

# Introduction

Grades 4-6, Lesson #1

## Time Needed

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20-40 minutes

## Student Learning Objectives

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To be able to ...

1. List and explain at least four ground rules.
2. Identify why ground rules are necessary.
3. Promote ways to show respect for one another.

## Agenda

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1. Introduce the unit.
2. Use case study and class input to set ground rules.
3. Discuss slang vs. medical/correct terms.
4. Introduce “anonymous question” cans (boxes, envelopes.)
5. Use *Introduction Worksheet* to summarize lesson.

This lesson was most recently edited November 2021.

## ***Elementary FLASH Grades 4-6***

### **Materials Needed**

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#### **Classroom Materials:**

- Coffee can, manila envelope or shoe box, for anonymous questions
- *Anonymous Question Roots Visual*

#### **Student Materials: (for each student)**

- *Introduction Worksheet*
- Several slips of matching scrap paper and a pencil

## Activity

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### 1. Introduce the unit by explaining that you are beginning a health unit where you will learn about relationships, puberty, reproduction and staying safe.

This health unit will focus on things that people need to know as they are growing up. Ask the students if they have any ideas about what they will be learning about and affirm their correct answers. Summarize by pointing out that these are important topics for everyone to learn about so that people can understand one another better and keep themselves safe and happy.

If students express embarrassment or discomfort, let them know that it is normal for some people to feel that way at the beginning of the unit, and that you will be working very hard to make sure everyone feels as safe and comfortable as possible while you are all learning about these important and interesting topics.

### 2. Tell the class that you want to share a case study with them and get their reactions to it.

Let them know this is a story about what happened in another classroom, not at this school, when they started this unit. Read aloud:

*“The class was beginning their reproductive health unit on that day. They came in from recess and Mr. Lopez asked everybody to calm down and get ready to work. But everybody was a little nervous and excited, and it took a long time before the jokes and laughter let up. When it was quiet, Mr. Lopez asked whether anyone knew what kinds of things they'd be studying in this next unit. Caleb raised his hand and asked, 'What about the reproductive system?' A few people giggled. Then Viet raised her hand. She asked whether the class would learn about menstrual periods. Four or five people began to laugh and Christina said, 'How dumb!' Viet started to blush. When the laughter kept up, tears came to her eyes and she finally got up and left the room.”*

Open a discussion about the case study. Some questions for the class to consider are:

- "Why do you think some people laughed?"
- "How did Viet feel?"
- "Do you think other people will raise their hands from now on? Why not? How will they feel about speaking in class?"
- "If you were the teacher, how would you handle the problem?"
- "How could the problem have been avoided in the first place?"
- "Do you think this kind of thing could happen in OUR class?"
- "How can we keep it from happening here? Why don't we develop a contract for how we'll treat each other during this unit?"

### 3. Have students develop ground rules.

List students' suggestions on the blackboard. Feel free to add to their list and remind them that these guidelines are for the students and the teacher to follow. You may want to include some of these:

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- Show respect for opinions and beliefs that are different from your own.
- No put-downs.
- Any question is a good question.
- Protect other people's privacy and your own.
  - For example, questions about friends and family members should not include their names or identities. Ask about "someone I know" rather than "my sister."
  - Students can use this framework to protect their own privacy as well.
- It's OK to pass or not answer a question.
- Be considerate of other people's feelings.
- No laughing at each other.
  - You can let the students know you don't mind laughing in general, or laughing when you talk, but that students should not laugh at each other.

### **4. Discuss slang and baby talk.**

Encourage students to ask questions regardless of whether they know the standard/medical words for things. Explain that you will always try to include the medical word in your answer and to spell it for them on the blackboard.

Note to teacher: Students may use slang or baby talk in the classroom for two reasons: Sometimes, the individual is testing you. ("Will they be shocked if I ask what's really on my mind?" "Do they know the meaning of slang terms?") Sometimes the student doesn't know the standard or medical term. In either case, a matter of fact, nonjudgmental substitution of the medical term by the teacher when answering will diffuse the need to test and will offer important information.

### **5. Introduce the Anonymous Question Box or Can.**

Explain to students what an anonymous question is – a question they write down on paper without their name on it. No one will know who asked what questions, and you will read and answer them out loud throughout the unit.

Let students know what topics you will be covering. Elementary FLASH has lessons on the following topics: Family, Self Esteem, Gender Roles, Friendship, Decision Making, Sexual Abuse, Puberty, the Reproductive System, Pregnancy and HIV. Mention the topics you will be covering and invite students to write any questions they have on the pieces of paper you have provided.

Ask every student to write at least one question. If they can't think of a question, ask them to write a fact about one of the topics you listed. Remind students that spelling isn't important for these questions. Walk around the room to collect questions and leave the box in a prominent location in the classroom. Invite students to submit additional questions anytime.

Use *Anonymous Question Roots Visual* to offer your students a starting point as they try to think of questions or write the question roots on the board:

- "Is it true that...?"
- "How do you know if...?"
- "What do they mean by...?"
- "Is it normal to...?"

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"What causes...?"

"What should you do if...?"

### 3. Wrap up the lesson.

Hand out the *Introduction Worksheet* and have students work in pairs filling it out.

### Related Activities for Integrated Learning

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#### A. Art

Students may volunteer to make posters listing classroom ground rules.

#### B. Language Arts

Have students write a story about a problem they experienced when another student was inconsiderate of their feelings. They should include how they handled the problem or how they would have liked to have handled it.

### Homework

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Students' options:

- Family homework: There is no homework question for today's lesson. Please read the information on the FLASH Family Homework Sheet for today's family homework.
- Individual homework: What do you expect to learn in this unit? What questions or concerns do you have about this unit?

Visual

## Anonymous Question Roots

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"Is it true that...?"

"How do you know if...?"

"What do they mean by...?"

"Is it normal to...?"

"What causes...?"

"What should you do if...?"

# Introduction Worksheet

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NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

Our ground rules are:

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Sometimes people use slang or baby talk to ask questions because those are the words they know. In this unit we're going to learn the \_\_\_\_\_ words for things.

The topics we will talk about include:

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