

Social and Emotional Learning

Lesson Title: Facing the Queen Bee/Top Cat

Grade Level: Middle School

Project and Purpose

Students will write relational aggression gossip scenarios based on cues given by the teacher, and as a group determine what it would take to make the right thing happen in each situation.

Essential Question

How do we break the patterns of relational aggression?

Materials

- Board or chart to draw a large Venn Diagram
- Hive/Pack Relational Aggression Roles chart
- Scenario slips — Cut apart on the horizontal lines

Teacher

1. Draw a Venn Diagram (two circles that partially overlap in the middle) on the board and label one circle “gossiping” and the other “sharing.” Ask students to define each term and fill in the diagram with how gossiping and sharing are the same and how they are different. Tell students they will be asked to add information to the chart as the class progresses.
2. Explain that this session will focus on how gossip fits into relational aggression, often incorrectly referred to as “Mean Girls” syndrome, named after the movie by the same name. Why is this incorrect? Because it’s not just girls who are involved; research shows us that boys are equally involved in relational aggression.
3. The Ophelia Project, the leading organization on the topic, defines relational aggression as when people spread lies about someone, ignore someone or purposefully leaves others out. It can include any/all the following:
 - talking badly about others
 - backstabbing one another
 - making fun of others for who they are, the way they dress or how they look
 - excluding and ostracizing others
 - leaving hurtful or mean messages on cell phones, social media, desks and lockers
 - cyberbullying or shaming others online
 - intimidating others
 - using peer pressure to get others to participate in bullying
 - establishing rules for anyone who wants to be part of the social group
 - forming cliques spreading rumors or engaging in gossip
4. Ask them how any of this information fits into the Venn Diagram and have a volunteer write their analysis in the correct section of their chart.

Hive/Pack: Relational Aggression Roles

Name: _____

Scenario: _____

| Role | Description | What they'd do/say in the scenario. |
|--------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| Queen Bee/ Top Cat | <p>These people often are in charge, call the shots, make the plans, and lead the group without asking for input from others. They lack meaningful friendships with other people and forget to apologize when they know they are wrong. They tend to be more irritated with than intrigued by others.</p> | |
| Wanna Bee/ Sidekick Cat | <p>This person spends a lot of time sharing information about other people (i.e., gossiping!), even if it isn't necessarily true, and provides the Queen Bee/Top Cat with regular updates on rumors—especially rumors involving QB/TC. This person is the Queen Bee's/Top Cat's "right hand" and appears to be the best friend. The Wanna Bee/Sidekick Cat always seems to be the one to select the information that is shared and communicates it to the group.</p> | |
| Chicken Bee/ Scardy Cat | <p>These people are often the victims of another person's aggression, usually the Queen Bee/Top Cat or the Wanna Bee/Sidekick Cat. They don't express how they really feel out of fear because they see others as more powerful than they are. The Chicken Bee/Scardy Cat often goes along with the group even if they don't want to and will do almost anything to avoid conflict. They will often stay in an unhappy friendship because they are afraid if they leave they will lose friends or become a bigger victim.</p> | |
| Strong Bee/ Confident Cat | <p>Strong Bees/Confident Cats don't get involved in Hive/Pack drama and surround themselves with friends who are honest, supportive, and considerate. When these people are presented with gossip, they tell the gossiper they are not interested, and when they see others being persecuted by the hive/cave, they stand up for them.</p> | |

Personal Reflection: What is the right thing to do/say in this situation? Why? What does it take to make the right thing happen?

Scenario Slips

1. Two people walk up to a group and say things that are untrue about a friend.
2. While sitting at the lunch table with the group, one person receives a text with an embarrassing picture of another student in the class.
3. Two friends complain to the others in the group about each other at different times.
4. A new student joins the class wearing an unusual outfit.
5. A student wants to sit with your group at lunch. There is definitely room at the table.
6. Every time this one person walks by, people make barking noises.
7. One of people in the group used to “go out” with the person you were just talking about. The person you were talking about is now going out with someone else in your group.
8. Being in a certain club in school is considered extremely cool. One person in your group wants to join a different club.
9. There is a person that keeps to themselves a lot. One of the people in your group decides the group should create a fake social media profile about that person.
10. A person is bending over and a potentially embarrassing amount of skin is revealed. One of the people in your group takes a picture and posts it online.