

LESSON 1: CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Desired Outcomes – Students will be able to:

- define conflict
- recognize the different possible responses to conflict
- look at the consequences of each possible response.
- use the 'Talk It Out' approach to problem solving.

Procedure:

1. **INTRODUCTION: DISCUSS** what conflict is.

- **TELL:** A conflict is a disagreement or fight about something that is important. Another word for conflict is 'problem.'
- **TELL:** Most of us have conflicts every day, including adults. I might have a conflict with myself about when to do my work. You and your best friend might have a conflict about the rules of a game.
- **TELL:** Conflicts happen because we are all different and because we sometimes have different ideas and feelings. This is part of what makes us human.
 - Just because we have different ideas does not mean we are wrong.
 - We may just see things differently.
 - It's not about 'right' or 'wrong.'
- **ASK:** Share a time when you have seen or been involved in a conflict.
- **ASK:** What choices do we have when we find ourselves in conflict with others?
- **DISCUSS & LEAD** students to conclude that there are 3 options when conflict occurs:
 - Ignore or deny it.
 - Fight it out.
 - Talk it out.

2. **FOCUS ON: IGNORING/DENYING:** Let's think about each of these choices, starting with ignoring or denying.

- **TELL:** Ignoring happens when you're angry or upset with someone, but instead of saying what is bothering you, you pretend there isn't a problem.
- **READ:** 'A Story with 3 Endings' using 'Ending #1.' (see next page)
- **DISCUSS:**
 - What happened at the end? How does Sue likely feel? How does Tom likely feel?
 - What do you think will happen next? Why do you think that?
 - Have you ever tried to ignore a conflict?
 - How did that work for you?
 - Is ignoring a good way to solve a problem? Why do you say that?
- **TELL:** When we ignore a conflict, it usually doesn't fix anything. You don't get a chance to tell your feelings and the other person never knows that something is bothering you. If the situation happens again, the same problem might happen again, too.

3. **FOCUS ON: FIGHTING IT OUT:** Let's turn our attention to fighting out a conflict.

- **TELL:** Fighting happens when you're angry or upset with someone and you are hurtful in return. You say or do something mean or you try to force the person to give you what you want.
- **READ:** 'A Story with 3 Endings' using 'Ending #2.' (see next page)
- **DISCUSS:**
 - What happened at the end? How does Sue likely feel? How does Tom likely feel?
 - What do you think will happen next? Why do you think that?
 - Have you ever tried to fight out a conflict?
 - How did that work for you?
 - Is fighting it out a good way to solve a problem? Why do you say that?
- **TELL:** When you fight with someone you are having a problem with, the other person might fight back. You may get hurt or you might get into trouble. Because there are no solutions, the problem gets worse for everyone. Later, you might feel sorry that you hurt someone and sad because the person may not want to be your friend. At other times, the person might give you what you want, but later, that person may feel angry or resentful. The person may seek revenge or break off the relationship.

4. FOCUS ON: TALKING IT OUT: Let's turn our attention to talking through a conflict.

- **TELL:** Talking it out means that, when you're angry or upset with someone, you tell the person what is bothering you. You say it in a way that doesn't blame or hurt the person. Then you listen to what the other person has to say and find ways to solve the problem that make you both happy.
- **READ:** 'A Story with 3 Endings' using 'Ending #3.' (see below)
- **DISCUSS:**
 - What happened at the end? How does Sue likely feel? How does Tom likely feel?
 - What do you think will happen next? Why do you think that?
 - Have you ever tried to talk through a conflict?
 - How did that work for you?
 - Is talking it out a good way to solve a problem? Why do you say that?
- **TELL:** When you tell someone what is bothering you and listen to what they have to say, you can often solve the problem in ways that are fair to both of you. The situation improves. Hurt feelings go away and your friendship becomes stronger.

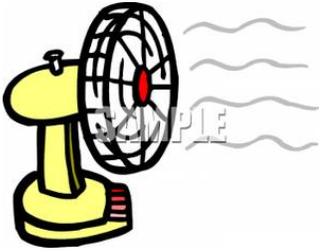
5. CONCLUSION:

- When you have conflicts at school, we cannot allow you to fight. Why do you think this is a school rule?
- Instead, we want you to talk about your problems and find peaceful ways to solve them. For the next few lessons, we'll be learning how to do that.
- Keep in mind that talking it out and trying to problem solve isn't always the best choice in certain situations. For example, bullying involves an imbalance of power that makes this approach inappropriate. Also, children who encounter dangerous situations at home or in their neighborhoods must be taught to avoid conflict and protect themselves. Discuss a variety of situations, as appropriate, and help students determine the best response.
- Remember, you don't have to be friends with everyone, but you do need to be friendly.

6. FOLLOW THROUGH: Add the 'How to Talk It Out' and 'Mouse, Monster, Me' posters to a prominent bulletin board space in the room for students to reference. Consider providing individual students with a smaller version of the poster to attach to their desks, clipboards, folder, etc. Reference these frequently to help students connect the concepts to real life experiences.

A STORY WITH 3 ENDINGS	
Beginning (always read)	It is recess and Tom is playing with a ball. Sue walks over and asks if she can play. Tom doesn't want to play with Sue because she sometimes hogs the ball, and no one else gets a turn.
Ending #1 (ignore it)	Instead of saying anything, Tom says, "Okay," and throws the ball to Sue. Sue bounces the ball a few times, then kicks it to the far end of the playground. Sue runs after the ball, leaving Tom standing there. He shrugs his shoulders and walks away.
Ending #2 (fight it out)	Tom: No way am I playing with you! Sue: Why not? Tom: Because you're a cheater! Sue: I am not a cheater! Now give me the ball. It's not just yours. It belongs to the whole class! Tom: Well I got it first! Sue: (grabbing the ball) I get a turn, too! Give it to me! Tom: NO!! They struggle with the ball until a teacher breaks up the fight.
Ending #3 (talk it out)	Tom: No. Sue: Well, the ball isn't just yours. It belongs to the whole class. Tom: Yeah, but sometimes you keep the ball and no one else gets a turn. Sue: I won't keep the ball. We can play catch. Tom: Okay. Tom throws the ball to Sue. She catches it and returns it to Tom. They continue playing until the recess bell rings.

HOW TO *TALK IT OUT*



1. Stop & Cool Off



2. Talk & Listen



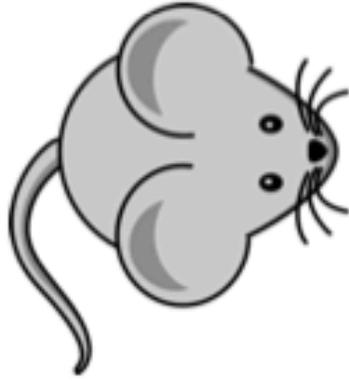
3. Think of ideas

(based on what you both need)



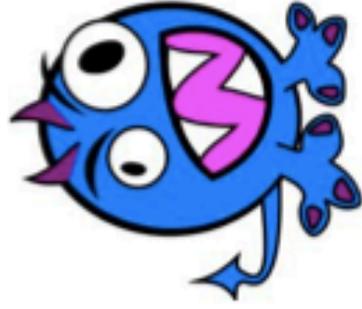
4. Choose an idea
and try it!

How do YOU handle conflict?



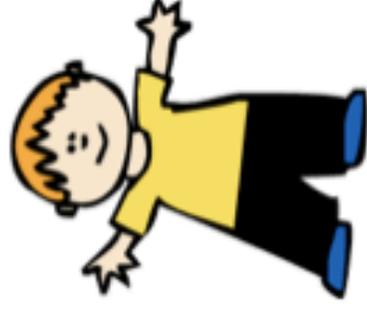
Mouse

Ignore
Hide feelings
Whine
Fake Cry
Give in
Tattle
Roll Eyes
Gossip/Tell Secrets
Avoid



Monster

Yell
Hit
Threaten
Fight
Deny Loudly
Stomp Around
Slam Doors
Loud Put Downs
Break Things



Me

Apologize
Report
Compromise
Talk it Out
Find a WinWin
Listen
Use Manners
I Message
Be Assertive