

Friendship

Grades 4-6, Lesson #5

Time Needed

35-45 minutes

Student Learning Objectives

To be able to ...

1. Describe characteristics of healthy friendships and other relationships.
2. List healthy ways to express affection, love, and friendship.
3. Demonstrate effective communication skills to promote healthy peer relationships.

Agenda

1. Explain the reason for the lesson.
2. Have students list the qualities they value in a friend.
3. Discuss feelings of loneliness.
4. Discuss the risks and benefits involved in initiating a friendship.
5. Use a bulletin board exercise to identify skills in building and maintaining friendships.
6. Answer "Anonymous Question Box" questions regarding friendship.
7. Summarize the lesson.

This lesson was most recently edited November 2021.

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Materials Needed

Classroom Materials:

- 2 empty bulletin boards

FLASH Key Concepts

It's important to treat everyone with caring and respect.

Activity

1. Explain the reason for the lesson.

Explain that, as people grow up, not only their bodies change, but their understanding of themselves changes and so do their friendships. That is what this lesson is about: understanding yourself and friendships.

2. Have students list the qualities they value in a friend.

Have the class make a list of all the qualities they can think of that make someone a good friend. It may help them to think about their own friends – what do they like about them? Give students about 5 minutes to make their list, then ask for volunteers to share one quality each. Praise students for their responses and ask if others had similar responses. There will likely be much overlap among lists. Conclude by summarizing the qualities students have listed. Student lists might contain qualities such as:

- Funny
- Trustworthy
- Have things in common
- Stands up for me
- Is nice to me
- Helps me
- Is good at... (soccer, math, French braiding, etc.)
- Has a... (puppy, trampoline, video game, etc.) that we play with

Note: Students may say that “keeping a friend’s secret” is an important quality. If so, make sure to discuss that it is important not to share friends’ personal information with other kids, but that if a friend is ever in danger or is doing something that could hurt themselves or someone else, it is very important to tell an adult who can help. This is one important way friends take care of each other.

3. Discuss feelings of loneliness.

Discuss how it feels to be in a new school where you don't know anybody. Point out that, while a person may feel as if they are the only one with those feelings, it's not true. Remind students that it is important to treat everyone with caring and respect.

4. Discuss the risks and benefits involved in initiating a friendship.

Discuss how it feels to initiate conversation or to call or text someone you think you might like to become friends with. Discuss how it feels to be on the receiving end when someone else initiates.

5. Use a bulletin board exercise to identify skills in building and maintaining friendships.

- a. Have half the class write ideas about "How to start a conversation to make a friend" and tape them on a bulletin board. This can be done aloud as class discussion instead.
- b. Have the other half of the class write ideas about "How to keep a friend" and tape them on a second bulletin board. This can also be done in discussion format. Depending on

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the ideas generated, the teacher may need to point out qualities of unhealthy friendships (e.g., if either person isn't treated fairly or honestly).

6. Answer "Anonymous Question Box" questions about friendship.

7. Summarize these points:

- People need friends. Each of us is valuable as a friend for one reason or another.
- People value different things in friends.
- It can be scary to initiate a new friendship, but it's just as scary to other people as it is to ourselves.
- There are many ways to go about starting or keeping a friendship.
- It's important to treat everyone with carrying and respect.

Related Activities for Integrated Learning

Language Arts

Read a short story or a picture book about friendship. Discuss friendship qualities that appear in that story.

Homework

Students' options:

- Family homework: What are important qualities to have in a friend?
- Individual homework: Write a poem about friends.