

Conflict Resolution Lesson Plan for Elementary Aged Students

Objective: At the end of this lesson plan, students will be able to:

1. Define and understand what conflict is
2. Follow a simple, four-step approach to resolve conflict
3. Identify each of the steps and use appropriate methods to execute them

After this lesson, they will know to:

1. **Keep calm.** After encountering initial conflict, the first thing they need to do is calm down. They will learn simple self-coping mechanisms that help them to become calm and maintain self-control.
2. **Identify the source of conflict.** Once calm, children will be able to state the problem using the facts. They will understand how to separate the problem from the person and focus on solving the problem. Students will know they need to speak and listen kindly and respectfully to the other person involved in the conflict.
3. **Name different ways that the solution could be solved.** Children will know to take turns brainstorming appropriate options for resolving the problem.
4. **Decide which solution will work best and implement it.** Students will learn to recognize which resolutions are appropriate for the conflict and to apologize when they are accountable for poor choices.

This four step approach can be referred to with the acronym KIND to help students remember the steps.

Introduction:

Begin by discussing exactly what conflict is. For younger students, it's best to stick with a simple definition, such as: Conflict is when two people (or groups of people) want different things or cannot agree on something. Teachers should also mention that conflict is not always bad – it can help promote new ideas.

Have students give examples of conflict that they may have encountered and explain how they felt when the conflict occurred. Encourage them to use 'I messages' when explaining how they feel – this helps them to identify the problem and their own feelings without focusing on blame.

Instruction:

Explain the four steps in conflict resolution. For each step, discuss how that particular step can be achieved. Ask students the following questions and go over each step of with them.

1. What are some things you can do when you get into a conflict to calm down?
Examples are:
 - Walk away from the situation.
 - Count to ten.
 - Take a few deep breaths.
 - Get a drink of water.
 - Write down your feelings.
 - Take a short walk.

2. What exactly was the conflict?
 - Remember to stick to the facts.
 - Use 'I messages' to say how you feel without just blaming the other person.
 - Take turns discussing the problem without interrupting.
 - Ask students to consider how they would feel if they were in the other person's shoes.
 - Remind students that if they made a mistake or poor choice, they should be accountable and apologize to the other person for what they did.

3. What are some ways conflicts can be solved? It is helpful when asking this question to provide examples of conflict, such as one child taking a toy away from another one.
 - Discuss the difference between appropriate and inappropriate solutions. For example, name-calling and hitting are the wrong choices when trying to solve the problem.
 - Sharing: encourage students to share fairly and consider setting timer so everyone has the same amount of time with a toy, game, etc.
 - Choosing different activities that both children agree on.
 - Discussing feelings.
 - Flipping a coin or using 'Rock, Paper, Scissors' to determine who goes first, who is 'it' in a game, etc.
 - Encourage students to seek creative and appropriate solutions for conflict, but also remind them if their own or another person's safety is involved, they need to tell an adult.

4. Decide on the best solution and put it in place.
 - Both people need to be satisfied with the solution.
 - The solution should be fair and appropriate to the conflict.

Activity: Puppet Conflict Resolution

Materials:

- Paper bags
- Glue
- Colored construction paper
- Markers
- Googly eyes
- Any other additions to enhance puppets, such as yarn for hair.

Have students create and decorate a puppet. Once complete and dry, use the printable card prompts to role play conflict resolution with the puppets using the four steps previously discussed.

Practice Conflict Prompts for Puppet Conflict Resolution

<p>A friend said something that hurt your feelings.</p>	<p>Someone played with your favorite toy and broke it.</p>
<p>A group of children are playing and they say you can't play with them.</p>	<p>During a game, someone is not following the rules.</p>
<p>Someone took your snack.</p>	<p>Someone won't share.</p>
<p>You want to watch TV, but mom or dad said no.</p>	<p>You are at the park and the other children won't give you a turn on the swings.</p>
<p>You wanted an ice cream bar, but someone in your family took the last one.</p>	<p>During a game of tag, you wanted to be 'it' first, but someone else said no.</p>
<p>Someone knocked over your chocolate milk.</p>	<p>After you won a game, the friend you were playing with called you names.</p>