



OBJECTIVE:

Sometimes, in trying to resolve a conflict, it's necessary to involve another person. We need to learn to sometimes seek out other people who might have a more objective or educated view, and who might help get past an impasse, or could provide a better solution.

This object lesson uses small blocks of wood and a challenge to perform an action that is difficult. It teaches cooperation and working together, but it will almost always teach the student to seek out help to solve a problem.

MATERIALS:

- Small blocks of wood approx. 2" square or larger (from a craft/hobby store)
- A table or desk
- A small box or bucket

Set up an area on a table or desk with two blocks of wood and a small basket (box). Put the bucket in the middle and the blocks on either side.



LESSON:

Tell the students, "When we have a problem facing us, we want to find a solution. If we have a conflict with someone, we want to find a way for both of us to find success, to win-win. But sometimes, we have a problem we can't figure out, so we need to seek help from another person".

The object of this activity is to have the students move a block from where it now sits and put it in the bucket or box. But, **they can only use one finger on one hand to do it.**



Select two students to try this. Give them the instructions to put the block in the bucket using only one finger on one of their hands. Give them 30 seconds to make it happen. They will push it around, or try to get it to the edge of the table (desk) and try to lift it or flip it into the bucket. After the 30 seconds, ask them if they need help. The class will be the third person and will give them advice on what to do.

The key to this lesson is to have the two students work together. Each will put on finger on a side of the block so they are on opposite sides. Then, with a little pressure, they can lift the block and move to the goal (the bucket). Other students may want to try the activity even though they know the solution.



This activity showed us that we need to work together to solve a problem, and that we also need to seek out help from another person if we need more advice on resolving our issue.

DISCUSSION:

- Why do we need both people to work together to solve a conflict?
- Can we see the strengths and the perspective of the other person while we work on this?
- Do you have to be the only one with the answer if you are involved? Why not?
- Why should we find more help if we need it to resolve our conflict? To whom can we go for this help?

ACTIVITY:

The Missing Piece



Materials:

- 24 piece puzzles (enough for one puzzle per team)

Overview:

You will need to purchase inexpensive 24 piece puzzles. You can find them at most Dollar stores. You will need enough for each team to have a puzzle.

Prior to the group activity, remove 1 piece from each puzzle so none of the puzzles can be completed. Don't tell the students that you have removed the pieces. Keep the puzzle pieces in a container at your desk.

Divide the class into small groups of 3-4 students. Pass out a puzzle to each group. Instruct the students to work together as a team to put the puzzles together. Give them a few minutes to put the puzzle together as a group. The teams will soon realize that they are missing a piece to their puzzle. Let the students look for their missing piece for a couple of minutes, and then let them know that you have the last piece of each puzzle. Instruct them that they will need to ask you for their last piece.



Once the students have asked you for their last piece, take this time to discuss how sometimes we need to work through our problems, but if we need help, you have to ask for it. This is just like trying to solve a conflict with another person - when we cannot resolve the issue, it is necessary to involve another person.

When we have to resolve conflict, we sometimes have to ask for help. We need to learn to seek out other people who might be more objective or who might help be able to provide a better solution. If we are angry at someone and we cannot solve the issue on our own, we do not want to let the conflict get worse.

If you don't know how to solve the conflict, you can't do it alone or you've tried and your solution didn't work, you should seek out help. The less angry you are, the easier it will be to solve the problem.

- Think what might happen if you don't get help.
- Decide what the problem is and what help you will need.
- Think about who you can ask for help. Choose someone you trust and who will know how to help you.
- Think about what you'll say when you ask for help.
- Remember, getting help when you need it is part of being responsible – to yourself.

Discussion:

- 1) How could we define conflict?
- 2) Does conflict have to be physical? Do conflicts always involve two or more people? What does it mean if we have a "conflict of ideas?" What about an "internal conflict?"
- 3) What causes conflict?
- 4) What elements do most conflicts seem to have in common?
- 5) What escalates conflict?
- 6) Have you ever been involved in a conflict where it escalated and you needed help?
- 7) Is it always necessary to involve another person to help you? Why or why not?