

BULLYING: AN OPPORTUNITY FOR PROBLEM-SOLVING

Learning Objective(s): The students will

1. Recognize behaviors that are considered bullying.
2. Identify ways to deal with bullying.
3. Utilize the problem-solving process to gather information, identify a problem, list and consider options, consider advantages and disadvantages, choose and implement a solution, and evaluate the effectiveness of the solution.

TEKS: SS K.17A, 1.19A, 2.20A

Materials: A copy of "Bad Week at School" (Attachment 1), drawing paper, copies of "Our Bright Ideas" (Attachment 2) (Second Grade Only), scissors and glue (Second Grade Only)

Vocabulary: brainstorming, bully, evaluate, judge, problem-solving, solution, tattling

Teaching Strategy:

1. Write the word "bully" on the board. Ask students the question, "What is a bully?" (A bully is someone who hurts another person by threatening them, calling them names, hurting their belongings or hitting or pushing them. A bully usually repeats the bullying behavior again and again. Often the bully is older or stronger than the person he or she is bullying.)
2. Read the story "Bad Week at School" (Attachment 1) to the class. Tell students that they are going to be like detectives and do some problem-solving. Explain that the first step of problem-solving is gathering the facts. Ask students the following questions and record their responses on the board or chart paper.
 - Who are the people involved in this situation? (Jake and Colin)
 - What is happening? (Colin is bullying Jake.)
 - What types of bullying are taking place? (making faces, knocking books off desk, tripping, threatening, cutting in line, name-calling, bumping, not letting Jake play soccer)
 - When is the situation taking place? (While Jake is at school.)
 - Where is the situation taking place? (School campus: classroom, cafeteria, PE, recess time)
3. Inform the class that the next step of problem-solving is to identify or state the problem. The statement should be expressed in the

form of a question. It should begin with the phrase “In what ways could Jake.....” or “How might Jake...” (Example: In what ways could Jake deal with the problem of Colin, the bully?) After students have discussed what they think the main problem is, the teacher should write the problem statement on the board or chart paper.

4. Explain that the third step in the problem-solving process is brainstorming possible ways Jake could handle the bullying situation. Tell students that they will get a chance to suggest what Jake could have done other than remaining silent.
5. Review the rules of brainstorming: (1) There are no wrong ideas; (2) don't make fun of any ideas or make comments; and (3) the more ideas, the better.
6. Kindergarten & First Grade Strategy: Record brainstormed ideas on the board or chart paper.

Explain that the next step of problem-solving is to evaluate or judge each solution. Review each suggestion on the brainstormed list and have students rate each idea. If they think an idea is very good and could possibly change Colin's behavior, they should indicate with a “thumbs up” signal. If they think an idea really wouldn't change Colin's behavior, they show indicate “thumbs down.” Remind students that they should indicate their own opinion and not be influenced by how other students vote. (If a majority of the students like an idea, then leave the idea on the list. If a majority of students dislike an idea, draw a line through it or erase it.)

Give students a piece of drawing paper. Have each student draw a picture representing the idea (from those remaining on the list) that he/she thinks is the best solution to the bullying problem.

Have students share their pictures and relate why they think the idea they chose is the best solution to the problem.

7. Second Grade Strategy: Give each student a copy of the “Our Bright Ideas” sheet (Attachment 2). Facilitate a brainstorming session and have students record each suggested idea on a light bulb on their sheet. (A visual may be displayed to demonstrate how the light bulbs should be labeled.)

Explain that the next step of problem-solving is to evaluate or judge the brainstormed solutions. Tell students that each solution will be judged on a scale of 1 to 3. The following rating scale will be used:

- 3 = Very good solution for this situation
- 2 = Average Idea - not sure it would solve this problem
- 1 = Don't think this solution would work for this situation

Review each suggested solution on the brainstormed list and have students rate each idea. They should write the rating at the bottom of each light bulb on the cap. (Students may reach consensus, work in groups, or evaluate the ideas individually.)

After students have evaluated each possible solution, instruct them to cut out the light bulb that states the idea that they think would be the best strategy for Jake to use to deal with Colin. Students should glue the light bulb on a piece of drawing paper and write a sentence explaining why they believe this is the best way for Jake to deal with Colin.

Students should share their finished product with the class.

8. To conclude the lesson by having students discuss any or all of the following questions:
 - Have you ever been bullied? How did it make you feel?
 - How did you handle the situation?
 - Is tattling the same as asking for help? What is the difference?
 - How can classmates help friends who are being bullied?
 - How can we prevent bullying in our school?

Extension for Gifted/Talented: Create a new ending to the story "Bad Week at School." The story should include the solution students chose and a description how the situation worked out.

BAD WEEK AT SCHOOL

Jake, a first grader, was looking forward to the weekend. He wanted to play with his cousins, have fun and just forget about the upsetting things that happened to him this week at school.

Colin, a classmate, had been bullying Jake every chance he got. Jake wished that he wasn't the youngest and shortest kid in the class. He seemed to be the only one that Colin picked on, and he wondered if that was why.

On Monday Colin made mean faces at Jake and stuck his tongue out at him every time the teacher, Miss Miller, turned her back. Colin also passed his desk and knocked Jake's books on the floor on purpose.

During PE class on Tuesday, Colin tripped Jake. He told Jake that if he told the PE teacher, he would beat him up after school. Jake's leg was sore, and he wanted to cry. He didn't say anything to anyone because he was scared of what Colin might do to him.

The next day at lunch time, Colin cut in front of Jake in the cafeteria line. When Jake was about to sit down at the table, Colin said, "I don't want 'Jake the Jerk' sitting at my table." That really hurt Jake's feelings and embarrassed him in front of everyone in the class.

Thursday, Jake overheard Colin telling Emma not to be friends with him. That same day, Colin whispered something in Armando's ear and then they both looked at Jake and laughed. It made him feel very uncomfortable.

Jake almost made it through Friday without any problems; however, things changed when Miss Miller rewarded the class by letting them play on the playground in the afternoon. Jake always liked to play soccer with his friends, Amar, Katie and Jennifer. As he approached them to join the game, Colin bumped into him. Then Colin grabbed the soccer ball and told Jake they didn't need anyone else on the team. Jake felt left out, alone and sad.

Our Bright Ideas

