

About This Activity:

Participant Media presents **Setting Ground Rules for Conversations in Class** to help educators in almost any level or subject to create an environment conducive to productive and supportive dialogue.

Curriculum Connections:

This activity fits in perfectly with lessons that address curriculum standards in language arts, civics, conflict resolution and mediation, behavioral studies, thinking and reasoning, and working with others.

Rationale:

The purpose of this activity is for students to consider what kind of environment is most productive for conversation and learning. The activity can also be used as a precursor to issue-driven lessons, in order to establish a conducive context for positive class discussions and sharing.

Student Objectives:

- Students will consider what kinds of responses and reactions have positive effects in conversation
- Students will consider what kinds of responses and reactions have negative effects in conversation
- Students will consider the difficulties in sharing personal opinions with a larger group
- Students will brainstorm ways in which their behavior might make it more difficult for people to share personal opinions with the larger group
- Students will brainstorm ways in which their behavior might make it easier for people to share personal opinions with the larger group
- Students will brainstorm what actions they can take to facilitate productive dialogue with their peers
- Students will apply the results of their brainstorms to a code of conduct for future class discussions

Requirements:

Materials:

- Chalkboard and chalk, or chart paper and markers

Time:

- 30 minutes

Techniques and Skills:

Large group discussion, small group work, supporting ideas with examples, vocabulary building, and analytical thinking.

Procedures:

1. Begin class with the following journal prompt written on the chalkboard or on chart paper. Allow 10 minutes for students to respond in writing in their journals or notebooks.

Imagine that you have a personal problem that you want to share with your best friend. How would you want your friend to respond when you told him/her? How would you want your friend to act after he/she knew? Make a list of as many things that you can think of that describe how you'd want your friend act once he/she heard what you had to say.

Note: Possible answers might be: I'd want him/her not to laugh at me; not to tell anyone else; not to criticize me; just to listen; to ask me more about it; to give me advice, to not give me advice, but just to listen to me; to be honest, etc.

2. Conduct a short discussion with the class about their journal entries. Ask for volunteers to share one of the items from their lists. Record their responses for the group on the chalkboard or on chart paper. If there are relevant responses not offered by the class, suggest them and add them to the list on the board.
3. Ask the class to look at the list they created. Ask them to talk about what they see.
4. Explain that this is the beginning of a list of “rules” for how to have a productive and supportive dialogue with their peers. Point out to the class how much is already on the board. This shows that they already know a lot about what it means to have a respectful conversation.
5. Divide the class into groups of 3-4 students. Assign each group one of the items from the board.
6. Allow 10 minutes for each group to discuss their term/phrase. Each group should prepare the following:
 - A definition of their term/phrase
 - An example in conversation of their term/phrase
 - An explanation of why their term/phrase is important to a respectful conversation
7. Allow 5-10 minutes for each group to report back to the class. Record their responses.
8. Explain that these are good rules to follow during class discussions—especially discussions where students are sharing personal opinions.
9. Create a new list of “ground rules for discussion” from the small group work. Add any other “rules” that are not already listed. Post this list in the classroom for future reference.

Note: Examples of some important ground rules to include might be:

- Listen to—and HEAR—your peers
- Be open to new ideas—your own, and others
- Agree to disagree sometimes
- Keep it confidential
- Be willing to share your thoughts
- Be respectful
- Don't interrupt
- Avoid using put-downs or making jokes

Visit <http://gsi.berkeley.edu/textonly/resources/discussion/methods.html> for additional ground rules activities

About This Activity:

Participant Media provides this activity about **Language, Communication, and Successful Conflict Resolution** to explore the impact and power of language—as a help—and a hindrance—to communication and understanding. This activity is geared towards students aged 12-16 but can be modified for use with other age groups.

Curriculum Connections:

This activity fits in perfectly with lessons that address curriculum standards in language arts, civics, conflict resolution and mediation, behavioral studies, thinking and reasoning, working with others, art connections, social studies, history, and civics.

Lesson Preparation:

- Prepare copies of *Student Handouts* for distribution
- Prepare (copy and cut) “word cards” for word game

Rationale:

The purpose of this lesson is for students to consider the role of communication in resolving conflicts. Specifically, the lesson encourages students to think about language and how it can create – or dissipate – conflict.

Student Objectives:

- Students will learn about homographs
- Students will use debate to reach consensus on the meanings of various words
- Students will explore the importance of a “shared vocabulary” in conversation and debate
- Students will extrapolate from personal experience of conflict to the universal experience of conflict
- Students will work in pairs to examine the nature of successful communication

Requirements:

Materials:

- Chalkboard and chalk, or chart paper and markers
- *Student Handouts: Pop Quiz, Word Game* (as individual cards)

Time:

- 45 minutes

Techniques and Skills:

Vocabulary building, reading comprehension, large group discussion, working in pairs, critical and analytical thinking, public speaking, supporting ideas with examples, research, and creative writing.

Procedures:

1. Once the class is seated, without any introduction distribute *Student Handout: Pop Quiz*.
2. Allow 5-10 minutes for students to complete the handout.
3. Tell the class that they will now grade their own quiz. Ask for a volunteer to read their first sentence.
4. After the first volunteer reads, say that his/her answer is wrong. Ask for a second volunteer. If the second volunteer uses the word in the same context as the first (“The wind blows hard,” and “Wind makes windmills go,” etc.) then repeat that his/her answer is wrong. If the second volunteer uses the word in a different context (“My brother always forgets to wind his watch.”), take a poll. Ask the class: How many of you used the word in this way? How many of you used the word the first way? Which is right?

Note: Because the students believe that this is a quiz, they may be very invested in getting the answers right. They may wish to argue the veracity of their answers. Allow this to occur. Allow students to debate among themselves which use of each word is accurate. Do not offer a final “verdict” on which students are correct. Mediate where necessary by asking questions, such as: Who else feels the way {Emmanuel} feels? Did anyone else use the word that way? Why do you think {Li} is wrong?

5. Once students have arrived at a place of complete disagreement, encourage the class to reflect on this experience. Ask the class to describe what just happened. Who is right? Who is wrong? Why is there such a difference in opinion? What happened to their ability to communicate?
6. Assure students that this was not an actual quiz, but was an experiment to show how important communication is in dealing with conflict. Tell the class that the words on the “quiz” were HOMOGRAHS: words that are spelled one way but have more than one pronunciation and meaning.

Note: To dispel any anxiety or concern, reiterate to students that this was not a quiz, but was only an experiment to illustrate the importance of clear communication, and that there will be no recorded grades.

7. Explain to the class that this experiment illustrates how, without a shared and agreed upon vocabulary, arguments can escalate and agreement becomes more and more difficult—even if both sides are right.
8. Elicit from the class examples of arguments, conflicts, or disagreements that they’ve experienced that arose from lack of communication, or from the aggressive or negative use of words. Record the students’ answers on the chalkboard or on chart paper.

Note: Students may offer specific slurs or stereotypes during this discussion. It is important to remind the class that while exploring the negative use of language is an important step to understanding conflict, the use of certain terms—in fact, sometimes just a reference to these

terms—may be difficult for some of their peers, and therefore should be discussed in class with particular sensitivity.

9. Conduct a short discussion about their responses using the following questions as a guide:
 - How did communication (or lack of communication) create this conflict?
 - How might the communication problem have been improved or solved?
 - What sorts of strategies or behaviors could you have used to help improve communication during the conflict?
 - What are some of the different ways people communicate? How might these different styles lead to miscommunication?

Note: The *Student Handout: Word Game* cards (quantity: 36) should be copied and cut in advance of this activity.

10. Divide students into pairs. Ask each pair to choose one “talker” and one “listener.”
11. Give the “talker” one of the cards from *Student Handout: Word Cards*.
12. The “talker” has 30 seconds to get his or her partner to call out the word on his or her card without saying the word itself, or any of the other words listed on the card.
13. When the “listener” has guessed the word, the pair should stand up. The first pair to stand wins. See how long it takes for the rest of the pairs to stand.
14. Have students switch roles (the “listener” becomes the “talker” and vice versa). Distribute another card to each pair. Repeat the activity.
15. Reconvene as a whole group and allow students to discuss their experience. Use some or all of the following questions as a guide:
 - In what ways did you find this activity easy or difficult? Why?
 - What made you the most frustrated? How did you express your frustration?
 - How many times did you guess the word wrong?
 - How did the experience of guessing wrong make you feel?
 - What did you realize about how you communicate by participating in this activity?
 - Was it easier to be the “talker” or the “listener?” Why?
 - What did you learn about how your partner communicates?
 - What made it easier for you and your partner to understand each other? What made it more difficult?
16. Explain to the class that words can help two people communicate, but they can also get in the way of communication. Ask the class how the words on the “quiz” got in the way of communication.
17. Ask the class what other categories of words might get in the way of communication or create conflict. Chart responses on the chalkboard or on chart paper.
18. Conduct a short discussion using some or all of the following questions as a guide:
 - How can words CREATE conflict?

- Give an example of how a person could use a word to create a conflict.
- Is the childhood rhyme “sticks and stones can break my bones but names can never hurt me” accurate? How do words hurt? Give an example.
- In what ways can language be used as a weapon? Explain.

Extension Activities and Ideas for Further Learning

- Have students create a “word poem” using the word COMMUNICATE. Students should write “communicate” vertically on the left hand side of a piece of paper. Then, they should create a poem where each line starts with a letter in the word. For example, the first line of their poem might be “Carefully listen to your friends,” the second line could be “Often they mean more than what they say,” and so on. Display student poems around the classroom—perhaps using them as ground rules for future productive classroom discussions.
- Instruct students to identify a current conflict from the local newspaper. The conflict can be local, regional, national, or international. Have them research their conflict—who are the parties involved, what is the nature of the conflict, what is the background of the conflict, etc. Then students should write a letter from a person (real or imaginary) on one side of the conflict to the other. Next, instruct them to write another letter that is a response to their first letter. Students should consider how language and communication might help to lessen this conflict and bring about a resolution.
- There are a number of nonprofit organizations that focus on building and strengthening communication to resolve conflict. Examples might be: Americans for Peace Now, Amnesty International, Seeds of Peace, Pen Pals for Soldiers, or The Carter Center. Students should create an informational poster about one organization: what it does, where it works, how others can get involved, how others can learn more. Display the posters in the school cafeteria, library, lobby, or hallways to encourage others to get involved with the organization and their work towards peaceful conflict resolution.

Student Handout: Pop Quiz

Directions: Use each of the following words in a grammatically correct sentence.

1. Wind: _____

2. Tear: _____

3. Bow: _____

4. Lead: _____

5. Content: _____

Student Handout: Word Game

Directions for facilitator: In preparation for use, cut along the double lines to create 36 individual cards. Distribute one card to each student pair.

<p>ELEPHANT <i>You cannot say: elephant, trunk, grey, peanut, Dumbo.</i></p>	<p>SCHOOL BUS <i>You cannot say: school, bus, yellow.</i></p>	<p>BEST FRIEND <i>You cannot say: best, friend, friends, peer.</i></p>
<p>FOOTBALL <i>You cannot say: foot, ball, the name of any specific football teams (including mascots), or name specific TV shows or movies about football.</i></p>	<p>TIGER <i>You cannot say: tiger, cat, stripe, Tigger, Frosted Flakes.</i></p>	<p>DOLLAR BILL <i>You cannot say: dollar, bill, money, green, George Washington, or any nickname for dollar bill (i.e., greenback)</i></p>
<p>DECK OF CARDS <i>You cannot say: deck, card, spade, diamond, heart, club, or name any specific card game.</i></p>	<p>BIRTHDAY CAKE <i>You cannot say: birthday, cake, eat, or frosting.</i></p>	<p>THREE RING NOTEBOOK <i>You cannot say: three, ring, note, book, notebook, spiral, notes, binder, or name any brand name three ring binder.</i></p>
<p>TENNIS RACQUET <i>You cannot say: tennis, racquet, or name any professional tennis player.</i></p>	<p>DRUM SET <i>You cannot say: drum, set, kit, drummer, sticks, cymbal, percussion, name any specific drummer, kind, or brand of drum (bass, snare, etc).</i></p>	<p>SUPERMAN <i>You cannot say: super, Clark, Kent, Lois, Lane, Lex, Luthor, or name any specific movie or TV show that is about Superman.</i></p>
<p>SWIMSUIT <i>You cannot say: pool, bathing, suit, swim, ocean, beach.</i></p>	<p>SOCCER <i>You cannot say: soccer, ball, black, white, goal, Olympic(s), or name any specific soccer team, player, or team mascot.</i></p>	<p>MUSEUM <i>You cannot say: museum, art, or name any specific museum.</i></p>
<p>SUNFLOWER <i>You cannot say: sun, flower.</i></p>	<p>ENVELOPE <i>You cannot say: envelope, letter, address, stamp, postage, mail.</i></p>	<p>BASEBALL CAP <i>You cannot say: base, ball, cap, hat, bat, or name any specific baseball team, player, or mascot.</i></p>

<p>DANCE <i>You cannot say: dance, music, step, partner, prom, or name any specific style or type of dance (i.e., tap, ballet, break).</i></p>	<p>MANICURE <i>You cannot say: manicure, nail, manicurist, pedicure, finger, polish, or name any specific place or brand of nail polish.</i></p>	<p>SOAP <i>You cannot say: soap, bar, wash, or name any specific kind or brand of soap.</i></p>
<p>CIRCUS <i>You cannot say: circus, big top, Barnum, Bailey, three, ring, clown, tent.</i></p>	<p>KANGAROO <i>You cannot say: kangaroo, pouch, joey, hop.</i></p>	<p>COFFEE <i>You cannot say: coffee, tea, creamer, or name any specific brand or kind of coffee or coffee shop.</i></p>
<p>AIRPORT <i>You cannot say: air, port, plane, pilot, terminal, takeoff, land, or name any specific airport.</i></p>	<p>PIZZA <i>You cannot say: pizza, pie, pizzeria, or name any specific brand or kind of pizza or pizza place.</i></p>	<p>SUNGLASSES <i>You cannot say: sun, glasses, lens, frame, or name any specific brand of sunglasses.</i></p>
<p>CHEWING GUM <i>You cannot say: chewing, gum, bubble, chew, blow, or mention any specific kind or brand of gum.</i></p>	<p>LIGHTBULB <i>You cannot say: light, bulb, Edison, electric, lamp.</i></p>	<p>CARTOON <i>You cannot say: cartoon, Saturday, Sunday, comic, strip, or name any specific comic strip or cartoon.</i></p>
<p>STAMP <i>You cannot say: stamp, envelope, postage, letter, mail.</i></p>	<p>PLAYGROUND <i>You cannot say: play, ground, recess, park, swing, slide, or name any specific park or playground.</i></p>	<p>BANANA <i>You cannot say: banana, yellow, peel, fruit, monkey.</i></p>
<p>WATERMELON <i>You cannot say: water, melon, seed(s), fruit, cantaloupe.</i></p>	<p>PARROT <i>You cannot say: parrot, bird, macaw, polly, cracker.</i></p>	<p>MUSIC <i>You cannot say: music, instrument, song, CD, musician, video, radio, or MP3 or name any MP3 player.</i></p>

About This Activity:

Issues of power and turf are at the core of the majority of personal and global conflicts. Participant Media presents this **Global Conflicts Activity** to help students gain a personal understanding of how these sorts of conflicts develop. Then, through research, students can apply those newly gained understandings to their study of global conflicts. This activity is geared towards students aged 14-17 but can be modified to be used with other age groups.

Curriculum Connections:

This activity fits in perfectly with lessons that address curriculum standards in social studies, civics, history, language arts, conflict resolution and mediation, behavioral studies, thinking and reasoning, art connections, and working with others.

Lesson Preparation:

- Arrange four chairs in a row in the front of the room
- Prepare copies of *Student Handouts* for distribution

Rationale:

The purpose of this activity is for students to examine how the elements of a personal conflict can be mirrored in a larger, global conflict. Students look at ways to manage and resolve personal conflicts and community conflicts in a productive manner and then apply these strategies to conflicts that are occurring around the world.

Student Objectives:

- Students will explore why “turf” is such a common cause of conflict through role-play
- Students will explore why “power” is such a common cause of conflict through role-play
- Students will examine how conflict can build or dissipate by analyzing the cycle of conflict
- Students will brainstorm possible nonviolent responses to conflict as well as aggressive ones, and discuss how best to achieve desirable outcomes
- Students will analyze personal conflict and apply these responses to evaluate outcomes
- Students will analyze community conflict and apply these responses to evaluate outcomes
- Students will analyze global conflict and apply these responses to evaluate outcomes

Requirements:

Materials:

- Chalkboard and chalk, or chart paper and markers
- *Student Handouts: Situations of Conflict, Cycles of Conflict*

Time:

- 45 minutes

Techniques and Skills:

Vocabulary building, reading comprehension, public speaking, large group discussion, working in pairs, comparing and contrasting information sources, critical and analytical thinking, responsive and creative writing, literary analysis, research skills, and supporting ideas with examples.

Procedures:

1. When students arrive, four chairs should be set up in a row in the front of the room.
2. After the class is settled, select six students to participate in the next activity. Ask one of the students to the front of the room to stand with you. Tell the other five participants that when you clap your hands they should come up and sit in the row of chairs, one student per chair. The four people who end up in the chairs will “win.” The person who ends up without a chair will “lose.”
3. Clap your hands. The five students will scramble to get to the chairs, and, inevitably, one student will remain standing. A disagreement might erupt (a student claims he/she got there first, a student tries to shoulder his/her way onto the remaining chair, a student complains that he/she was sitting farther in the back of the class and that the other students had an “unfair” advantage, etc.).
4. Tell the class that the student standing with you was chosen to be the judge and decide who wins and who loses. The student does not have to explain why he/she decides the way he/she does. The class can call out their opinions. Allow students to disagree.
5. Return all six students to their seats. Allow 10 minutes for the class to discuss the experiment.
6. Ask the class to describe what happened when there were five students and only four chairs. Ask the five students who were competing for the chairs to share how they felt during the activity. Why was it so important to “win” a chair? Ask the student who had to decide the “loser” to describe how he/she felt. What made his/her role difficult?
7. Tell the class that there are approximately 20 significant armed conflicts happening around the world today, and that almost every single one of them is being fought over one of two issues: power (governmental rule) or turf (land/territory).*

*Note: This information according to *Patterns of Major Armed Conflicts, 1997-2006*, by Lotta Harbom and Peter Wallensteen, Uppsala Conflict Data Program, Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University

8. Ask students what happened when there were five people fighting over four chairs. Ask them what happened when there was one person who could make a decision for the larger group. Ask: How does this relate to the statistic they just heard? Why might so many global conflicts erupt over power and territory?
9. Divide the class into pairs. Distribute one copy of *Student Handout: Cycles of Conflict* to each pair.
10. Choose one of the following prompts and write it on the chalkboard, chart paper, or distribute it to each pair as a *Student Handout: Situations of Conflict*.

Situation I: Adults in your community/neighborhood are tired of the noise and nuisance of young people “loitering” near local restaurants, movie theatres, and parks in the evenings. For this

reason, a group of concerned citizens is bringing a new proposal before the City Council at their next meeting: On Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights, the most popular commercial blocks will be off-limits to anyone under the age of 18 after 8 pm. Penalties for disobeying this ordinance would be monetary fines, forced community service, and potential house arrest.

-or-

Situation II: The administration of your school has decided that the school would benefit from a school uniform policy. The principal is bringing the suggestion to the next PTA/School Board meeting that all male students must wear grey slacks, a white button-down shirt, and a navy blue tie to school every day. Female students must wear a grey, knee length skirt, a white button down shirt, and a blue vest to school every day. Penalty for not wearing the uniform would be suspension, grade demerits, and possible expulsion.

11. Students must summarize the situation on their handout in the box labeled “Event/Situation.” Allow pairs 15-20 minutes to complete their handouts brainstorming possible choices, reactions, responses, and results that would be considered “aggressive” or uncooperative, and “cooperative” or nonviolent.

Example: The following is one example of how the *Student Handout: Cycle of Conflict* might be completed by students:

Situation II: Uniforms: Yes or No?

Choice (cooperative): Attend PTA meeting and present an alternative opinion (compromise)

Reaction (cooperative): PTA members consider kids’ perspectives

Response (cooperative): Conduct a “sit-in” outside the next School Board meeting, invite a local newspaper or TV station to garner support

Result (cooperative): Uniform policy is vetoed or, if it is passed, it is passed in part, not in full

Situation II: Uniforms: Yes or No?

Choice (aggressive): Paper the school with anti-uniform flyers and graffiti

Reaction (aggressive): Principal threatens suspension if culprit is identified

Response (aggressive): Students become agitated and an “us and them” attitude is adopted throughout the school

Result (aggressive): School Board sees that the students are rebellious and agrees with the need for stricter policies; votes for mandatory uniforms.

12. When pairs have completed their handouts, come back together as a whole class to discuss their answers and their process. In addition to eliciting the students’ responses, use some or all of the following questions to guide the discussion:
 - Do you think the situation you worked on with your partner dealt with turf, power, or both? Explain.
 - Did you or your partner have an emotional response to the situation? If so, why?
 - What, in general, did the reactions and results have in common with the original choices? Was there a clear pattern?
 - Was it harder to come up with an aggressive choice, or a cooperative one? Why do you think this was the case?
 - Would you ever be able to change an aggressive cycle once it’s started? What choices or behaviors might change an aggressive cycle into a cooperative one? In other words, how might you draw a new arrow from a box on the “aggressive” side over to the “cooperative” side?

- Similarly, how could you change a cooperative cycle once it's started into an aggressive one?
 - How do the two outcomes differ?
 - Based on this exercise, what is the best way to achieve your desired outcome in this sort of situation? Why do you think this?
 - Was there a similarity between the responses you and your partner brainstormed for this situation and the responses you observed when your classmates were arguing over the last chair? Explain.
 - How did the chair experiment affect how you responded to the situation on your worksheet?
13. Explain to the class that there are times that cooperative choices will be met with aggressive reactions and responses. Ask the class how they might manage the process if this should happen. How might they redirect the cycle if their attempts at cooperation were to be met with aggression?
14. As a concluding activity, write the following prompt on the chalkboard or on chart paper. Students can respond in their notebooks or in their journals. Encourage students to relate this quote to the activities they completed in class. How might a small problem (not enough chairs) mimic a larger problem (in their community or in the world)?
- “In matters of truth and justice, there is no difference between large and small problems, for issues concerning the treatment of people are all the same.”*
–Albert Einstein
15. For homework, instruct students to read the newspaper or visit a global news website. Students should identify a significant armed conflict from the day's headlines. They should print the article or clip it from the newspaper. Then instruct students to summarize the conflict and list potential responses—both violent and non-violent—to the conflict on a new *Student Handout: Cycle of Conflict*.

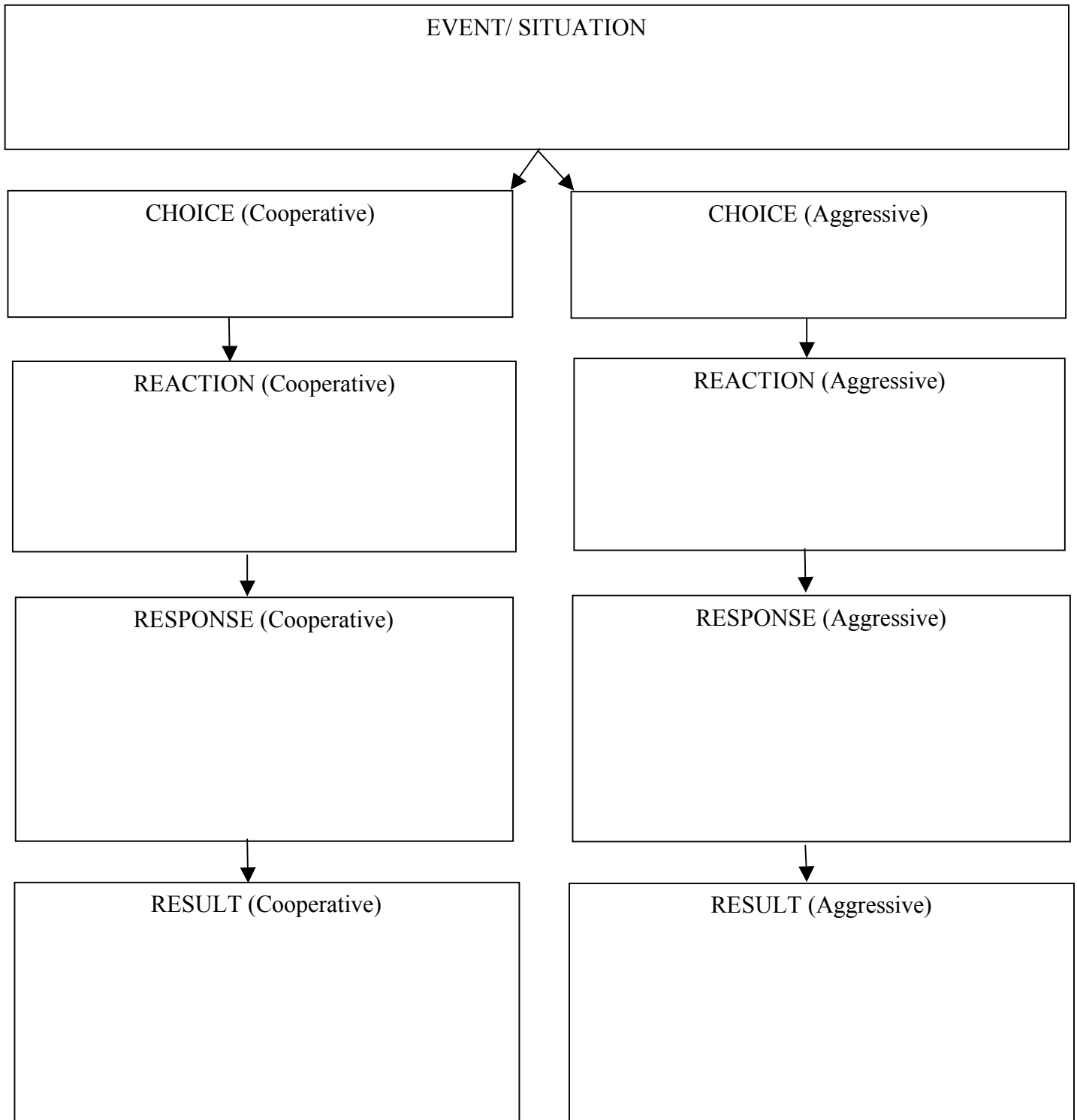
Extension Activities and Ideas for Further Learning:

- Instruct students to write an in-depth research paper on one of the following significant ongoing global conflicts. Their paper should include background on the situation, circumstances that are causing the situation to remain unresolved, the underlying reason for the conflict (i.e., land, governmental power), and a personal reflection on what they learned from their research, including their own ideas for how the conflict might get resolved.
 - Sudan vs. Darfur rebel groups
 - Russia vs. Chechen separatists
 - India vs. Kashmiri separatist groups/Pakistan
 - Uganda vs. Lord's Resistance Army
 - Columbia vs. the National Liberation Army and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia (FARC)
 - Sri Lanka vs. Tamil Eelan
 - Israelis vs. Palestinians
- Instruct students to create a “Collage of Conflict.” Students should read the newspaper for 2 to 3 weeks and clip all the headlines they see which relate to a conflict, either on a

- global, local, or personal scale. Have them create a collage using the headlines to communicate an additional message about the nature of conflict and its consequences. Students should write 2-3 paragraphs “analyzing” their collage, explaining why they chose the headlines they chose, as well as the larger message of their collage.
- Students should identify a nonprofit or NGO that addresses one or more global conflict. How might they get involved in the work of that nonprofit? How might they raise awareness about this conflict in their local communities and at school?
 - Students should organize a “Resolving Conflict Around the World” exhibit for their local community or school community. Students can work individually, in pairs, or in small groups to research a particular conflict and create an informational poster about that conflict. Display the posters in the school lobby before and/or after school as students enter and leave for the day. Posters should include the following information:
 - Background of the conflict, including geography and parties involved
 - Statistics about the number of people killed, injured, or left homeless due to the conflict
 - Statistics about the duration of the conflict
 - Photographs and maps that illustrate the conflict
 - At least two nonprofit organizations working to resolve the conflict or provide aid to people hurt by the conflict
 - At least one way students can get involved in resolving this conflict and/or raise awareness about the conflict

Student Handout: Cycles of Conflict

Directions: Summarize the conflict in the “Event/Situation” box. Then brainstorm possible reactions, responses, and results, following a path of “cooperative” choices (non-aggressive, supportive) as well as a path of “aggressive” choices (confrontational, non-cooperative).



Situation I: Adults in your community/neighborhood are tired of the noise and nuisance of young people “loitering” near local restaurants, movie theatres, and parks in the evenings. For this reason, a group of concerned citizens is bringing a new proposal before the City Council at their next meeting: On Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights, the most popular commercial blocks will be off-limits to anyone under the age of 18 after 8 pm. Penalties for disobeying this ordinance would be monetary fines, forced community service, and potential house arrest.

Situation II: The administration of your school has decided that the school would benefit from a school uniform policy. The principal is bringing the suggestion to the next PTA/School Board meeting that all male students must wear grey slacks, a white button down shirt, and a navy blue tie to school every day. Female students must wear a grey, knee length skirt, a white button down shirt, and a blue vest to school every day. Penalty for not wearing the uniform could be suspension, grade demerits, and possible expulsion.

About This Activity:

Participant Media presents this **Tree of Peace** activity as a way for students to ‘deconstruct’ peace: what must be present in order for peace to exist, what are the results when peace exists, and what, in essence, peace is made of—in a personal, local, and global context—using the culturally ubiquitous symbol of the tree as a vehicle for their exploration. The activity is geared towards students aged 14-18, but can be modified for other age groups.

Curriculum Connections:

This activity fits in perfectly with lessons that address curriculum standards in social studies, history, conflict resolution and mediation, civics, language arts, English, behavioral studies, arts and communications, thinking and reasoning, and working with others.

Lesson Preparation:

- Prepare copies of *Student Handouts* for distribution
- OPTIONAL: create a poster-sized “Tree of Peace” to be completed by the class as a whole group

Rationale:

The purpose of this activity is for students to consider how peace can be both fostered and suppressed in society. In addition, students are encouraged to explore the importance of peace in society. What does it mean for the people who experience it? For those who are forced to live without it? What does it require in order to exist? Specifically, how do the members of a peaceful society benefit?

Student Objectives:

- Students will discuss the importance and application of symbolism in different cultures, specifically, the symbol of a tree
- Students will create a common vocabulary for the different elements that exist in a peaceful society
- Students will work in groups to reach consensus on the importance and impact of these societal elements
- Students will make connections between personal and local events and events that take place on a global scale

Requirements:

Materials:

- Chalkboard and chalk, or chart paper and markers
- *Student Handouts: The Iroquois Tree of Peace, Tree of Peace Activity, A Poison Tree*

Time:

- 45 minutes

Techniques and Skills:

Vocabulary building, reading comprehension, small group work, large group work, comparing and contrasting information sources, critical thinking, responsive and creative writing, creative thinking, literary analysis, and research skills.

Procedures:

1. Distribute the *Student Handout: The Iroquois Tree of Peace*. Allow 10 minutes for students to read the story silently, or, alternatively, ask for volunteers to read it out loud.
2. As a whole group, discuss the idea of a tree as a metaphor for peace. Use some or all of the following questions to guide the discussion:
 - According to the legend, who was The Peacemaker?
 - What attributes of the tree are mentioned in the legend and how are those attributes related to attributes of peace?
 - According to the legend, what is the role of the eagle? Who might fulfill a similar role in your life?
 - Why is the eagle a good choice for this role? What other animal could have been used? What would make that animal less (or more) appropriate?
 - In what ways is a tree a suitable metaphor for peace?
 - What other concepts are represented by trees in literature, myth, religion, etc. (Family Tree, Tree of Life, Christmas trees, the World Tree, etc.)?
 - What other concepts can you think of that could be symbolized by a tree? Explain your answer.
3. Distribute *Student Handout: Tree of Peace Activity*. Take a few minutes to discuss the list of terms in the chart on Page 1 of the handout.
4. Review the instructions as a whole group. Then divide students into small groups. Explain that they are now going to work together to complete the handout.
5. Explain that the purpose of the handout is to consider what is required in an environment in order for conflicts and disagreements to be resolved peacefully. Explain that every member of the group might not have the same opinions about where the terms belong on the tree. There are many “right answers” and it is acceptable to debate placement.
6. Allow 25 minutes for students to work together to complete their handout as a group.
7. Once the groups have finished, conduct a large group discussion about their process. Use some or all of the following questions to guide the discussion:
 - What does “self esteem” and “pride in one’s heritage” mean to you? Why might these things be necessary in order to have peace?
 - Give an example of the opposite of self-esteem. How might this affect peace in an environment?
 - How does communication affect peace or conflict? Why?
 - What do you think of when you think of “artistic freedom?” What is an example, from current events or history, when the lack of artistic freedom resulted in conflict?
 - Why do you think “hope” was on the list of terms? How does hope relate to peace?
 - Give an example from current events or history when prosperity (or lack of prosperity) on a personal, community, or international level created conflict or peace in that society. Explain.
 - How difficult was it to come to consensus when defining the terms? Why? Where did dissent arise?
 - How difficult was it to come to consensus when deciding where to place the terms on the tree? Why? Where did dissent arise?

- As a group, did you enact any of the terms from the chart in order to resolve your difference of opinions peacefully?
- What additional terms did your group come up with? Where did you place them on the tree?
- What terms did your group place on the roots of the tree? Why did you decide that these were basic requirements for peace?
- What terms did your group place on the fruit of the tree? Why did you decide that these were results of peace?
- What terms might be BOTH requirements for, and results of peace?
- How do the presence (or absence) of civil rights relate to the existence of peace in a society? Why do you think there is this correlation?
- How do the presence (or absence) of civil rights relate to conflict or war in a society or region? Why do you think there is this correlation?

OPTIONAL: On a large piece of chart paper, create another tree as a class. Allow time for discussion and consensus building. Encourage students to suggest new terms to place on their class tree.

8. Distribute *Student Handout: A Poison Tree*. Instruct students to complete the handout for homework.

Extension Activities and Ideas for Further Learning

- In your journal, or notebook, respond to the following question:

Why do people fight?

- Keep in mind that you are not being asked to write about what people fight *over*, but rather about *why* people so often resort to fighting and violence to resolve disputes and disagreements instead of mediation or compromise. In your answer use examples of disagreements that occur on a personal level (between friends or family members), a local level (between neighbors or rival groups in the community), and a global level (war, terrorism, institutional racism/prejudice). What environmental conditions contribute to fighting? What environmental conditions contribute to peaceful resolution? What types of personalities are more likely to resolve a dispute by fighting versus negotiation?
- Instruct students to research one of the following ongoing armed international conflicts and write an expository essay relating their research to the elements of peace from the Tree of Peace exercise. Students should consider what is missing in these situations in order for peace to falter, and how the situations might be adjusted to be more conducive to a peaceful resolution.
 - Armed conflict in Afghanistan—the U.S., U.K., and Coalition Forces fighting al-Qaeda and Taliban
 - Genocide in Sudan—internal fighting with rebel groups in Darfur
 - Middle East conflict—Israelis and Palestinians
 - Jimmy Carter, while serving as the 39th president of the United States, brokered the first modern peace settlement in the Middle East: the Camp David Accords of 1979 between Israel and Egypt. Before becoming President, Carter grew up on a farm in rural Georgia, and today he lives and farms on that same land. The Carter Farm yields many crops, but there is one that is particularly special to the former President: 16-acres of pines that he
www.takepart.com/JimmyCarterManFromPlains

himself planted by hand over 50 years ago. Write a well-researched essay about the Carter administration, the current work of the Carter Center, and the life story of Jimmy Carter in which you relate his background as a farmer to his work in the arenas of global peace and human rights—both while he was president, and after he left the White House.

- Have students create an original artistic representation of peace, using their own unique symbol. Each piece should include the terms from their tree and a short explanation of their choices. Organize a class “exhibit” that displays all the different symbols for peace in the school lobby or in a designated display case.
- Have students create their own awareness campaign about a specific conflict in which they are particularly interested. Their campaign should include a slogan/motto, a logo, three specific ideas for ways to help educate the community about this conflict, information about three existing nonprofit organizations that are dedicated to resolving the conflict peacefully, and suggestions for how local students and community members can support the work of these nonprofits.
- Have students write a personal response essay to the following quote:

“It is one thing to say that we each have the right not to be killed. It is another to say that we each have the right to live comfortably, with adequate food, health care, shelter, education, and opportunities for employment. It is even more powerful to say that we each hold these rights equally—that no one person is more entitled to any of these rights than the next, regardless of his or her sex, race, or station in life.”

—Jimmy Carter, Talking Peace

Student Handout: The Iroquois Tree of Peace

There is an ancient Iroquois legend that tells of a mystical Peacemaker and a Tree of Peace.

Once, in a period of terrible warfare and bloodshed among the *Five Nations**, a cycle of anger and violence was taking over every village and threatening to destroy their entire culture. It was at this time that a baby was born to a young woman in a small village. Very early in life, this little boy exhibited almost magical powers. His family knew right away that he was different, and raised him with special care. When he grew into a man, he left his village on a personal quest—to bring Peace to the Five Nations and to the world. He would become known in Native American legend as The Peacemaker.

The man left his family and embarked upon a long, arduous journey from village to village, striving to convince even the most hateful warmongers that Peace must come. After many challenges, and years of traveling throughout the Five Nations, The Peacemaker successfully ended the ongoing wars that were tormenting his people.

When The Peacemaker finally restored Peace to the world, he turned to a nearby pine tree and told his followers, “From now on, this tree will stand as a symbol of Peace, to remind all of us how important it is to use negotiation, not violence, to resolve our differences. I chose this pine tree because of its height: it can be seen from even the most distant villages. The clusters of needles represent all the First Nations of our people, and they are evergreen, symbolizing my wish that this Peace may never be broken. The roots of this tree spread out in all four directions, north, south, east, and west, symbolizing the influence that our Peace will have, all over the world. In the branches of this tree lives a majestic bald eagle. When the eagle thinks danger is approaching, it screeches and calls out. This represents the duty that each of us have to protect our Peace if we feel there is danger approaching.”

**The “Five Nations” refers to five Native American tribes that lived on what is now known as the eastern seaboard of the United States. They were the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuya, and Seneca tribes.*

Student Handout: Tree of Peace

Name _____ Date _____

Directions: Provide a meaning for each of the terms below. You may use a dictionary definition, brainstorm examples to illustrate the term, or explain its importance to you. Then arrange each term on the Tree of Peace (Page 2).

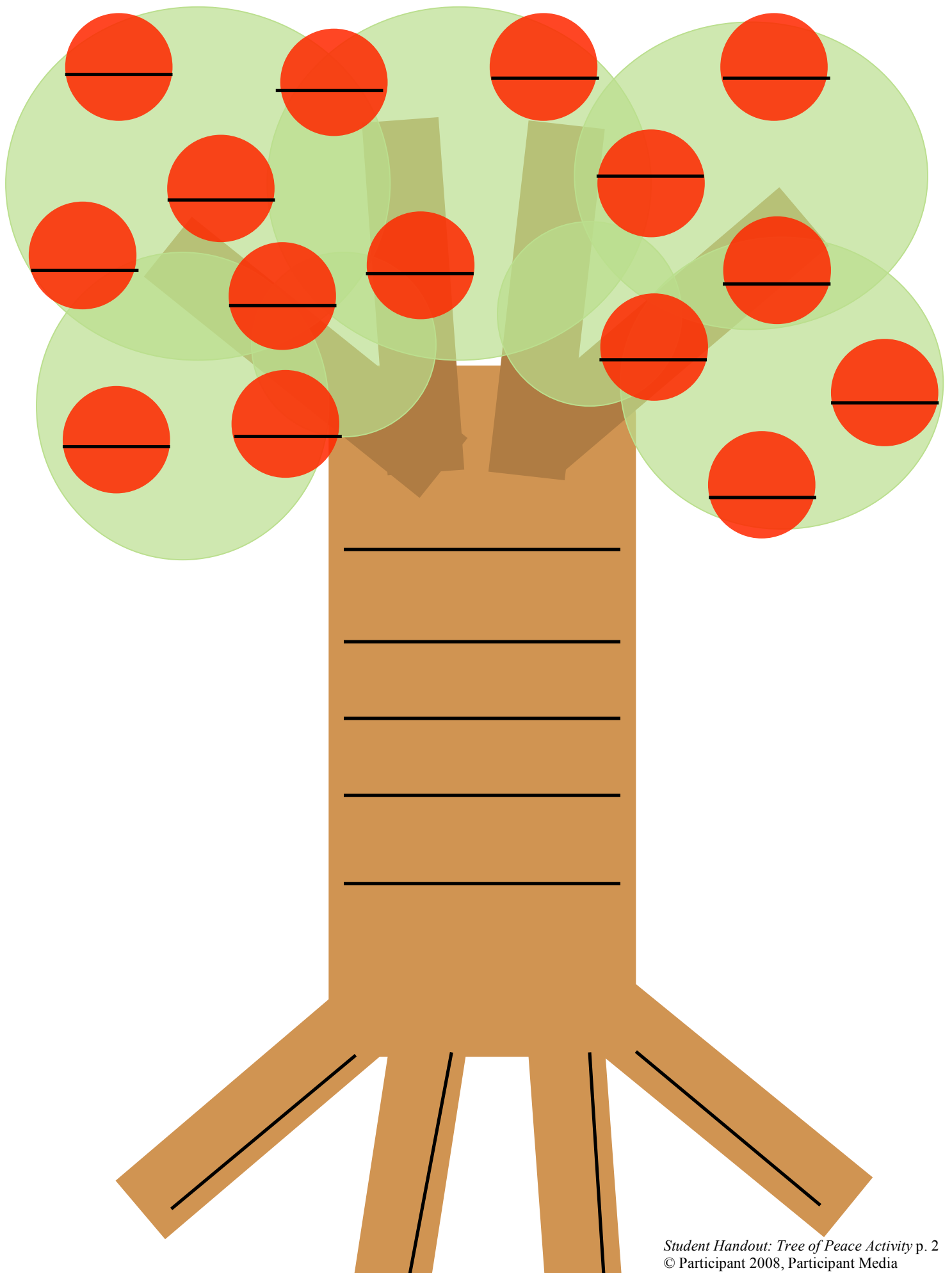
- Write the basic requirements for peace on the roots of the tree.
- Write the core aspects of peace on the trunk of the tree.
- Write the results of peace on the fruit of the tree.

In the space provided, explain why you placed each term where you did on the tree.

Brainstorm additional terms that are not listed below, but which you think belong on the tree.

Place them on the tree in the appropriate places.

TERM	MEANING	EXPLAIN PLACEMENT ON TREE
SELF ESTEEM (PRIDE IN ONE'S HERITAGE)		
PHYSICAL SECURITY AND SAFETY		
FREEDOM OF RELIGION		
COMMUNICATION, FREEDOM OF SPEECH & PRESS		
TOLERANCE ACCEPTANCE OF DIVERSITY		
ARTISTIC FREEDOM		
FRIENDSHIP		
PROSPERITY		
COMPASSION		
HOPE		



Student Handout: A Poison Tree, by William Blake

Directions: Use the poem *A Poison Tree*, below, to answer the questions that follow. Use a separate piece of paper for your answers if necessary.

I was angry with my friend:
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.
I was angry with my foe:
I told it not, my wrath did grow.

And I watered it in fears
Night and morning with my tears,
And I sunned it with smiles
And with soft deceitful wiles.

And it grew both day and night,
Till it bore an apple bright,
And my foe beheld it shine,
And he knew that it was mine,--

And into my garden stole
When the night had veiled the pole;
In the morning, glad, I see
My foe outstretched beneath the tree.

1. What is this poem about? What is the story that the narrator is telling?
2. Why do you think the narrator tells his *friend* that he is angry, but not his *foe*? What are the results of these actions?
3. What might have happened if he had told his foe that he was angry? How might the outcome have been different? Explain.
4. Trees are often used as symbols of positive things in different cultures, and in literature (Tree of Life, Tree of Peace, Family Tree, etc.). In this poem, the tree symbolizes something negative. What does the tree symbolize? What does the apple symbolize? What does the garden symbolize? Explain whether you find this use of symbolism effective or not.
5. This poem follows a singsong rhyme scheme (aa/bb/cc/dd...etc.). How might this be seen as an example of irony? How does the rhyme scheme work with or against the content of the poem to add meaning? Explain.
6. The last lines of the poem; “In the morning, glad, I see/ My foe outstretched beneath the tree” tell us a great deal about the narrator. What do we learn about him in these two lines? How might one argue that the narrator has also been poisoned?
7. Identify an example of strife in your family, school or neighborhood that could be seen as an illustration of the poem *A Poison Tree*. Support your choice with specific details about the conflict, as well as specific references to the text of the poem.

About this Activity:

Participant Media offers the following **Interviewing Peers** activity to encourage students to communicate their experiences by developing a common vocabulary, interviewing in pairs, and sharing their feelings and opinions about local, national, and international conflicts and the different societal elements that contribute to them. The activity is geared towards students aged 14-18 but can be modified for other age groups.

Curriculum Connections:

This activity fits in perfectly with lessons that address curriculum standards in social studies, history, civics, language arts, conflict resolution and mediation, behavioral studies, thinking and reasoning, working with others, visual art, and art connections.

Lesson Preparation:

- Prepare copies of *Student Handouts* for distribution

Rationale:

The purpose of this lesson is for students to consider their own personal opinions about the situations and behaviors that cause conflict in society.

Student Objectives:

- Students will establish a common set of vocabulary terms with which they can discuss conflict
- Students will brainstorm examples to support these vocabulary terms
- Students will share what they know about significant, ongoing global conflicts
- Students will interview someone, and be interviewed, about their personal opinions regarding conflict and some of the societal elements that cause conflict
- Students will analyze their own and another student's responses in a large group discussion

Requirements:

Materials:

- Chalkboard and chalk, or chart paper and markers
- *Student Handout: Interviewing Peers*

Time:

- 45 minutes

Techniques and Skills:

Vocabulary building, large group discussion, interviewing, critical and analytical thinking, research skills, responsive and creative writing, expository writing, supporting ideas with examples, and working in pairs.

Procedures:

1. Write the following terms on the chalkboard or on chart paper:
 - Peer pressure
 - Bias
 - Oppression
 - Ethnocentricity
 - Greed
 - Miscommunication
 - Fear
 - Need
2. Ask for volunteers to read each of the terms aloud. Brainstorm definitions and examples for each term, recording student responses as “word webs” on the chalkboard or on chart paper. These word webs should remain visible for reference throughout the following activity.
3. Ask the class what all these terms have in common. Explain that these concepts are often the cause of conflict—both on a personal level, such as a conflict between friends, as well as on a larger level, such as a civil war or even genocide.
4. Ask the class for examples of a conflict, and have them relate that conflict to one of the terms on the board. Elicit examples of conflict that exist personally (between friends, family members), locally (gang rivalries, school rivalries, local ethnic conflicts), and globally (the Vietnam War, Khmer Rouge, Darfur, war in Iraq, etc.).
5. Explain that during the next activity, they will be discussing personal opinions and feelings that relate to these topics, and that it is important to respect each other’s responses and perspectives.

Note: It may be helpful to establish ground rules for discussion before this activity, to ensure productive and respectful dialogue. See *Activity: Setting Ground Rules for Conversations in Class*.

6. Divide the class into pairs. Give each student a copy of *Student Handout: Interviewing Peers*.
7. Allow 10 minutes for one student to interview his or her partner using the questions on Page 1 of the handout. Students should take notes on their partners’ responses in the space provided.
8. After 10 minutes, instruct students to “switch.” The interviewer will become the interviewee, and vice versa. Allow 10 minutes for students to complete Page 2 of the handout.
9. After every student has had the opportunity to be both interviewer and interviewee, reconvene as a whole group to discuss the activity. Encourage students to share with the class some of the answers they gave in pairs. Use some or all of the following questions to guide the discussion:
 - How have your personal experiences with censorship affected you? When have you felt censored?
 - How do you feel when your freedom of expression is limited? Why is your freedom of speech important to you?
 - How has the spirit of cooperation or collaboration affected your neighborhood or school?
 - When have you seen a lack of cooperation result in hostile behavior?

- Who is the most generous person you know? How do they affect the people around them?
- How has insecurity negatively affected you, or the people around you? How do you think the feeling of insecurity might be linked with anger?
- Why is respect important? What does respect mean to you?
- Why are some people indifferent to the suffering of others? What impact does their behavior have on their environment, and the people around them – both those who are suffering, as well as those who are not suffering?
- How does bias bring about hostility and conflict? How might tolerance bring about peaceful conflict resolution?
- What did you learn about your partner during this activity?
- Did anything you shared surprise you and if so what was it and why?
- Did anything you and your partner had in common surprise you and if so what was it and why?
- Did you learn anything about yourself in this activity and if so what was it?

10. For homework, students should freewrite in response to the following prompt in their journals or class notebooks:

“Everyone has inside of him a piece of good news.”
—Anne Frank

Extension Activities and Ideas for Further Learning

- Create a class edition of a “tolerance” newspaper, based on the information students shared in their pair work. Assign students different columns: an in-depth profile of someone who represents generosity; an overview of a conflict and suggestions for resolution; a featured interview with a local “peacemaker;” an editorial about “need” in the community and suggestions for solving the problem; cover and report about a school event that epitomizes diversity; etc. Format the edition like a real paper. Copy onto newsprint. Distribute copies of the newspaper in the school lobby to promote conflict resolution in the school community.
- Assign students a research project on a local or global conflict with the following assignment:

Choose one specific local or global conflict. Describe the conflict objectively and research the conflict’s current state, as well as its history. Then provide a solution (or solutions) to the conflict. Incorporate existing solutions and organizations who are working on solving the conflict (such as the U.S. Supreme Court, the United Nations, etc.) as well as suggesting new approaches in your solution. Conclude your research project with an additional resource page that lists at least 5 nonprofit or nongovernmental organizations that work to solve the specific conflict, or one of the issues underlying the specific conflict. The resource page should be formatted similar to a bibliography page, with each entry including the name of the non-profit or NGO, its address, phone number, and website, as well as the organization’s mission and at least two of its programmatic or policy efforts.

(continued on next page)

- Assign students a narrative expository essay using the following prompt:

Every one of us has had a personal experience with peer pressure, bias, oppression, ethnocentricity, greed, miscommunication, fear, or need. Describe a personal experience that you've had with one of these issues. Explain how the experience relates to the issue and how it affected you. Then identify a domestic or global conflict that also relates to the same issue. Explain how the conflict relates to that specific issue, and then compare and contrast your experience with the larger conflict. How are the causes of each similar and different? How are their effects similar and different?

Directions: Complete this handout in pairs. Choose one person to interview the other and complete Page 1. Then switch roles and complete Page 2. Record your partner's responses in the space provided.

Questions for First Interviewee:

1. Tell about a time when a feeling of insecurity or self-consciousness caused you to act in an aggressive or insensitive way towards someone else. What did you do?

2. Tell about a time, in your own experience, when you witnessed someone acting with indifference to the suffering or discomfort of others. How did you react?

3. Name someone you know, or know of, who represents the antithesis of greed: generosity. What impact has this person had on you?

4. Give an example of a policy, law, or rule that you think perpetuates bias. Why do you think this is a biased policy? How does this policy make you feel?

Questions for Second Interviewee

1. Tell about a time when you treated someone else with disrespect, and explain what caused you to act that way. How did this behavior make you feel?

2. Tell about a time when you had a personal experience with censorship, or, in contrast, when your freedom of speech was upheld in the face of resistance. How did you feel when you thought your right to express yourself might be curtailed?

3. Tell about a time when you have, or someone you know has, been in need. How do you think this experience impacts a person? A family? A community?

4. Give an example from your school, neighborhood, or from a current event when lack of cooperation and/or rivalry lead to a conflict. How did this affect you? Explain.

About this Activity:

Participant Media presents the activity **Wall to Peace** which focuses on symbolic and figurative walls to peace: built with “blocks” that divide people and cultures. The activity is geared towards students aged 14-18 but can be modified for other age groups.

Curriculum Connections:

This activity fits in perfectly with lessons that address curriculum standards in social studies, history, civics, English, language arts, conflict resolution and mediation, behavioral studies, thinking and reasoning, and working with others.

Lesson Preparation:

- Prepare copies of *Student Handouts* for distribution
- Prepare (copy and cut) “word cards” for debate game in advance (OPTIONAL)

Rationale:

The purpose of this activity is for students to explore the impact of different behaviors and to discuss how these behaviors can bolster or hinder the presence of peace in a society, through mediated debate and small group work.

Student Objectives:

- Students will analyze literary quotes and relate them to their own experience
- Students will learn and discuss new vocabulary that pertains to conflict and conflict resolution
- Students will work in small groups to debate various issues and practice conflict resolution
- Students will deconstruct which behaviors make for a productive debate and which behaviors undermine positive communication

Requirements:

Materials:

- Chalkboard and chalk, or chart paper and markers
- *Student Handouts: Blocks to Peace, Stepping Stones to Peace, Mending Wall*

Time:

- 45 minutes

Techniques and Skills:

Vocabulary building, reading comprehension, large group discussion, small group work, critical and analytical thinking, public speaking, supporting ideas with examples, creative writing, responsive writing, and literary analysis.

Procedures:

1. Write the following prompt on the chalkboard or on chart paper. Allow 10 minutes for students to respond in their journals or notebooks.
“Good fences make good neighbors.”
2. Ask the class what they think this phrase means. What do you think makes a better neighbor—a fence or no fence? How does a “wall”—literal or figurative—make for a good neighbor or friend? How might it make for a bad neighbor or friend? What makes a better neighbor (or friend): good boundaries or good communication? Why?
3. Ask for volunteers to share their freewrite responses. Allow 10 minutes for students to share what they wrote.
4. Ask the class when boundaries are most important. Explain that physical boundaries are sometimes (but not always) erected when people have stopped respecting each other or listening to each other, or when people feel threatened (by perceived or actual threats). Use the example of two neighbors. When might two neighbors feel the need to build a picket fence between their properties? What environment would encourage them to NOT build a wall or fence?
5. Write the following quote underneath the first one.
“Don’t burn your bridges.”
6. Ask the class what they think this quote means. Elicit and chart student responses on the chalkboard or chart paper.
7. Ask the class when people might choose to erect a bridge—literally? Why are bridges built? What do they do?
8. Ask how fences and bridges might symbolize war and peace, or miscommunication and communication, or hate and love.
9. Suggest that when people (or groups of people) stop listening to each other, and stop treating each other with respect, miscommunication can occur. Miscommunication can lead to frustration and a feeling of not being respected, which, in turn leads to conflict and aggression. Likewise, if miscommunication is recognized and stopped, conflict might be resolved peacefully.

10. Write the following terms on the chalkboard or on chart paper:

BLOCKS TO PEACE

- GREED
- DISRESPECT
- CENSORSHIP
- PREJUDICE
- FEAR
- NOT LISTENING
- PEER PRESSURE
- RIVALRY
- INDIFFERENCE
- OPPRESSION

STEPPING STONES TO PEACE

- GENEROSITY
- RESPECT
- FREE SPEECH
- TOLERANCE
- SECURITY
- COMMUNICATION
- CONFIDENCE
- COOPERATION
- COMPASSION
- CIVIL RIGHTS

11. Allow 20 minutes to elicit definitions and examples from the class for each of the terms on the board. Record their responses next to each term. Leave the list and the definitions on the board for reference throughout the following activity.
12. Ask the class why the first list might be titled “Blocks to Peace,” and, in turn, why the second list would be titled “Stepping Stones to Peace.” Discuss the metaphor of a wall built with blocks and the metaphor of a bridge built with stepping stones, and relate those two symbols to the words listed under each.
13. Explain that the class is now going to participate in an activity that illustrates how communication can break down, and how conflict can occur because of that breakdown in communication. It also illustrates how to identify breaks in communication before they devolve into conflict.
14. Divide the class into four groups and arrange the groups against all four walls of the classroom.
15. Give each “team” copies of *Student Handout: Blocks to Peace* and *Student Handout: Stepping Stones to Peace*. Instruct students to cut out the cards along the double lines so that each team has a set of 20 cards, with one word on each.

Note: Alternatively the handouts can be cut into cards before class and four prepared sets can be distributed; one set to each team.

16. Explain to the class that they are now going to have short debates on various subjects. Tell the class that if, during their debate, a student on one of the teams exhibits one of the words from the list “Blocks to Peace” from the board, one of the other teams can respond by “throwing down” the corresponding card to stop the argument. Then the team that threw down the card must argue the same point, while simultaneously illustrating a term from the “Stepping Stones to Peace” list. If they are successful in both arguing their point AND illustrating the term, the team collects both cards and that team receives a point. If they are unable to illustrate the term, another team has the opportunity to try. Whichever team is successful in arguing their point AND illustrating a term from the “Stepping Stones to Peace” list picks up both cards.
17. The winning team is the team with the most cards and/or points at the end of the activity.

Note: It is crucial that one adult in the room serves as the mediator for this activity, ensuring that a constructive and organized debate format is followed, that each team has an opportunity to argue their point, settling disputes, etc.

Example: The class is debating the validity of the phrase “Good Fences Make Good Neighbors.” A member of Team I says: “Fences are important because they mark boundaries.” A member of Team II replies: “That’s a dumb thing to say.” Because this statement illustrates one of the “Blocks to Peace” (disrespect), a member of any of the other teams can then stop the debate and throw down the “Disrespect” card. Whoever “threw” the Disrespect card must then explain why that card was thrown (“Tasha disrespected Paolo by calling him dumb.”) then that student, or a member of his/her same team, must provide an argument that refutes the statement “Fences are

important because they mark boundaries” while illustrating one of the terms from “Stepping Stones to Peace,” such as: “When boundaries are marked with fences or walls, it makes it harder for people on each side to cooperate.” They would then throw the “Cooperation” card on top of the “Disrespect” card, and collect both cards. That team would earn one point.

Some suggested topics for debate might be:

- Good fences make good neighbors.
- It should be a law that everyone has to drive a hybrid car.
- Boys are better at sports than girls.
- Prayer should be allowed in public school.
- The legal drinking/voting age should be 16.
- Women should be eligible for the draft.
- If we don’t learn about history, we are doomed to repeat it.
- There is (racism, anti-Semitism, homophobia, sexism) in the U.S. today.
- Cigarettes should be taxed at 200% and that money should be used for cancer research.
- Ratings should be removed from all movies so that no child is banned from any movie.
- Gays should be allowed to marry.

Note: Alternatively students can suggest debate topics, or debate topics can be gleaned from a current newspaper or news broadcast.

18. For homework, distribute *Student Handout: Mending Wall*. Instruct students to complete Page 2 of the handout, based on a critical reading of the poem on Page 1. Alternatively the class can read the poem and discuss it together as an extension activity.

Extension Activities and Ideas for Further Learning

- Instruct students to research current events—or events in history—where a wall or fence was constructed as a boundary. Has this “fence” made “good neighbors?” What has the fence accomplished? What problems has it created? What might have been a better solution? Possible topics might be:
 - The Berlin Wall
 - The wall erected between Israel and the Palestinian Territories
 - Great Wall of China
 - The San Diego Border Fence
 - Warsaw Ghetto wall
 - Figurative walls, such as voting/school district lines within cities, or “good neighborhoods vs. bad neighborhoods”
 - The gates in “gated communities”
- As a service learning activity, instruct students to research a nonprofit organization whose work exemplifies the building of bridges, and explain how their work is relevant to this subject. Students might work individually, in pairs, or in small groups. Allow class time during the following week for students to present their organization to the class. For extra credit, students can volunteer for the organization’s local branch, or provide other support to the organization, or the organization’s mission. Students can identify nonprofits on their own, or a list can be provided. Some relevant nonprofits might be: Habitat for Humanity, The Make It Right Foundation, Pen Pals for Soldiers, Kaboom, Do Something, City Year, The Bridge School, Facing History and Ourselves, Operation Respect, Seeds of Peace.

- Create a class “Bridge of Peace.” Have each student create their own “stone” to add to the bridge. “Stones” might be 8 ½" x 11" pieces of paper, decorated shoe boxes, small pieces of cardboard or wood, collected stones or pebbles. Students should decorate their “stone” to represent an image of one of the terms in the “Stepping Stones to Peace” list, or they can add their own term. Then arrange their work in the shape of a bridge on a bulletin board or display case. Create a permanent bridge by gluing the blocks or mounting the paper “stones” on foam core. Display the bridge in the school lobby to raise awareness about conflict resolution with the entire student body or donate it to a local organization.

Directions: Cut along the double lines to make 10 cards.

GREED

DISRESPECT

CENSORSHIP

PREJUDICE

FEAR

**NOT
LISTENING**

**PEER
PRESSURE**

RIVALRY

INDIFFERENCE

OPPRESSION

Directions: Cut along the double lines to make 10 cards.

GENEROSITY

RESPECT

FREE SPEECH

TOLERANCE

SECURITY

COMMUNICATION

CONFIDENCE

COOPERATION

COMPASSION

CIVIL RIGHTS

Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,
And spills the upper boulders in the sun;
And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.
The work of hunters is another thing:
I have come after them and made repair
Where they have left not one stone on a stone,
But they would have the rabbit out of hiding,
To please the yelping dogs. The gaps I mean,
No one has seen them made or heard them made,
But at spring mending-time we find them there.
I let my neighbor know beyond the hill;
And on a day we meet to walk the line
And set the wall between us once again.
We keep the wall between us as we go.
To each the boulders that have fallen to each.
And some are loaves and some so nearly balls
We have to use a spell to make them balance:
'Stay where you are until our backs are turned!'
We wear our fingers rough with handling them.
Oh, just another kind of outdoor game,
One on a side. It comes to little more:
There where it is we do not need the wall:
He is all pine and I am apple orchard.
My apple trees will never get across
And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him.
He only says, 'Good fences make good neighbors.'
Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder
If I could put a notion in his head:
'Why do they make good neighbors? Isn't it
Where there are cows? But here there are no cows.
Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
What I was walling in or walling out,
And to whom I was like to give offense.
Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That wants it down.' I could say 'Elves' to him,
But it's not elves exactly, and I'd rather
He said it for himself. I see him there
Bringing a stone grasped firmly by the top
In each hand, like an old-stone savage armed.
He moves in darkness as it seems to me,
Not of woods only and the shade of trees.
He will not go behind his father's saying,
And he likes having thought of it so well
He says again, 'Good fences make good neighbors.'

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Directions: Answer the following questions based on the poem, *Mending Wall*, by Robert Frost. Use a separate piece of paper for your answers.

Part I: Reading Comprehension

1. Who is the speaker in this poem? What is his relationship to the wall?
2. Why do you think the poem is called *Mending Wall* and not *Mending the Wall* or simply *Walls*?
3. The poem begins with an observation: “Something there is that doesn’t love a wall.” Why does the speaker say this? What specific observations does the speaker share as the poem continues to support this statement? Explain.
4. What kind of a wall is in the poem? How do you know? Support your answer with specific references to the poem.
5. What “outdoor game” does the speaker and his neighbor play?
6. Does the speaker feel like the wall is necessary or not? Support your answer with specific references to the poem.
7. Does the speaker think that “good fences make good neighbors” or “something there is that doesn’t love a wall?” Support your answer with specific references to the poem.

Part II: Literary Analysis

1. Explore the element of humor and pretend in the poem. How does the speaker reveal a sense of humor? Why might this be important to the meaning of the poem? Support your response with references to the poem.
2. Write a paragraph on the importance of symbolism in this poem. Explore the symbols of the hunter, the wall, the elves, and the stones. What other symbols add meaning to this poem?
3. At the end of the poem, the speaker observes that his neighbor seems to “move in darkness.” Respond to this observation and analyze its importance within the larger meanings in the poem.

Part III: Personal Response

1. When have you felt ‘walled in’ or ‘walled out’ in your own life? What, or who, caused you to feel this way? How did you cope with this feeling?
2. The speaker in the poem feels like his neighbor is blinded by his father’s beliefs, and unable to think outside of those beliefs. Write about a personal experience you’ve had when you, or someone you know, hasn’t been able to ‘see’ outside the beliefs of their parents or ancestors. How might this ‘blindness’ allow old conflicts to continue? Explain.
3. Write a response poem to *Mending Wall*. Draw from personal experience to create your own tone, voice, setting, and a message or moral.