

Lesson Plan

Respect in Friendship

Objective

Students will understand the following:

1. Even when feelings are hurt, we need to treat friends with respect
2. Talking about an issue is more effective than getting even
3. Doing the right thing is better than doing the easy thing

Grade Level

Grades K-4.

Standards

Supports learning standards in social studies and health.

1. Students understand the individual responsibilities of citizenship and promoting a civil society.
2. Students demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health and to create positive personal relationships.

SEL Topics:

- Social Skills, Self Awareness, Self Management
- Empathy
- Positive Relationships

Character Traits:

- Respect, Empathy, Responsibility, Perseverance

Materials

Links to all materials can be found in the online version of this [Lesson Plan](#)

1. Be Bigger, Book 2, Talking with Trees (print or ebook)
2. Being a True Friend Worksheet
3. Classroom Posters

Vocabulary

Respect- Caring enough about others' feelings to think before you act

Relational aggression bullying- (A form of bullying in which hurt is caused through damage to relationships or social status.) When you leave someone out of the group or an activity because you want them to feel bad.

Procedures

-Read *Be Bigger* children's book (paper book or project the ebook on a whiteboard).

- On each page, focus on the characters' facial expressions and body language.

How is each character feeling on each page? Help the children see how they can pay attention to faces and body language to help them understand how others are feeling (to help prevent misunderstandings), and how they themselves are feeling (to better understand where their actions are coming from).

- Discuss hurt feelings and how to react to them

Talk about how the girl was feeling at the beginning of the book.

-Why was she upset? (She felt left out and her feelings were hurt.)

-What did the tree mean by "your heart and stomach are tied up in knots"? (Teach children to pay attention to the cues their body gives them to help them figure out if they are sad, anxious, angry, etc.)

-Why did the tree say the girl was planning to get even with her friend? What does "getting even" really mean? (You perceive that someone hurt you and so you hurt them in return.) Does getting even take away your hurt? (No, it just makes both of you feel bad.)

- Discuss issues around respect and relational aggression bullying.

In the story about the girl's grandmother, we see the girls each call on their other friends to exclude someone in order cause hurt (relational aggression bullying).

This is an issue of respect and caring. Being respectful means you care enough about others' feelings not to cause harm. In this case the girls are trying to hurt each other on purpose. Friends don't do that. Respectful people don't do that. Even when feelings are hurt, we need to deal with the issue respectfully (caring enough not to cause harm.)

- Discuss another way the girl could deal with her hurt feelings.

The tree shows her how to "Be Bigger" than the hurt feelings (how to rise above the hurt to deal with the issue respectfully.)

A more effective way to deal with hurt feelings is:

1. Figure out what you really want. (your friend to apologize, your feelings not to hurt)
2. Choose an action that helps you get what you really want. (Talk to your friend to let her know she hurt your feelings. Talk through the issues respectfully. Focus on how you are feeling instead of being accusatory.)

OPTIONAL INTERACTIVE ACTIVITY-

Consider having the children act out this scenario in pairs, each stating their side of the situation in a respectful way.

For example: Pose a situation in which one child is upset because his/her friend won't sit at the lunch table with him/her anymore. Child 2 should respond with a reason he/she is upset or an apology. The exchange should not include name calling or accusations (e.g. "You were such a jerk when you left me out on purpose!")

Child 1: It feels like you don't want to sit with me at the lunch table anymore. Did I do something to upset you?

Child 2: Yes, my feelings were hurt when you invited everyone to the party except for me. Why wasn't I included?

Or "I'm sorry, I didn't mean for you to feel that way. What made you think I didn't want to sit with you?"

- Help children see making a right choice feels good in the long term.

The tree says, "There's the easy way, and there's the right way. If you want the ache in your heart to stop, choose the right way."

Ask the students, "Which was the easy way out of this situation? Which was the right way?" (Easy way was pretending nothing happened or keeping on the way she had been. The right solution was to face her embarrassment / discomfort and have the conversation with her friend.)

Why not take the easy way? The easy way feels better for a little while, but the problem isn't resolved. The hurt in the girl's heart is still there and it will be until she talks to her friend. The right way (facing her friend) was harder at first, but it would get her to resolution (no more heartache) faster.

-Discuss some other situations in which people might face a choice of an easy way or right way.

Life is full of choices where doing the right thing is more difficult, but the long-term reward is worth it. Pose some questions that help children understand this:

"What if you borrowed your friend's toy and accidentally broke it. You don't want to tell him the truth and you think it would be easier to pretend that you just forgot it and will give it back another day."

"What if you and your friend were doing homework and it was easier to just copy your friend's math answers than to solve the problems yourself. What will happen when the math test comes and you don't know how to solve those problems?"

-Teach it is ok to make mistakes and that we use these opportunities to grow.

Use the story about the girl's grandmother to help children see that everyone makes mistakes. It's part of growing up. By making the situation right and learning not to make the same choice next time, we are growing to be more responsible adults. Learning to forgive yourself for mistakes is important to building self-respect. Focus on learning and growing, and releasing the guilt/shame. Teach children to enjoy the feeling (pride) they get after doing the right thing.