

The Art of Peacemaking

Overview:

Students discuss how negotiation skills can solve conflict and find solutions to problems in real life.

Materials:

- Paper, pencils, or pens

Procedure:

1. Ask the students to share examples of when they had a disagreement with a family member or friend and acted in a respectful way to solve the problem (sitting and talking, not yelling, not fighting, looking at things from the other person's point of view, etc.).
2. Suggest that resolving disagreements often involves compromise. As a class, define compromise. Explain that these are all examples of respectful peacemaking.
3. Discuss when we need to be peacemakers. Cite and list examples. Emphasize that respectful peacemaking involves talking things out with each other to create a peaceful solution. List and discuss these types of solutions:
 - Win-Win Solution — both sides talk things out so each gets something he or she wants. There is no “loser.” It is peaceful.
 - Win-Lose Solution — one person gains something at the expense of the other person. It reflects competition instead of compromise.
 - Lose-Lose Solution — no one gets what he or she wants. This isn't a solution, but sometimes this outcome is inevitable. As long as the conflict is settled peacefully and respectfully, something has been achieved.
4. Pair the students up. Invite them to discuss conflicts that occur at school or that they've heard about in the news. Instruct each pair to imagine that one of these situations was peacefully resolved. Have them write how a solution was reached, who helped, and if it was a “win-win” outcome. Have them share their solutions. Suggest that we must act respectfully if we want to gain self-respect and earn the respect of others.

Inspired by an idea posted on the Ben & Jerry's Kids' Conscious Acts of Peace website (www.euphoria.benjerry.com/esr/cap).

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This lesson is from the *Good Ideas* book, available for purchase from the CHARACTER COUNTS! online store: <http://www.charactercounts.org/materials>

McREL standards

Life Skills

Standard 2. Uses conflict-resolution techniques.

Level IV, Benchmark 9. Establishes guidelines and rules for negotiating (e.g., clarifying problems, considering other viewpoints, listening to others, meeting at mutually agreeable times).

<http://www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks/>