

Cooperation

Grades 6-8

Segment Summary:

Cooperation on stage and behind the scenes is critical to a play's successful run.

With only a week before the opening night of *Time Flies*, it's no surprise that the Wesleyan Players are working overtime to memorize their lines. What many people might not realize, however, is the extraordinary amount of effort and teamwork that goes on behind the scenes in order to make a play successful. Like the actors, everyone backstage plays a crucial part in the production. The stage managers keep everything organized, the set decorators build the props and the director helps the actors with their line delivery and stage presence. And these are just a few of the tasks necessary to put on a good show. It takes everyone cooperating and working together in order to achieve success. The cast members know that if they can't depend on their backstage counterparts, and vice versa, they won't reach their desired goal: a perfect performance.

Discussion Questions:

1. What character traits can you identify in the Wesleyan Players?
2. How are the cast members and the play's backstage crew like a team?
3. Can you have cooperation without teamwork? Explain.
4. Which theatrical job do you think is the most stressful or the most time consuming?
5. Give examples of other types of jobs in which teams of people have to cooperate. What happens if there is a breakdown in any part of that team?
6. Think about the teams or other groups with whom you have worked. What roles have you played in these groups (leader, motivator, supporter, etc.)? How does it make you feel when others don't do their part? Explain.
7. Are some group jobs or roles more important to a team than others? Why or why not?
8. Does your family work together like a team? If so, describe the ways that your family members cooperate. If not, what would it take to increase cooperation in your family?
9. Why do you think some people prefer not to work on teams or in organized groups? Can you give some examples of professions that don't require some amount of interaction and cooperation with other people?

Vocabulary Words and Definitions:

Accomplish (v.)

Definition: to succeed in doing something, especially after trying very hard

Context: After years of schooling, hard work and dedication, Quentin accomplished his goal of becoming a doctor.

Altercation (n.)

Definition: a short but noisy argument or fight, usually with an unknown person

Context: Due to the school's zero-tolerance policy on fighting, the altercation between Cami and Michaela resulted in a two-day suspension.

Aspiration (n.)

Definition: a strong desire to have or achieve something

Context: Dean's aspiration is to study art history in Italy.

Collaborative (adj.)

Definition: relating to a piece of work, an effort, etc., involving two or more people or groups working together to achieve a goal, especially in science or art

Context: Sherman and Donna's collaborative effort earned the pair first prize in the science fair.

Component (n.)

Definition: one of several parts that make up a whole machine or system

Context: Interpreting road signs is one of the vital components of learning how to drive.

Conflict-resolution (adj.)

Definition: relating to a process or method of dealing with a problem so that there is no longer a disagreement

Context: Adam uses avoidance as his conflict-resolution technique whenever he argues with his brother.

Cooperation (n.)

Definition: the act of working with someone else to achieve a goal

Context: The success of the community food bank depends on the cooperation of parents, students, teachers and community groups.

Diversity (n.)

Definition: the quality of being made up of a range of different people, ideas, etc.

Context: The new wildlife habitat houses a diversity of species, including the spotted owl and the indigo snake.

Escalate (v.)

Definition: to become much worse, often very quickly

Context: The argument escalated beyond words when Hector pushed Marta into the door.

Tension (n.)

Definition: a situation in which different needs, forces or influences work in different directions and make the situation difficult

Context: Many students struggle to reduce the tension that builds between their parents and them.

Source: *Longman Advanced American Dictionary*. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited. 2000.

Activity: You Make the Call

Objectives:

Students will be able to

- Identify situations that escalate to verbal or physical altercations
- Discuss the reasons why verbal altercations may intensify
- Work with a group to identify the positive and negative outcomes of fighting
- Work with a group to identify the positive and negative outcomes of cooperation
- Offer examples of conflict-resolution techniques

Materials:

- Pens, pencils
- Paper
- Chalkboard, overhead projector, or interactive white board
- **You Make the Call Scenarios** handout
- **You Make the Call** worksheet

Procedure:

1. Before starting this activity, you will need to make a copy of the **You Make the Call Scenarios** handout. Cut the scenario strips apart, and place them in a container from which students will draw later in the activity.
2. Begin this activity by asking your students to list examples of situations that escalate to verbal or physical altercations. Record this list on the board.
3. Continue with a discussion about fighting by asking your students the following questions:
 - Have you ever been in a verbal or physical altercation? If so, what happened?
 - Have you ever witnessed an altercation that escalated from something small? What instigated the altercation?
 - What caused the argument to intensify?
 - What were the outcomes of the fight?
 - In your opinion, was fighting a positive way to resolve the problem? Why or why not?
4. Divide the class into groups of three or four. Give each group one copy of the **You Make the Call** worksheet. Pass around the container in which you placed the scenario strips. Allow a representative from each group to draw one strip.
5. Explain to students that they will work within their groups to complete the decision-making matrix on the **You Make the Call** worksheet using the scenario their group representatives drew. After completing the matrix, the members of each group will work together to answer the discussion questions at the bottom of the worksheet.
6. Wrap up this activity by allowing time for each group to share its answers to the discussion questions at the bottom of the **You Make the Call** worksheet.

You Make the Call Scenarios

One of your opponents cheats during a game.

Someone accidentally bumps you in the hall.

Someone makes fun of your mother.

Someone breaks in line right in front of you.

Someone you do not like makes fun of the way you dress.

Someone you know tells your friends lies about you.

Someone you know stole your iPod at your party last weekend.

You find out that someone you do not like is spreading rumors about you.

You find out who egged your house last weekend.

You find out who told the school's principal that you were responsible for last week's false fire alarm.

You find out who stole your expensive jacket.

Someone in your class told your teacher that you were trying to cheat during last week's test.

You and your best friend have a crush on the same person.

You find out who posted a vicious rumor about you on Facebook.

You find out who has been prank calling your house when you look at a friend's cell phone.

Someone you know told your parents that you snuck out of your house last Thursday night.

You Make the Call

Group Member Names: _____

Directions: With your group, use the matrix below to decide the best response for your given situation.

To Fight ...	Or Not to Fight
I would fight this person because _____. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	I would not fight this person because _____. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
If I fight this person, _____ will happen. (List at least three positive outcomes.) 1. 2. 3.	If I do not fight this person, _____ will happen. (List at least three positive outcomes.) 1. 2. 3.
If I fight this person, _____ will happen. (List at least three negative outcomes.) 1. 2. 3.	If I do not fight this person, _____ will happen. (List at least three negative outcomes.) 1. 2. 3.

Work with your group to answer the discussion questions below. Be prepared to share your answers with the class.

1. What did you decide to do? _____
2. Why did you make this decision? _____
3. Do you always have a choice in a situation like this? Explain. _____

4. What are at least two conflict-resolution techniques that you can use in a similar situation?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
5. What can a person do if he or she is in a situation where the other person is not willing to use cooperation to find a peaceful solution? _____
