

Peace and Conflict Grades 7–8

What is Peace? What is Conflict?

Students will

- define the natures of peace and conflict and understand that they can take many forms
- understand that not all conflict involves physical violence
- cooperatively plan and present a strategy or course of action that addresses conflict resolution
- explore and express thoughts through dramatic presentations

Related International Dates

- International Day of Peace (September 21); UN International Day of Non-Violence (October 2); UN Disarmament Week (4th week in October); Remembrance Day (November 11)

Preparation

- Provide paper and coloured pencils for each student.
- Optional: Copy a class set of *Six-Step Problem-Solving* (page 92).

Instructions

1. To set the tone and introduce the theme, begin with an activity from *Building the Foundation* that highlights the benefits of and need for cooperation and communication skills in resolving conflict and maintaining peace. Some suggestions: *The Candy Game* (page 20), *Open-Handedness* (page 21), *Group Machines* (page 13), *The Web* (page 17), *Two by Four* (page 15), *Double Line-up* (page 15).
2. Write the word “CONFLICT” on the board. Ask students to draw pictures of what comes to mind when they see this word. Students share and explain drawings with partners.
3. As a full group, brainstorm as many different words or phrases that can be associated with the word “conflict”. Write these on one side of the board, but without comment or discussion at this stage.

4. Write the word “PEACE” on the board. Once again, students draw representations of this word and share with partners.
5. As a full group, brainstorm as many different words or phrases that can be associated with the word “peace”. Write these on the other side of the board without commenting.

Discussion

- Review the results of the two brainstorms. Which ideas surprised you? Which ones were new to you? Which ones don't belong?
- What is the difference between “conflict” and “violence”? Is conflict always physical in nature? Give examples of types of conflicts other than physical ones (e.g. verbal disagreements, lawsuits, spreading nasty rumours, excluding people, etc.)
- Discuss the following statements: 1) *Conflict is natural and normal.* 2) *Conflict creates opportunities for peace.*
- Create class definitions of “conflict” and “peace”. Display on large pieces of paper in the classroom.

Follow-up Activity: Six-Step Problem Solving

- Introduce students to *Six-Step Problem-Solving* (page 92) as a structured way of resolving interpersonal conflict.
- In groups, create role-play scenarios to demonstrate how conflicts can be resolved using the *Six-Step Problem-Solving* approach. *For example: someone in class starts a rumour about you and now your friends are not talking to you; everyone in your class has been invited to a party except for the new student.*
- Once students are familiar with the six-step process through role-playing, it can be applied as a mediation process for actual conflicts that occur in the class. Students may wish to set up a space in their classroom, or a location in the school, where students in conflict can work out a situation with the help of a third-party mediator (ideally another student).

Source: Adapted from “Defining Peace and Conflict” in *Education for Development: A Teacher’s Resource for Global Learning* by Susan Fountain. Copyright © 1995. UNICEF.

Reproducible Master

Peace and Conflict
Grades 7–8**Six-Step Problem-Solving**

<p>1. IDENTIFY NEEDS</p> <p><i>What do you need (or want)?</i></p>	<p>Each person in the conflict should answer this question without blaming or accusing the other person or persons.</p>
<p>2. DEFINE THE PROBLEM</p> <p><i>What do you think is the problem here?</i></p>	<p>Come up with a response that includes the needs of both parties, but does not blame. Others in the group can help with this, but the persons involved in the conflict must agree to the definition of the problem.</p>
<p>3. BRAINSTORM LOTS OF SOLUTIONS</p> <p><i>How might you solve this problem?</i></p>	<p>Come up with as many possible solutions as you can. Anyone in the group may offer a response. These should be written down and received without comment, judgment or evaluation. The aim of this step is to come up with as many potential solutions as possible.</p>
<p>4. EVALUATE THE SOLUTIONS</p> <p><i>Would you be happy with this solution?</i></p>	<p>Each party in the conflict goes through the list of possible solutions and says which ones would or would not be acceptable to her/him.</p>
<p>5. DECIDE ON THE BEST SOLUTION</p> <p><i>Do you both agree to this solution? Is the problem solved?</i></p>	<p>Both parties must agree and acknowledge their efforts in working out the solution.</p>
<p>6. CHECK TO SEE HOW THE SOLUTION IS WORKING</p> <p><i>Let's talk to each other again soon to make sure the problem is really solved.</i></p>	<p>A plan is made about how to evaluate the solution. The evaluation may take place in a few minutes, an hour or the next day or week, depending on the nature of the conflict and the age of the persons involved.</p>

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