**Conflict Resolution Handout**

**Conflict Resolution Styles Lesson Plan**

# Many Ways to Resolve Conflict

Grade Levels: **3 - 12**

## Objectives

* Students will learn a range of possible conflict resolution techniques.
* Students will learn some of the technical terms of conflict resolution.

## Materials

* Copies of Resolution Vocabulary handout
* Copies of the Identify the Resolution handout

## Procedures

1. Explain that there are many ways people resolve conflicts, some of which have names.
2. Read the Resolution Vocabulary handout with your students, discussing each of the terms.
3. Ask students if they can think of examples of each kind of conflict resolution.
4. Hand out the Identify the Resolution handout and read the following situations to the class.
5. Have students identify what type of conflict resolution is being used.
   1. Roger and Kindra were arguing over who would get to use the box of markers. They realized that arguing was getting them nowhere, so they figured out several ways they could both use the markers. Then they chose the way they liked best. (NEGOTIATE)
   2. Jerome, Ted, and Alfredo are supposed to put up a bulletin board display together, but they can't agree on what the theme should be. They finally went to their teacher Mr. Nunez and asked him to choose the bulletin board theme. (ARBITRATE)
   3. Juanita was upset because her best friend Sara walked by her this morning without saying a word. She didn't speak to Sara all day. Finally Sara got Luanita to say what was wrong. "I didn't even see you," Sara cried. "I would never walk by without saying something to you." It was all a misunderstanding. (COMMUNICATE)
   4. Ricardo and Diana were playing on the same softball team, but they both wanted to pitch. They were shouting at each other. Finally Monty came up and helped them work out a solution to the problem. (MEDIATE)
   5. Marla was being teased and called names by some kids in the class. She hated being called names. Every morning the class had a class meeting to discuss things. Marla suggested that there be a class rule against name-calling and teasing. (LEGISLATE)
   6. Carmen has accused Reba of stealing things out of her locker. They have taken their problem to the student court. The court is made up of a high school girl, who is the judge, and a jury of eighth- and ninth-graders. They will present evidence to the court. The jury will decide if Reba is guilty. If she is, the judge will decide her punishment (LITIGATE)
6. Conclude this activity by having a class discussion using the following questions:
   1. Have you used one of these conflict resolution approaches? If so, describe the situation.
   2. What are some other ways of resolving conflicts that are not on this handout? (compromise, problem solving, competing, using chance)
7. To take the discussion even further, read the poem "Ations" on page 59 of Shel Silverstein's *A Light in the Attic*.

Excerpted from *Elementary Perspectives: Teaching Concepts of Peace and Conflict* by William J. Kreidler.

**Conflict Resolution Handout-5 Styles**

**Conflict Resolution Vocabulary**

**C:\Users\Geiger\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\OJA88DJ0\MC900089090[1].wmf COMMUNICATE**  
Some conflicts start because people misunderstand each other. Talking things out and explaining might take care of it.

**C:\Users\Geiger\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\OJA88DJ0\MC900078809[1].wmf NEGOTIATE**  
When two or more people decide to work out a conflict themselves, they might follow a set of steps. The steps help them work out the conflict or *negotiate*.

**C:\Users\Geiger\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\OJA88DJ0\MC900297565[1].wmf MEDIATE**  
Sometimes people want to work out a problem but have trouble negotiating. They might ask someone to help them. That person is called a *mediator*. He or she *mediates* the conflict by helping the people work it out. The mediator does not tell the people what to do; he or she helps them decide for themselves.

** ARBITRATE**  
Sometimes a mediator does solve people's problems. Then he or she isn't called a mediator. He or she is called an *arbitrator*. When people ask an arbitrator to help them, they must agree to do whatever the arbitrator suggests.

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When people can't work out their conflict themselves, they may go to a court and have a trial. They hire lawyers and go before a judge. A judge is like an arbitrator. The lawyers try to convince the judge that their client is right. The judge decides who is right according to the law and decides what solution there should be. This can take place in a school when there is a formal peer mediation system established.

**C:\Users\Geiger\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\XB5XV956\MC900088968[1].wmf LEGISLATE**  
To legislate is to make something the law or a rule. Some kinds of conflicts cause people to try to change laws or rules so the problem won't happen again.

Excerpted from *Elementary Perspectives: Teaching Concepts of Peace and Conflict* by William J. Kreidler

**Conflict Resolution Handout**

**5 Styles**

**Five Styles of Handling Children's Conflicts**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Style of Handling Conflict** | **Uses** | **Limitations** |
| **DIRECTION**  When you say, in effect, "Do this," you are directing. Direction is a non-negotiating approach. An adult authority decides what needs to be done and gives the direction that it be done. It's important to recognize that directing need not be unkind or authoritarian. Children can be told nicely, but clearly, what they need to do. | When safety is at stake; when children are out of control and need help getting back into control; when there is no time to discuss or negotiate; when the problem is not important enough to spend much time or energy. | Doesn't build children's independence in problem solving; may cause resentment on the part of children; may not really solve problems. |

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| **MEDIATION** A third party--either a staff person or any trained person--sits with children and helps them work out their conflict by creating an environment where problem solving can take place. This is done by strictly enforcing ground rules: be honest, no interrupting, and no name calling or put downs. The mediator helps the disputants define their problem, develop solutions, and choose a workable solution. | Because the disputants are solving the problem themselves, they are invested in the solution. Also, it helps get to the root of some persistent problems. | Takes time! The conflict may not be worth the time and effort compared to the learning that comes from it. |
| **ARBITRATION** Also involves a third party who hears both (or all) sides, then tells the disputants how they should handle the conflict. This may be done with some input from the disputants, or by simply saying, "This is what you're going to do." | Efficient. Gives the disputants a chance to state their point of view, but doesn't spend a lot of time on problem solving. | May not get to the root of the problem. The disputants may not learn anything about solving conflicts. |
| **JUDGMENT** Sometimes the emphasis needs to be not on problem solving, but on determining who was right and who was wrong. Children depend on the adult to act as a judge, to listen and weigh the evidence, and then to pass a fair judgment. | When there has been clear wrongdoing and the parties involved want justice; when there is a need for consequences to be decided upon for actions. | Doesn't build independent problem-solving skills; keeps children dependent upon adults; is by nature a win-lose solution rather than a win-win solution. |

Excerpted from *Early Childhood Adventures in Peacemaking* by William J. Kreidler and Sally Tsubokawa.