

Lesson 7

Meeting Point - Conflict Resolution

Rationale

Conflict is an everyday part of pro-social development and peer bonding. Adolescents who can recognize the precursors to conflict and are skilled in employing strategies to resolve conflict can build stronger, healthier relationships. Adolescents who respect differing opinions and the needs of others seek peaceful solutions to conflict.

Character Education

This lesson promotes these character traits:

Respect

Cooperation

Responsibility

Objectives:

Following this lesson, the student will be able to:

- Define conflict
- Demonstrate the ability to listen respectfully to different points of view
- Recognize conflict as an opportunity to learn about oneself and others
- Demonstrate the effective use of cooperation as an approach to conflict resolution
- Differentiate healthy and unhealthy approaches to resolving a conflict
- Compare the potential consequences of handling conflict in healthy and unhealthy ways

Activities

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| 1. Point of View | 10 minutes |
| 2. A Friend's Dilemma | 10 minutes |
| 3. Conflict Resolved | 10 minutes |
| 4. Work It Out | 20 minutes |

Materials

In this lesson, you will need:

- Student Workbook pages 16 and 17
- Work It Out Card Set
- Home Workout 7, Teacher's Manual page 98
- Work it Out Game Instructions, Teacher's Manual page 99
- Agree, Disagree, Not Sure Display Cards, Teacher's Manual pages 100-102

Before You Start

- Distribute the Student Workbooks at the beginning of the lesson.
- Before you begin the lesson, make a copy of the Agree, Disagree, and Not Sure cards and display them in three areas of the room. These will be used in Section 1: Point of View.
- Review the Work It Out game instructions, materials, and teacher's script pages 95-96.
- To reinforce the skills taught in this lesson, prepare journal activities or lesson extenders from the **Looking for More?** section to assign at the beginning or end of your classes throughout the week.
- Make a copy of **Home Workout 7** for each student. Distribute at the end of the lesson.

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1. Point of View

Last week we talked about how each of us is different. How can we benefit from our differences? 🗨️ *Where one person has a strength, another might have a weakness; we can learn to work together.* Most of the time, our differences complement one another. Being friends with different kinds of people can be interesting, but what if we have different points of view? For example, raise your hand if you think zoos are better than museums. ✂️ *Allow time for students to raise their hands.* Raise your hand if you think museums are better than zoos. ✂️ *Allow time for students to raise their hands.* These differences may not be a problem now, but what if we took a class fieldtrip and we had to choose either to visit a zoo or a museum? In this situation, our differences could present a conflict.

Who can tell me what a conflict is? 🗨️ *A conflict is a disagreement between people.* That's right; a conflict is a disagreement between two or more people involving a perceived threat to their needs, interests, or concerns. We have conflicts every day. They can be simple or complicated, short or long, silly or serious. Conflicts can turn out well or they can turn out badly depending on how we approach them. Today we're going to look at conflicts not only as problems to be solved but also as opportunities to build stronger relationships.

Open your workbooks to page 16 to the section titled, "My Point of View." Read each statement and decide whether you agree or disagree with it. Then circle your answer. If you can't decide, circle "not sure." Remember, this is your point of view. There is no right or wrong answer. Be prepared to explain your answer. ✂️ *Allow time for students to complete the activity.*

Now that you have identified your position on each of these statements, you're going to have the chance to share your point of view. Look around the room. Notice that I have put up signs that say Agree, Disagree, and Not Sure in different corners of the room. I will read the statements you just marked. When I ask "What is your point of view?" quietly take your workbook and walk over to the sign that corresponds to your position.

If you circled Agree, stand by the sign marked "Agree."
If you circled Disagree, stand by the sign marked "Disagree."
If you circled Not Sure, stand by the sign marked "Not Sure."

✂️ *After the students have taken a stand on each statement, call on students from each group to explain why they made their choice.*

1. When you get to the ticket window at the movies, your friend says she can't pay because she forgot her wallet at home. Even though this is the third time this has happened, you decide that it is best to pay for her ticket. What is your point of view? ✂️ *Allow time for students to take a stand. Call on students from each group to explain their point of view.*
2. When you are upset with your best friend, it's better to communicate via text message rather than in person. What is your point of view? ✂️ *Allow time for students to take a stand. Call on students from each group to explain their point of view.*

You may return to your seats. ✂️ *Allow time for students to return to their seats.* How many of you understood the conflicting viewpoints? ✂️ *Allow time for students to raise their hands.* How many of you realized that you hadn't considered every point of view? ✂️ *Allow time for students to raise their hands.* Who would have taken a different position if you considered the other viewpoints? ✂️ *Encourage students to respond and explain their viewpoint.*

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2. A Friend's Dilemma

Listening to another person's point of view can help us better understand the dynamics of a situation. However, differences of opinion can sometimes lead to a conflict. Let's take a closer look at how this can work. Look at the section in your workbooks titled, "A Friend's Dilemma." Consider the following scenario:

✂ Call on a student volunteer to read the scenario.

Fredrick and William are best friends. One day at the park, Fredrick overheard a group of girls talking about William's girlfriend. They said she went to the movies with another guy. Fredrick wasn't sure he heard it right, and anyway he believes gossip leads to trouble. Fredrick decided just to forget about it. He didn't want to cause problems for William right before William's big game. The next week, William came to Fredrick brokenhearted because he found out that his girlfriend went to the movies with another guy. Fredrick confessed to William that he might have overheard that the week before. William was upset that Fredrick didn't tell him what he heard.

What is the conflict between Fredrick and William in this situation? 🗨 William is upset that Fredrick did not tell him what he overheard. **That's right. Does this problem have two viewpoints?** 🗨 Yes.

What are the two viewpoints? 🗨 William thinks Fredrick should have told him about his girlfriend. Fredrick believes he was looking out for William by not telling him.

To resolve this conflict William and Fredrick have to decide how to approach it. Let's consider their options. In your workbook, look at the boxes below the scenario. William and Fredrick could approach this conflict in a healthy way by talking it out, or they could approach the conflict in an unhealthy way by arguing.

Think about each of these options and their possible consequences. Keep in mind that consequences can be positive or negative. Then on the lines provided, list the possible consequences for each option.

✂ Allow time for students to complete the activity.

Who would like to share their answers for the healthy option, talking it out? 🗨 Fredrick and William listen to each other's point of view; they learn why they each did what they did; their friendship has a better chance of becoming stronger if they talk it out; they might respect each other more.

Very good; who would like to share their answers for the unhealthy option, argue? 🗨 Their friendship could end; they might get in a fight; William might not realize how much Fredrick really cares about him; they could resent each other for not understanding each other's viewpoint.

Excellent! Approaching the conflict in a healthy way by talking it out is an opportunity for William and Fredrick to build a stronger friendship. Fredrick will know what William would want him to do the next time a situation like this one might happen, and William will know that Fredrick really cares about him. In the end, they would build a stronger friendship.

3. Conflict Resolved

Let's look at alternative approaches to resolving conflicts. Turn to page 17 in your workbooks to the section titled, "Approaching Conflict." As we review each Conflict Resolution Approach, mark the healthy approach box if you think it is a healthy approach to resolving a conflict.

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Who can tell me what Don't Sweat the Small Stuff means? 🗣️ *If it is a small problem, let it go.* Sometimes, getting your way isn't worth the risk of escalating a conflict. **Is this approach healthy or unhealthy?** 🗣️ *Healthy.* That's right; it's better to let it go than to worsen the conflict. **Who can give me an example of when you would use Don't Sweat the Small Stuff?** 🗣️ *There is one cookie left; if someone says something bad about me, I don't let it bother me, etc.*

Who can tell me what Avoid It means? 🗣️ *Choosing to ignore a conflict instead of working it out.* **Is this approach healthy or unhealthy?** 🗣️ *Unhealthy.* That's right; when you choose to ignore a conflict by avoiding it, you choose to not resolve it. **Unresolved conflicts are unhealthy because they can lead to more conflicts and potentially damage friendships.**

Who can tell me what it means to Compete? 🗣️ *One person must lose for the other to win.* Competition is healthy when you're playing on a sports team or competing in a spelling bee. However, a competitive approach will not resolve a conflict.

If two friends compete to resolve a conflict, only one person gets what they want. How might the other person feel? 🗣️ *Upset, angry, hurt.* **What might happen as a result?** 🗣️ *They might not be friends anymore.* **Is this a healthy or unhealthy approach?** 🗣️ *Unhealthy.*

Who can tell me what Agree to Disagree means? 🗣️ *Sometimes people cannot reach an understanding because they have different points of view but they don't want to fight about it.* **Very good; in situations where there is no chance of agreement and arguing about it would make the conflict worse, Agree to Disagree to resolve it. Would using this approach most likely have positive or negative consequences?** 🗣️ *Positive.* **So, is it a healthy or unhealthy approach?** 🗣️ *Healthy.*

Who can read the definition for State Your Feelings and Your Point of View? 🗣️ *Tell the other person how you feel about the conflict and clearly state your point of view.* **Is this a healthy way to handle a conflict?** 🗣️ *Yes.* **When you explain to the other person how you feel and why you feel that way, it's easier to cooperate.**

Who can tell me the definition for Apologize and Talk it Out? 🗣️ *Tell the other person, "I'm sorry," and work together to find a peaceful resolution.* **Is this a healthy way to resolve a conflict?** 🗣️ *Yes.*

Think back to the lesson on peer pressure. When do you use Steer Clear? 🗣️ *When you need to stay away from a dangerous situation.* **If you know that drugs, violence, or weapons are involved you would want to steer clear of that situation. Steer Clear is a way to stay away from a dangerous conflict. Is this a healthy or unhealthy approach?** 🗣️ *Healthy.*

What does it mean to Compromise? 🗣️ *Both people agree to give up some of what they want in order to work out the conflict.* **In a compromise, you can give in a little, share, or split the difference. Is this a healthy or an unhealthy approach?** 🗣️ *Healthy.*

A Win-Win approach takes cooperation and good communication skills to find a solution without settling for something you don't want to do. In a win-win, both people get what they want by talking it out and coming up with alternative activities that they both agree on. Is this a healthy or an unhealthy approach? 🗣️ *Healthy.*

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Let's see if you can come up with a compromise and a win-win for the same conflict. Look at the section at the bottom of workbook page 17 titled, "What to Do?" Listen to the conflict situation.

Larry and Lou don't know what to do Friday night. They planned to hang out. Larry thinks going to the high school football game sounds fun, but Lou isn't really into football. Lou thinks going to a classmate's party sounds fun, but Larry doesn't really like parties all that much.

What is the conflict? 🗨️ *Larry thinks the football game sounds fun and Lou thinks the classmate's party sounds fun.* **Let's help them find a compromise. Write your answer in the space provided.**
✂️ *Allow time for students to complete the activity.*

Who can tell me how Larry and Lou could compromise to resolve their conflict? 🗨️ *They can reach a compromise by going to the first half of the football game and then head to the party.* **They could settle on their compromise and do half of what they want, or they could go for the Win-Win. Let's help them come up with a win-win in this situation. How could Larry and Lou find something that they both want to do?** 🗨️ *They could talk through a few ideas until they find something they both want to do.*

What do you think Larry and Lou could do for a win-win? 🗨️ *They could go for pizza and meet up with friends.*

Both of these approaches to resolving conflicts require cooperation and effective communication skills. Sometimes it's more difficult to reach a Win-Win resolution, but the positive effects of working together to find a solution that satisfies both people are worth the extra effort.

4. Work It Out

Let's see how well you approach conflict situations. We're going to play a game called "Work It Out" where you and a teammate will decide the best way to approach a conflict. The object of the game is to resolve the most conflicts.

✂️ *Select 4 students to demonstrate the gameplay as you go over the instructions. The 4 students will make two teams of two in this group.*

In your game set, you will have a deck of Situation Cards and a deck of Conflict Approach Cards.
✂️ *Display an example of each type of card.* **Each player will receive one set of the six Conflict Approach Cards.**

On your turn, a member of the opposing team will draw a Situation Card and read the conflict situation aloud. ✂️ *Allow time for student to demonstrate.* **Do not discuss the conflict approach with your teammate. Each of you will select a Conflict Approach Card and place it facedown on the desk.**
✂️ *Allow time for student to demonstrate.* **The reader from the opposing team will turn over the cards to see if they're a match.** ✂️ *Allow time for student to demonstrate.*

If you and your teammate selected the same Conflict Approach Card and it matches the answer on the Situation Card, you have a match and can place the matched Situation and Conflict Approach cards to the side. You resolved the conflict. It's now the other team's turn.

If you and your teammate did not select the same Conflict Approach Card, you do not have a match. Return the Conflict Approach card to your hand. It's now the other team's turn.

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If your team's Conflict Approach Cards match each other but do not match the answer on the Situation Card you can call for a Challenge. To meet the challenge, you must explain how the approach you selected could resolve the conflict. If the opposing team agrees that your argument is plausible, then you win the challenge and the match. If the opposing team disagrees with your argument, there is no match. Return the Conflict Approach Cards to each player. It's now the other team's turn. You may also raise your hand in a challenge if the teams do not agree and you need my help.

Continue playing until one team matches all of their Conflict Approach Cards. Remember to apply the skills you have learned in today's lesson. If anyone demonstrates unhealthy approaches to resolving the challenges, you will forfeit one of your matches and your Conflict Approach Cards will be returned to your hand.

The team that makes the most Conflict Approach Card matches wins the game. Once you are in groups and you have set up your games, I will announce which teams go first. ✕ Divide students into groups of 4-6 players with teams of 2 players each. Distribute the game materials. Once the groups are ready to play, announce which team in each group will be the first team in turn, and begin the game. Groups of 6 with 3 teams per group will play counterclockwise. Allow time for students to play the game.

You did a great job of applying the different healthy approaches to these conflicts. Next week, we will learn healthy ways to manage anger and how to de-escalate a conflict.

- ✕ Collect the game materials.
- ✕ Distribute the Home Workouts.
- ✕ Collect Student Workbooks.