



Conflict Resolution

Students practice compromising and building consensus on controversial issues.

SECTION 5 Finding Solutions

Subjects:

sociology, writing skills, physical education



Approximate lesson time:

3 hours



Materials:

dictionaries, copies of worksheets

STUDENT OBJECTIVES:

At the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Analyze their experiences with conflict to identify sources and solutions.
2. Formulate a procedure for solving problems.

VOCABULARY:

conflict • cooperation

TEACHER BACKGROUND:

Conflict resolution is an important life skill. The better students can identify and resolve conflicts, the easier they will be able to navigate the oceans of life.

Students will devise their own steps for resolving conflicts. They may include such topics as listening to each side in the conflict (remember, there may be more than two sides), listing each group's goals or needs, looking for ways to compromise so each group gets some of its needs met, building partnerships between groups for a "big plan" solution to the conflict, or looking for ways to address all group concerns, possibly through future projects.

ACTIVITIES:

A: Conflict Resolution: Real-Life Scenarios

1. Distribute a copy of the Conflict Resolution: Real-Life Scenarios Worksheet to each student. Direct each student to individually reflect on their experiences and write detailed examples.
2. Divide students into discussion groups. Have them share their experiences. Then have the group develop a definition for each word.
3. If desired, share group definitions.

B. Remembering Conflicts (The individual portion of this activity may be assigned as homework.)

1. Instruct students to remember a time when they had a conflict with another person. Ask them to focus on an event when they and another person wanted different things or had different ways of handling a situation.
2. Instruct students to summarize the event in a paragraph, answering the following questions in a first-person narrative. Use the Remembering Conflict Worksheet if desired.
 - How did it begin?
 - What was the conflict?
 - Was it resolved? How?
 - How did you determine who "won" or "lost?"
 - Did you like how it ended?
 - Would you do anything differently next time?

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National Science Education Standards

Unifying Concepts and Processes

*Evidence, models,
and explanation*

Science as Inquiry

*Abilities
necessary to do
scientific inquiry*

*Understanding about
scientific inquiry*

Science in Personal and Social Perspectives (9–12)

*Environmental
Quality*

- In small groups, tell students to briefly describe their “Remembering Conflicts” experience. Reflecting on those experiences, students should brainstorm the skills necessary to effectively resolve conflicts. Have one student record the group’s list of skills on the Resolution Ingredients Worksheet. Then, tell students to formulate a step-by-step procedure for solving conflicts.
- Share your results with the class.

C. My Spot (This activity requires a large, open space.)

- Instruct students to silently choose a place they feel most comfortable in, but not to go there (establish boundaries if necessary).
- Then gather the students together in the center of the space. Have them link arms facing the center of the circle. Ask them to remain silent for this activity. Tell them that to complete this challenge, they must take everyone to “their spot” while remaining linked. If the circle breaks, they must start over again. Be sure to move slowly and carefully so no one gets injured.
- Make notes during the activity about who shows leadership, as well as who is ignored in the group. After the students have completed this activity, discuss what happened in large or small groups.

Debriefing Questions

- How did everyone decide on a plan?
- Did anyone feel they weren’t “listened” to?
- Who showed the most leadership?

- What made you feel annoyed or frustrated in this activity?
- How do you know when someone is really listening to you?
- If several people have solutions that seem to work, how would you decide which plan to follow?
- What did we learn from this activity that we can apply to our discussions about wolf management?

ASSESSMENT:

Individuals will turn in Remembering Conflict. Groups will turn in Resolution Ingredients and Real-Life Scenarios.

EXTENSION:

School Lot Debate: A town resident just donated an empty lot to your school. There are many things the school could do with the property. Divide the class into four groups:

- Advocates for a baseball/softball field on the lot
- Advocates for a nature area with trails, trees and bird feeders on the property
- Advocates for a new parking lot
- Advocates for selling the land and buying new computers for the school

Each group should develop reasons why their use is the best for the property. Then, each group will have a chance to make a presentation to the “school board” (made up of one representative from each interest group).

After groups have made their presentations, challenge the group to resolve the conflict over the use of this property (this might involve further presentations, discussions, bargaining etc.).

Name: _____



Remembering Conflict

On a piece of paper, write a first-person story of a time you experienced conflict with another person.

- How did it begin?
- What was the conflict?
- Was it resolved? How?
- How did you determine who “won” or “lost?”
- Did you like how it ended?
- Would you do anything differently next time?

Group Member Names: _____



Resolution Ingredients Worksheet

Brainstorm the skills necessary to effectively resolve conflict. List below.

List the steps necessary for resolving conflict.

Name: _____



Conflict Resolution: Real-Life Scenarios

**Give an example from your life
when you have experienced:**

Group Definition:

(complete this section in small groups)

Conflict

Compromise

Creative thinking

Negotiation

Solution

Cooperation

Consensus

Tolerance

Obstinance