull up a sock.
- Take a step backward and stretch the muscles in your shoulders and your face.
- Walk away.
- Laugh.
- Pinch yourself.
- Stomp your foot on the floor twice.
- Think of something positive about the other person involved.
- Take a time out to gather your thoughts and regain your calm.
- Talk to a friend and vent.
- Go to a quiet place and write about the situation you are experiencing.

2. Students reflect on the importance of cooling down.

Point out that all of these suggestions are ways to make a person stop, think, and cool down before deciding on what to do. Explain that this cooldown time is very important. Invite volunteers to explain why they think it is important. Through discussion, guide students to realize that cooldown time will keep them from saying or doing things that they cannot take back and may regret later, that could escalate the conflict and make it worse, or that could result in negative consequences.

Refer to the list on the board and point out that doing just one of these things will relax the body and the mind and relieve tension, thus diffusing the intensity of emotions. Say, “You can get control of yourself in conflicts. There are always options to consider and choices to make. You are capable of thinking about them and choosing wisely.”

Part III Change History (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students apply methods of controlling emotions and changing reactions to conflicts.

1. Students revise the scenario.

Explain that students are going to change history. Tell them to take out writing materials. Then, reread a shorter version of the scenario that you discussed earlier:

Andre tells you that Patrice said something about you that isn't true. Andre says that someone in gym class told him about it. Andre also says that this person said that Patrice is calling you a spoiled brat. You go ballistic.

Ask students to describe what they would do next. Ask them to identify decisions they can make to change the ending. Tell students to write a new ending for this scenario based on these decisions.

2. Students share their revisions.

Invite volunteers to share what they wrote. Encourage other students to express support or ideas of their own.

Comment on similarities and differences that you observe among the new endings. For example, you might point out the number of different ways that students used to cool down. You might also point out that most students made similar decisions after cooling down.

3. Students rewrite the conflicts they described.

Ask students to take out the conflicts they wrote about, which you assigned as homework during Part III of Lesson 2. Ask students if they think cooldown time would have helped in these situations. Have them add a short paragraph to their writing, explaining what the people involved could have done to cool down and how it would have affected the conflict. If a student describes someone in the conflict as calm and in control of their emotions, have the student write about what might have happened if the person hadn't been calm and in control.

If time permits, have students complete this assignment in class. Otherwise, have students complete this assignment as homework.

Conclusion *(2 minutes)*

Ask students to reflect on the list of ways to cool down and to identify strategies that would work for them. Suggest that they make a note of these strategies and use them the next time they feel themselves involved in a conflict. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- You have the power to control your emotions and the behaviors they produce.
- There are strategies to control anger when you reach your limit. Use them.
- In conflicts, there are always options to consider and choices to make. You are capable of thinking about them and choosing wisely.

Student Assessment

1. List three things that make you angry. Why do they make you angry?
2. How can knowing why you are angry be helpful to you?
3. List three strategies for cooling down.

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Using Quotations

“Conflict is inevitable, but combat is optional.” –Max Lucade

Discuss the meaning of this quote as a class. Tell students that conflict doesn't always have to result in arguments or fighting. Ask students to describe how controlling emotions in a conflict can prevent it from escalating.

Math Connection

Have students plot line graphs depicting the intensity of emotions in conflict situations. At each point, students are to identify what action is occurring and what emotion is being demonstrated.

Have students plot another line on the same graph. Each point on this line should identify an action, the emotion, and a strategy to control that emotion. Have students compare the two lines.

Writing in Your Journal

Have students write a letter to someone who has made them angry. Have them read it and then rip it up.

Have students describe how they feel now that they have written, read, and ripped up their letters.

Using Technology

Have students visit <https://www.verywellmind.com/tentips-for-managing-conflict-tension-andanger-2330720> for anger-management tips.

When they are finished, have students select the tips they find most helpful and discuss them as a class.

Homework

Explain to students that “mensch” is a Yiddish word that means “wonderful person.” Tell students that everyone knows derogatory words to call others. Ask, “Do you know any complimentary words you can use to describe others?”

Have students brainstorm a list of complimentary words in any language. Tell them to list as many as they can.

Additional Resources

Show students paintings by David Hockney, Andrew Wyeth, Jean-Michel Basquiat, and Keith Haring.

Have students discuss how these works make them feel.

USING COMMUNICATION SKILLS EFFECTIVELY



AGENDA

- Starter
- I Said This, but I Meant That
- I-Messages
- Try Them
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students will recognize how miscommunication can escalate a conflict and even create new conflicts.

Students will apply assertive behavior skills to conflict situations.

Students will apply communication skills to conflicts in their own lives.

Materials Needed

- One copy of the “Act Two” activity sheet for each student (Part I)
- One copy of the “I-Messages” activity sheet for each student (Part II)

Starter (3 minutes)

Draw a tic-tac-toe grid on the board and place an “X” in one of the squares. Without saying anything, point to a student and indicate that they should come to the front of the room. Hand the student a piece of chalk and look toward the game board. Play the game silently. If you win, smile broadly and raise your fists in victory. If you lose, frown as you cross your arms and sulk.

Thank the student, and ask them to be seated. Ask the following questions:

- What just happened here? (You and a student played a game of tic-tac-toe.)
- How did this happen if I never said a word? (You used gestures, or nonverbal cues, to challenge the student, and you both knew how to play the game.)
- Was I excited or disappointed at the end? How could you tell?

Remind students of the power of communicating assertively, both verbally and nonverbally. Say, “Today we’re going to explore how miscommunication affects conflicts and how you can communicate more effectively to resolve conflicts.”

Part I I Said This, but I Meant That (20 minutes)

Purpose: Students recognize how miscommunication can escalate a conflict and even create new conflicts.

1. Students role-play a scenario.

Distribute copies of the “Act Two” activity sheet to students. Give students time to read through the activity sheet. Then, ask for volunteers to play the roles of the parent and Sam, using only the first part of dialogue (the words that were actually said).

2. Students discuss the scenario.

Begin a discussion about the layers of miscommunication in this scenario by asking the following questions:

- Where did this conflict really begin? In other words, what was Act One? (getting detention in school)
- How did Sam react to the parent’s anger at the beginning of Act Two? (aggressively)
- Why do you think Sam reacted this way? (because the parent was angry and Sam felt defensive)
- Why didn’t Sam say what he really meant? (because Sam was embarrassed)
- What did Sam do after realizing that he forgot to call home? (blamed the teacher)
- What will the consequence of this miscommunication be? (The parent is going to call Sam’s teacher.)
- Do you think this conflict is over? Why or why not? (No; if the parent calls Sam’s teacher, another conflict will begin.)

3. Students role-play other versions of the scenario.

Ask two other volunteers to play the roles of the parent and Sam, this time using the second set of dialogue (what the characters meant).

When they have finished, ask where the communication in this version fails. (After the parent’s line, “Did you forget that you had a dentist appointment?”) Explain that at this point, communication falls apart because at times, Sam and the parent are no longer talking about the same things.

Ask for two more volunteers to play the roles of the parent and Sam. Explain that when the parent gets to their second line (“Did you forget that you had a dentist appointment?”), you will ask the volunteers to freeze and improvise a completely new ending to the scenario—one in which the characters say what they mean and avoid creating a new conflict.

If necessary, guide the Sam character to explain why he was late, and the parent character to remind Sam of the importance of calling home if he is delayed for any reason.

4. Students reflect on the importance of communication.

Point out that it is not always easy for us to say what we mean, and that we often say things we don’t mean. Say, “In the case of Sam, when he caught himself misspeaking, he stuck to it. What else could he have done?” (Students might respond: he could have corrected himself.) Ask, “How would this have changed things?” (Students should say that the communication between Sam and the parent could have improved.)

Say, “Communicating effectively by saying what you mean can be difficult, but the more you work at it, the easier it gets.”

Part II I-Messages (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students will apply assertive behavior skills to conflict situations.

1. Students recall the importance of assertive behavior.

Point out that in the last version of the scenario, Sam and the parent were demonstrating more assertive behavior. They were speaking and acting assertively, and were able to communicate more effectively as a result.

Ask if anyone can recall how to be assertive, rather than passive or aggressive. Through questions and prompts, guide students to review the following criteria that they learned earlier in the year (see “Lesson 4: Being Assertive” of Module One: Communication):

- Make eye contact.
- Speak calmly, clearly, and confidently.
- Use words that show you are a responsible person.
- Say what you mean in a respectful manner.
- Be sure that your body language and your words are sending the same message.
- Listen to the other person and think about what they are saying.

Remind students that assertive behavior is usually the most successful way to communicate, especially in conflicts. Say, “Effective communication is the key to resolving conflicts.”

2. Students apply assertive communication skills to conflicts.

Tell students that when they are feeling upset or angry, they can use “I-messages” to help them be assertive. As you distribute copies of the “I-Messages” activity sheet, explain that I-messages can help students take responsibility for their feelings and begin discussions that will help resolve conflicts.

Give students time to read through the example on the activity sheet. Point out the following about each part of the I-message:

- It begins with “I,” not “you.” It also starts with a statement of feelings. Beginning this way ensures that the speaker and the listener are focusing on the emotions of the speaker rather than an accusation directed at the listener. Accusations do not encourage dialogue; they trigger conflicts because the listener feels as if they are being attacked, and therefore often refuses to listen. (Write “begin with ‘I,’ not ‘you’” on the board.)
- The second part is a factual description of the action that evoked certain emotions in the speaker. It simply states the problem or what happened. Notice that it does not contain accusations or insults, such as “when you are inconsiderate.” Such words will only escalate a conflict. (Write “describe the behavior” on the board.)
- The last part of the message explains why you are experiencing certain emotions. This part lets the listener know how and why the behavior affected the speaker. Again, it is important to focus on what is important to you, and not on accusing or blaming the other person. (Write “explain how the behavior affected you” on the board.)

3. Students use I-messages to express their feelings.

Invite students to fill out the remainder of the activity sheet. Suggest that students refer to the “Sometimes I Feel...” activity sheet from Lesson 2 for help. Remind them that the “Sometimes I Feel...” activity sheet lists an entire vocabulary of feelings.

When students are finished, ask volunteers to share what they wrote. As they respond, have them express themselves in an assertive manner. If time permits, invite other students to role-play the person receiving the message, describe how they would react to the message, and explain why. Point out that practicing such messages out loud will help prepare students to deliver I-messages more effectively.

4. Students discuss how I-messages demonstrate assertive behavior.

Have students describe assertive behavior. Ask, “Can using I-messages help you to behave more assertively? How?” (Students should say that using I-messages allows them to speak calmly, clearly, and confidently, and say what they mean in a respectful manner.)

Part III Try Them (10 minutes)

Purpose: Students apply communication skills to conflicts in their own lives.

1. Students reflect on conflicts in their own lives.

Ask students to think about a conflict that they have been in recently, or one in which they are currently involved. Tell them to think about the details of the conflict, and to think about how they reacted. Remind them to also think about the other person in the conflict.

2. Students choose a conflict to address.

Give students the remainder of the class period to write I-messages that explain how they felt and why. Tell them to be sure that they identify the conflicts before writing their I-messages.

Remind students that when they deliver their I-messages, it is very important to be assertive—to speak calmly and clearly, and to control their emotions. If they can do this, then they will be able to listen actively to the other person’s response, and continue a dialogue that will resolve the conflict.

Conclusion (2 minutes)

Ask students to look again at the “Act Two” activity sheet and to identify the I-messages they find. (Both the parent and Sam used forms of I-messages in their “meant” dialogues.) Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- Speaking and acting assertively helps us communicate more effectively— especially in conflicts.
- Speaking calmly and controlling our emotions helps us express ourselves assertively and resolve conflicts.
- Good communication is the key to resolving conflicts.

Student Assessment

1. List three reasons why miscommunication occurs.
2. Imagine that you are trying to read, but another person nearby is being very loud. Describe an aggressive way to ask that person to be quiet, not using an I-message. Then, describe how you could assertively ask that person to be quiet, using an I-message.
3. List three reasons why using I-messages is an effective way to communicate.

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Using Quotations

“Kindness is more important than wisdom, and the recognition of this is the beginning of wisdom.”

—Theodore Isaac Rubin

As a class, discuss how kindness and understanding can help resolve a conflict, while forcing one’s opinions can often escalate it. Have students brainstorm times when they could have used kindness to resolve a conflict.

Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

I-messages focus attention and conversation on the speaker and their feelings. Have students draw I-messages. Ask them to fold a piece of drawing paper in half. Have students reflect on a conflict they have had and draw the way that they saw the conflict on one half and the other person’s perspective on the other half.

Discuss how seeing both sides of a conflict can help to resolve it.

Writing in Your Journal

Have students write about an experience they had in the past week where they were able to avoid an argument or conflict.

Discuss how students were able to accomplish this. Ask, “Was avoiding this argument or conflict easy or difficult?”

Using Technology

Have students search online for information on internet etiquette. Discuss common breaches of internet etiquette and how they are perceived (e.g., typing in all capital letters is seen as shouting).

Discuss how sending an email, text, or instant message can often escalate a conflict, as emotions are difficult to convey online. Tell students that following proper internet etiquette can help them express themselves online.

Homework

Have students investigate different gestures used to communicate in other cultures. Have them also research gestures that have different meanings depending on the culture.


Discuss how simple miscommunications due to cultural differences can cause conflict

Additional Resources


Discuss writing as a means of communicating effectively.

Allow students to choose a prompt from *350 Fabulous Writing Prompts* by Jacqueline Sweeney. Have students work on their prompts. Then, have them share their work with the class and explain what they hoped to communicate.

ACT TWO



Read what each person says. Also, read the text beneath the dialogue to find out what each person meant to say.



PARENT: (*upset, angry*) Where have you been?
(*You're over an hour late, and I've been really worried.*)

SAM: (*defensively*) At school.
(*I got detention and I'm kind of embarrassed about it.*)

PARENT: (*confused*) But school was over an hour ago! What have you been doing?
(*Did you forget that you had a dentist appointment?*)

SAM: (*insulted*) I told you! I was at school! The teacher made us stay late.
(*Don't you believe me? Oops, did I say "us"?*)



PARENT: (*frustrated*) Why?
(*Please just explain why you are so late.*)

SAM: (*anxiously*) Because somebody was throwing spitballs and the teacher got mad, so the class got detention.
(*Well, really just me, because I threw some spitballs.*)

PARENT: (*wary*) That doesn't seem fair, but you should have had enough sense to call.
(*And you weren't involved?*)

SAM: (*resentfully*) Well, the teacher wouldn't let us leave the room!
(*I forgot to call. That's what I should have done.*)

PARENT: (*angry*) That's it! I'm going to call your teacher about this! I had to cancel your dental appointment!



I-MESSAGES

I-messages are a great way to explain yourself when you are upset. When you use them, people are more likely to listen to you and to respond without becoming angry and defensive. Read the example, and then try to write your own I-messages.

EXAMPLE

Someone in your household often forgets to give you your messages.

I feel upset

when you don't give me my messages

because they are important to me.

1. A classmate has started calling you by a nickname that you dislike.

I feel _____

when you _____

because _____

2. Your teacher hasn't called on you all week, even though you've raised your hand.

I feel _____

when you _____

because _____

3. One of your friends often borrows your things and doesn't return them.

I feel _____

when you _____

because _____

CREATING A WIN-WIN SITUATION



AGENDA

- Starter
- Who Loses?
- Who Wins?
- Me First?
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students will recognize the dynamics of win-lose and lose-lose situations.

Students will recognize the benefits of win-win situations.

Students will practice resolving conflicts.

Materials Needed

- Index cards (Part III)

Starter (3 minutes)

Ask students to define “conflict.” (Students should respond: conflict is the result of two or more opposing forces or ideas.) Ask students to analyze how a common conflict situation—a sporting event—gets resolved.

As students respond, prompt them to go beyond describing the sporting event, and express the understanding that the conflict, or game, ends when one side wins and the other side loses.

Write the words “Win-Lose” on the board. Explain that this same idea is often applied to other conflict situations in life—when someone wins, someone else generally loses. Explain to students that today they will discover that this is not the only, or the best, option when resolving conflicts.

Part I Who Loses? (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students recognize the dynamics of win-lose and lose-lose situations.

1. Students brainstorm win-lose situations.

Write the words “football” and “tennis” under the heading “Win-Lose” on the board. Invite volunteers to name and write a few other examples of win-lose situations. Your list might include the names of other sports, as well as board games, card games, computer games, races, spelling bees, contests, and so on.

Make the observation that most people enjoy playing games and competing in contests. Explain that because we have so much experience with games, a win-lose approach to a conflict is a familiar one.

Ask students if they think that personal conflicts should be handled in the same manner as a game or a contest. Affirm that they should not, and then cross out the win-lose column on the board.

2. Students consider lose-lose situations.

Begin another column on the board with the words “Lose-Lose” at the top. Ask what students think a lose-lose situation is. (Students should respond: nobody wins; both sides lose.)

Prompt students to think about situations in which everyone loses by offering the following example: “Suppose I borrowed your baseball glove and forgot to return it. You get angry and tell everyone that I stole your glove from you. Why would this be a lose-lose situation?”

Elicit from students the fact that now both the owner and the borrower of the glove are experiencing negative consequences—one person has lost something and the other is the victim of rumors. Point out that neither one is a “winner” here. Both have lost. Explain that in lose-lose situations, people can get so focused on making sure the other person doesn’t win that they don’t care if they themselves lose. All they care about is that the other person loses, too

Invite students to identify who wins and who loses in the situations below. As students respond, ask them to explain their thinking.

- Someone calls you a name, so you puncture that person's bicycle tire. A teacher sees you and reports you.
- You go to the same store every day to buy a snack after school. One day, the manager wrongly accuses you of shoplifting. You start yelling at the manager and knocking items off the shelves. The manager calls the police.

3. Students evaluate lose-lose situations.

Point out that each situation above resulted in negative consequences—and further conflict. Ask students to identify the behavior that prompted each lose-lose situation. Write their responses on the board under “Lose-Lose.” (Students should respond: getting angry, getting even, wanting someone else to lose, blaming someone else.)

Ask if anyone thinks that lose-lose situations are good solutions to problems. Cross out this column on the board. Explain that lose-lose situations are the easiest ones to avoid. Ask students if they can explain why. (Students should respond: because people can control their emotions and behaviors in these types of situations.)

Part II Who Wins? (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students recognize the benefits of win-win situations.

1. Students evaluate win-win situations.

Begin another column on the board with the words “Win-Win.” Ask what a win-win situation might be. (Students should respond: one in which nobody loses; both sides compromise.)

Remind students that it's common for people to look at conflicts from a win-lose point of view. Suggest that to resolve conflicts, we need to change the way we look at a situation and choose what's best for everyone, not only ourselves.

2. Students identify win-win solutions.

Outline each of the three lose-lose situations described in Part I again. After each one, ask students how these situations could be handled differently so that everyone involved wins. Ask questions to elicit the following suggestions from students:

- The student could ask you to return the baseball glove. Then, you could apologize for forgetting to return it, and the student would no longer be angry and would not spread rumors about you. Once the glove is returned, both parties will feel okay about it.
- Rather than puncturing the bicycle tire, you could deliver an I-message. Once your feelings have been expressed and the other person knows how you feel, you can talk about the situation without adding fuel to the fire.
- You could keep calm and explain to the manager that you have not stolen anything. You might respectfully ask the manager why they believe you are shoplifting. After that, you can empty your pockets and allow the manager to search your backpack.

Prompt students to conclude that when everybody wins and nobody loses, there will be no conflict; everybody involved will leave the situation feeling satisfied. Acknowledge that finding win-win solutions will not always be easy, but if students apply problem solving skills, use effective communication skills, and identify options and consequences, they will find them.

Remind students that taking the time to think through a problem and being responsible for their feelings, words, and actions will help them resolve—and even avoid—conflicts.

Part III Me First? (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students work in teams to solve a problem and reach a successful resolution.

1. Students participate in a game that requires a win-win resolution.

Divide students into two even teams. Have teammates sit together in a circle on opposite sides of the room. Give each student two index cards, and then tell the class to write in large letters “me first” on one card and “work together” on the other. Explain that in this game, students will earn points by choosing either to work together with their opposing team or to put their own interests first. Explain the point system to the class:

- If one team says “me first” and the other team says “work together,” the team that said “me first” gets three points and takes one point from the team that said “work together.”
- If both teams say “work together,” they both get two points.
- If both teams say “me first,” they both lose two points.

Appoint one person from each team to be that team’s speaker. Tell students that on your signal, they are to silently vote by holding up either their “me first” or “work together” cards. The speaker will count the votes. When both teams have finished, have the speakers say their teams’ choices.

Play several rounds of the game. After the first few rounds, encourage students to trust each other in order to find a win-win solution. Help them realize the need to find such a solution to the game.

2. Students discuss the activity.

Have students return to their seats, and then begin a discussion by asking them questions such as the following:

- What happened when both teams approached the problem from a win-lose perspective (i.e., by saying “me first”)? (Students should mention that they lost points.)
- How did it feel when you said “work together,” but the other team said “me first”?
- Were you afraid that the other team would say “me first” if you said “work together”?
- What happened when you decided to work toward a win-win solution (i.e., by saying “work together”)? (Students should mention that it was easier to earn points for their teams.)
- Why was trust important to finding a win-win solution to the game? (Students should respond that trust was important because each team had to believe that both teams were working toward the common good.)

Explain that the teams were most successful when they realized that they could both achieve their goals, and decided that they could easily divide the points instead of struggling in vain over them.

Ask students to describe how this activity relates to finding win-win solutions in real life. Tell students that the most ideal way to resolve a conflict is to find a win-win solution. Point out that, as in the game, win-win solutions often require that both parties involved lose a little in order for both to benefit.

Conclusion (2 minutes)

Urge students to look for win-win solutions when they are in a conflict. Ask students to summarize why this is the best approach to take. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- Examine conflicts from a win-win perspective.
- Use problem solving skills to find win-win solutions to conflicts.
- In order to avoid or resolve conflicts, take the time to think through the problem and be responsible for your feelings, words, and actions.

Student Assessment

1. Define “win-lose,” “lose-lose,” and “win-win.” List an example of each type of resolution.
2. List three advantages of achieving a win-win resolution.
3. List three strategies for achieving a win-win resolution.

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Using Quotations

“Better bend than break.” –Scottish proverb

Have student pairs come to the front of the room and argue a topic of their own choosing that has no clear solution. Explain that compromise is often the way problems are solved. Ask students to describe how the argument would have ended if each person agreed to “bend.”

Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

Provide students with paper and markers/crayons. Have them create comic strips in which superheroes and villains find win-win solutions to their conflicts (e.g., a superhero and a villain resolve their conflicts so they can combat a greater menace).

Display students’ comics around the classroom.

Writing in Your Journal

Have students write themselves an apology letter that they would like to receive from someone who hurt them. The letters should identify the conflict in detail.

As a class, discuss how this exercise helped students define the issues of the conflicts they wrote about.

Using Technology

Have students use PowerPoint, a video recorder, or an audio recorder to create brief public service announcements about ways to find win-win solutions to conflicts.

Present these public service announcements to the class.

Homework

Have students clip or print articles that involve conflict from news publications or magazines.

Have students create win-win resolutions to the conflicts.

Additional Resources

Have students read the “Can Schools Afford Disabled Students?” activity sheet.

Have students debate this issue and find win-win resolutions to it.

CAN SCHOOLS AFFORD DISABLED STUDENTS?

Garret Frey was only 4 when he slipped off his father’s motorcycle and severed his spinal cord. Since then Garret, now 16, has been paralyzed from the neck down. He needs round-the-clock care to help him eat and drink, change positions in his wheelchair, suction the tube in his throat and monitor the ventilator that helps him breathe.

Without someone with nursing skills to assist him, Garret could not attend Jefferson High School in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, where he is a sophomore and a B student.

But it costs the Frey family nearly \$20,000 a year for the licensed practical nurse who helps Garret. For years, they have been trying, unsuccessfully, to persuade the Cedar Rapids school board to cover the cost. Last November, their dispute reached the U.S. Supreme Court.

“Disabled kids like me have a right to a free education,” Garret says, “without paying for extra care.”

But Cedar Rapids Superintendent Lew Finch insists that his school board doesn’t have the money to pay for the care Garret needs. He points out that the district already has hired a special teacher associate, purchased a special bus and adapted a computer to accommodate Garret. “You have to ask, where do you draw the line,” Finch says. “If the courts open this up, it

could be a bottomless pit.”

Garret’s case could decide just how far schools must go to aid students with disabilities. Federal law requires communities to offer disabled students full access to public education—and a full range of “special education related services.”

But there’s no agreement on how much extra care Garret and tens of thousands of other severely disabled students are entitled to. The Freys hope the Supreme Court will state that the law covers services like Garret’s nurse.

Garret’s insurance has been paying for his nurse. But he has nearly used up his policies, and his family can’t afford to pay for the services on their own. If he loses his case, he might have to finish high school from home.

Garret’s case has made headlines, but he says he’s not looking for any extra attention. “A couple of kids asked me if I thought I was a role model,” he says. “I don’t think of myself that way, but if my case can help change things, I think that would be good.”

The court is expected to issue its decision this spring, but it won’t be soon enough for Garret. “I wish it would all be over,” he says, “and I hope it will help other kids.”

—Susan Hansen

*Reprinted with permission from *React* magazine.

RESOLVING CONFLICTS



AGENDA

- Starter
- Put It Together
- When to Walk Away
- Practice
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students will discuss strategies that they have learned for resolving conflicts.

Students will identify situations in which the best option is to remove themselves from the conflict.

Students will analyze conflict situations and make decisions about how to resolve them.

Materials Needed

- One index card for each student (Starter)
- One copy of the “Cover All Bases” activity sheet for each student (Part I)
- List of procedures and resources for conflict resolution that are in place in your school (Part II)
- One copy of the “Dilemmas” activity sheet for each student, cut into four individual scenarios (Part III)

Starter (5 minutes)

As students enter the classroom, give each one an index card. Tell students to write what they have learned about conflict resolution over the last five lessons. Ask students to write about recent conflicts in their lives and how they handled these situations differently as a result of their new knowledge.

Part I Put It Together (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students review techniques that they have learned for resolving conflicts.

1. Students discuss their ideas regarding conflict resolution.

Ask students to list ideas that they think are important to remember when dealing with conflict situations. Have students write their responses on the backs of the index cards they used during the starter. Explain that it is not necessary to write responses in any particular order.

Have students stand and read the backs of their cards. Ask a volunteer to write responses on the board. If more than one student mentions a particular idea, have the volunteer underline it on the board. If possible, call on everyone to express an opinion.

2. Students organize their thoughts.

Say, “We can see from what’s written on the board that you all have learned a lot about dealing with conflicts. It would be helpful to have all of this information organized somehow, wouldn’t it?”

Distribute copies of the “Cover All Bases” activity sheet. Give students time to scan the activity sheet, and then ask if they think these steps represent the ideas that are written on the board. Begin a discussion by asking questions about each step:

- Why is the first step so important? Can you think clearly when you are angry?
- Why is it important to identify what is causing you to feel angry (step two)?
- Have you ever been in a conflict in which you didn’t understand what was happening (step three)?
- How does step four represent a crossroads in the process?
- Why is step five key here?
- Can you listen effectively when you are talking (step six)?
- Why are win-win results the best results (step seven)?

Part II When to Walk Away (10 minutes)

Purpose: Students identify situations in which the best option is to remove themselves from the conflict.

1. Students discuss the role of decision making in conflict resolution.

Direct attention back to the activity sheet and ask students to identify the shortcut on the road to reaching a resolution (Students should mention that in step four, they can choose the option to walk away.)

Explain to students that there will be times when they must face a problem head-on and deal with it, but there will be other times when the best decision is to just walk away.

Point out that the class hasn't spent much time examining this option before, but it will be discussed now, as sometimes it is the best decision to make.

2. Students identify conflicts from which to walk away.

Invite students to give examples of situations in which choosing to walk away and avoid further conflict is the best decision to make.

As students respond, listen for them to make certain points. As they are made, write them on the board. If necessary, use questions and comments to guide students to recognize that they should walk away from the following situations:

- Conflict in which they cannot gain control of their emotions or behaviors.
- Times when another person involved in a conflict is getting out of control.
- Situations that are escalating out of control.
- Situations that become physical or violent.

Explain that each person has the power to control their own feelings and actions, but we do not have the power to control anyone else's. Acknowledge that the goal in these situations should be to avoid making the problem worse, and that the best way to do this is to walk away from the conflict.

3. Students explore other options for handling out-of-control conflicts.

Begin a discussion by asking students what else they should do when a conflict gets out of control. Encourage them to give other examples of such conflicts, as well as suggestions for dealing with them.

Affirm responses that reflect the understanding that when a conflict turns violent and personal safety is threatened, or when such a conflict is brewing, students need to alert adults to the situation.

Ask students if they know about school procedures or resources available to them if conflicts escalate. As students respond, verify or clarify the information they give. Tell students to make a note of this information.

Be sure that students understand that when a conflict is escalating and threatens to become violent, they should walk away and get help. Point out that this is not a matter of being disloyal to anyone; it is simply a matter of safety for themselves and for others.

Suggest that students keep the “Cover All Bases” activity sheet in their folders or notebooks and review it from time to time. Emphasize that using these strategies will help them with resolving conflicts.

Part III Practice (20 minutes)

Purpose: Students analyze conflict situations and make decisions about how to resolve them.

1. Students work in small groups to discuss situations.

Divide the class into four groups. Give each group one of the scenarios from the “Dilemmas” activity sheet. Explain that they are to discuss the scenario as a group and decide on a course of action that will best resolve the conflict.

Give the groups five minutes to make their decisions. Circulate among students as they work, offering suggestions or comments as needed.

2. Students share resolutions.

Ask students to share their resolutions. Explain that groups can either appoint a spokesperson to report the group’s decision or members of the group can role-play the scenario.

After each group has finished, invite others to ask questions or make comments about how the dilemma was resolved. If necessary, ask questions or make comments yourself that will help students recognize that they can either support a group’s decision or suggest another solution.

Conclusion (2 minutes)

Ask students to describe how they will handle conflicts that arise in their everyday lives. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- You have the power to control your feelings and actions, but you do not have the power to control the feelings and actions of others.
- There are situations in which choosing to walk away to avoid further conflict is the best decision to make.
- When a conflict becomes physical or violent, walk away and seek help.

Student Assessment

1. When is it best to walk away from a conflict situation?
2. Describe a conflict in which you have been involved. Using the steps to conflict resolution, analyze how you acted. Would you behave differently now? If so, how?

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Using Quotations

“I do desire we may be better strangers.” –William Shakespeare

Explain to students that it is often best not to respond to someone who is angry. In these cases, it's best for you to excuse yourself and leave the situation.

Brainstorm with students a list of times when it is better to just walk away and not get involved.

Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

Have students brainstorm a list of tips for walking away from conflicts (e.g., leave, seek help from an adult, ask a friend to escort you away). Divide students into small groups. Have the groups create posters showing a few of these tips. Display the posters around the classroom.

Writing in Your Journal

Have students review their notes for this module. Have them write about which lessons they enjoyed the most and which skills they found most useful.

Using Technology

Visit www.wordpress.com and create a classroom blog about conflict. Have students write, on paper, short entries with tips for conflict resolution and how they can apply (or have applied) these tips to their own lives. Upload these entries to the blog. Provide students with the blog's address and allow them time to browse it.

Homework

Have students write a paragraph in response to the following question: What would you do if your best friend asked you to hide something they had stolen?

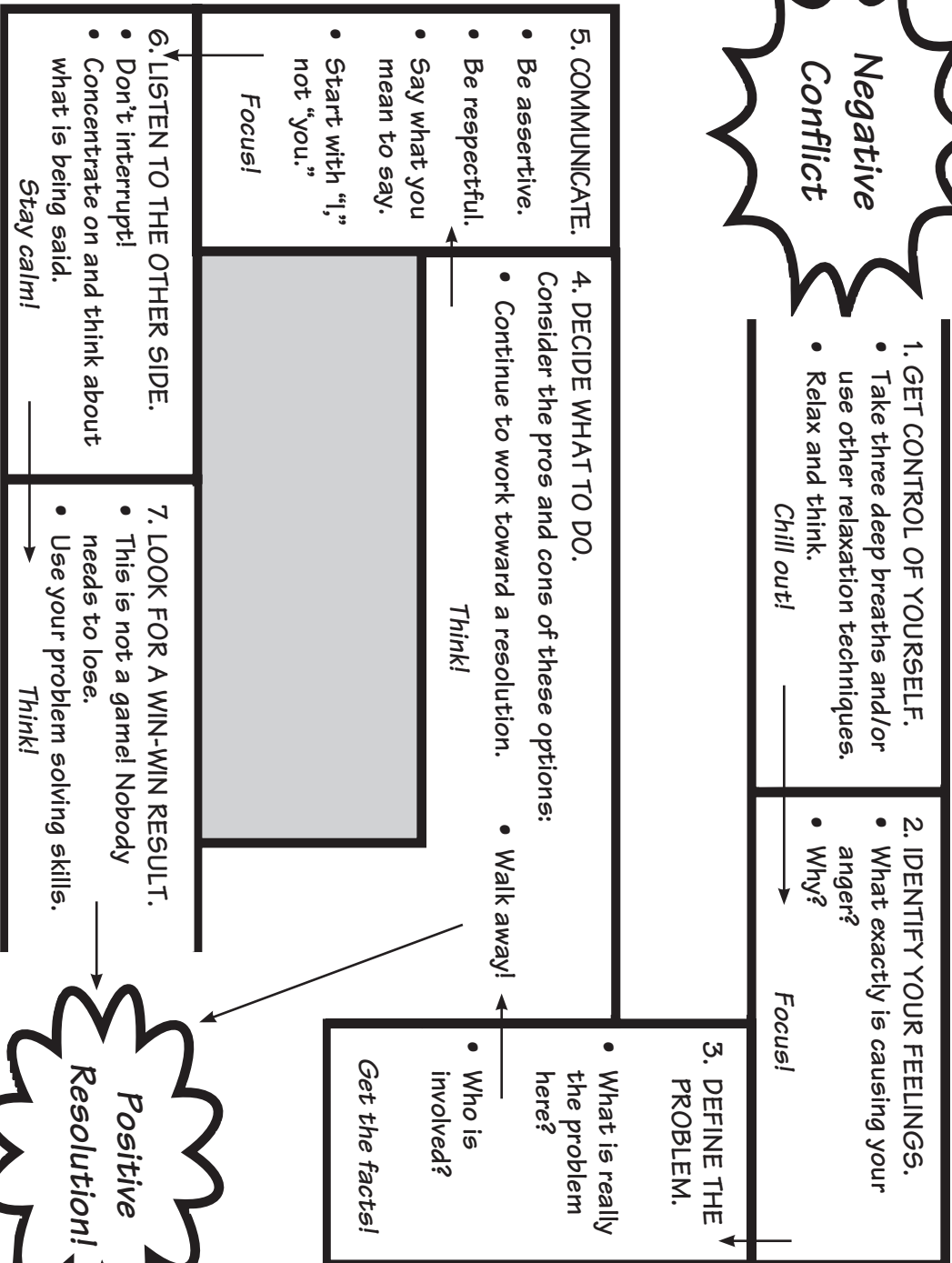
Have students present their work to the class.

Additional Resources

Have students research the peaceful protest strategies used by Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr.

Have students report their findings to the class. Discuss reasons why Gandhi and King chose to protest peacefully rather than resort to violence to solve their problems.

COVER ALL BASES



DILEMMAS



1. You are playing soccer with your classmates during lunch. Some players are pushing and shoving each other during the game. As everyone walks back to class, someone throws a punch at you. What do you do?

2. Your friend is in a bad mood because she got grounded for a week. You are talking about going to a movie, when she suddenly starts yelling at you. The next thing you know, you're in an argument. What do you do?

3. Your brother has been teasing you all afternoon. You throw a pillow at him and tell him to back off. He throws the pillow back at you and knocks your glasses off your face. What do you do?

4. You hear that someone is accusing you of stealing a jacket. This person lost a jacket that looks just like yours. This person hangs around with a group of people that you try to avoid. What do you do?