

Unit II: From the Playground to the World Stage

Grade Levels: K-5

Time: 30+ minutes

Lesson EII-5: Power of Hurtful Words & Responding to Them

Interdisciplinary Connections:

Character education, literacy

Objectives:

- Students will recognize how hateful words make them feel and how they impact others as well.
- Students will identify strategies to use to respond to hurtful words.

Key Terms:

Hurtful	Hateful	Feeling good	Strategy
Sad			

Materials:

- Drawing of sad and happy face
- Poster paper (to make class rules)
- Note-taking paper for students

Activities/Procedures:

- Show a picture of a sad face. What words make you feel sad?
Optional: In one of the circles, have students draw a sad face.
- What words make you feel happy? Draw a happy face in another circle.

Classroom Activity:

- Ask students to think of words that make them sad or angry. Students write the words on a slip of paper anonymously and the teacher collects the slips of paper.
- Selects words from the slips of paper (avoiding those not appropriate for the grade level) and writes them underneath the picture of the sad face on a board, chart paper, or overhead projection. After selecting words from the slips of paper, fold them in half and staple them shut as students are working in groups.
- Students get into pairs or small groups and discuss the questions:
 - How do these words make you feel?
 - What would you do if you were called one of these words?
 - How could you let the person know how the word(s) make you feel?
 - Share responses with the large group.
- The class collectively decides on the best ways for responding to hurtful words, and together they create class rules to display in the front of the classroom.
- Now discuss words that make students feel good/happy.
- To conclude the lesson on hurtful words, the students come up randomly and take the top paper from the notes on hurtful words, crumple it up, and throw it in the trash.

Evidence of Understanding:

The class collectively decides on the best ways of responding to hurtful words. Together the students create class rules to display in the front of the classroom.

Extension Activities: Taking Action and Giving Service:

- Ask students to discuss: “What would you do if you heard someone else being called these words?” Talk about being an upstander. (Discuss the difficulties of being an upstander as well as the reasons why we need people – and ourselves – to be upstanders.)
- Read *Words Are Not for Hurting* by Elizabeth Verdick.
- Connect this lesson with the lesson on Chrysanthemum.

However, for this lesson, distribute a paper doll to each student rather than a heart. Read aloud from the list of hurtful words/actions that the class created and bend a piece of the paper doll’s arm or leg or crumple the body a little bit. Then read aloud from a list of words/actions that are happy and make the students feel good. Each time a happy/feel good word/action is read, the students should unbend and smooth one of the wrinkles made in the body of the paper doll.

After completing the reading of the words, ask the students to study the paper doll very carefully and to notice any wrinkles and/or crumpled parts of the doll that remain despite efforts to smooth them out. Discuss how hurtful words/actions can damage a person and how the damage may endure just as the wrinkles on the paper person cannot all be removed.