

LESSON 6

Name-Calling

Goal

To examine the consequences of using stereotypical labels to describe people and to consider appropriate responses to name-calling when it occurs.

Materials

Paper and pencil, "One Person/Many Roles" worksheet, one copy of the worksheet for each student

Key Words and Phrases

Self-esteem, cumulative, retaliating, non-confrontational, label, assumptions, target

Process

1. Ask students to think about names that they have been called and write them at the top of a sheet of paper.
2. Assure students that they do not need to censor their responses because they will remain anonymous.
3. Continue by having students write, at the bottom of the same sheet of paper, how they felt being called the names that they listed above. Again, assure them that their responses will remain anonymous.
4. Collect the papers and ask the students to listen quietly as you read each name or label.
5. Next, read the list of emotions or feelings, but this time record the words on the board as you go. Put a checkmark by repeated words and phrases.
6. Ask the group to discuss their feelings about this lesson, using some or all of the following questions as a guide to the discussion:
 - a. What is the impact of name-calling? Are the results primarily constructive or destructive?
 - b. Which of the names that were read are based, at least in part, on stereotypes? Explain the stereotypes behind some of the names.
 - c. Do you think that name-calling is common? If so, why do you think it is common?

NOTE: Do not say that the names should be negative; allow students to respond to your direction as they wish. Most students will assume that name-calling is negative.

NOTE: Most of the names will be negative, perhaps cruel or shocking. The impact of this lesson lies in the cumulative impact of hearing the list.

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- d. What are some possible long-term effects if someone is repeatedly called hateful names? (e.g., low self-esteem, depression, anger)
 - e. Is there a lot of name-calling in this school? If so, do the adults in the building interrupt the name-calling when they hear it? Do you think they should?
 - f. If the adults don't interrupt name-calling when they hear it, why do you think that might be?
 - g. What effect might persistent name-calling have on a school's overall atmosphere?
 - h. What are some possible ways to respond when you are called a hurtful name without retaliating using more hateful and hurtful words? (e.g., ignoring the person, suggesting that the person get to know you before making assumptions, asking an adult for help if the name-calling continues)
 - i. What are some non-confrontational ways to respond if you hear your friends calling others hurtful names? What are the benefits and challenges of saying something to your friends in such a situation?
 - j. Would you ever intervene if you heard someone that you didn't know calling someone a hurtful name? Why or why not?
7. Distribute the "One Person/Many Roles" worksheet, one copy of the worksheet for each student. Allow time for students to reflect on the various roles they have played in the past, and to write some notes for themselves in each of the four squares. Encourage students to write something in all of the squares.
 8. After students have completed this task, form pairs or small groups and ask each student to select one square from the worksheet to discuss with others in the small group. Allow 10-15 minutes for this discussion. Following the small group discussion conduct a discussion with the whole group using the following discussion questions.
 - a. Which role, if any, was hardest for you to acknowledge and discuss? Why do you think that might be?
 - b. Which role, if any, was easiest to discuss and why?
 - c. What, if anything, might prevent you from being an ally or confronter?
 - d. What do you want from others when you are being targeted?
 - e. How can bystanders learn to become allies?

Parts of this lesson adapted from *Opening the Door to Diversity: Voices from the Middle School (Resource Guide)*. 1999. Westerville, OH: National Middle School Association.

Language Arts: Listening and Speaking

- Uses listening and speaking strategies for different purposes

Life Skills: Thinking and Reasoning

- Understands and applies basic principles of logic and reasoning

Civics

- Understands the importance of Americans sharing and supporting certain values, beliefs, and principles of American constitutional democracy
- Understands the role of diversity in American life and the importance of shared values, political beliefs, and civic beliefs in an increasingly diverse American society

Behavioral Standards

- Understands various meanings of social group, general implications of group membership, and different ways that groups function



One Person/Many Roles **Worksheet**

<p>'TARGET'</p> <p>a) Describe a time when someone's words or actions hurt you.</p>	<p>"PERPETRATOR"</p> <p>b) Describe a time when your words or actions hurt someone.</p>
<p>"CONFRONTER"</p> <p>c) Describe a time when you interrupted an act of prejudice.</p>	<p>"CONFRONTER"</p> <p>d) Describe a time when you saw an act of prejudice taking place and you did not intervene.</p>

