

Lesson Plan: Social and Communication Skills regarding Assertiveness and Conflict Resolution Techniques

Duration:	<p>2 teaching periods (45 minutes per period) The first period relates to assertiveness. The second period deals with the topic of conflict resolution.</p>
Summary Description:	<p>The aim of this lesson is to introduce students to the topics of assertiveness and conflict resolution. This lesson will introduce students, aged 12-14 (junior cycle in secondary school) to the complexity of communication. It is important that students understand that they should be assertive in social interactions so that they are not taken advantage of, but also they should be taught to stand back and assess the social situation before reacting to it. This is so that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They do not overreact and risk their safety; 2. They do not cause conflict for themselves with the other party; 3. Their reaction border on being assertive rather than aggressive; and 4. They are not perceived as a bully by being too aggressive. <p>For this reason, this activity has been designed using a series of practical examples and role-play activities, where students are asked to consider the scenario presented in the first lesson, generate 3 different responses to the scenario and then discuss how each response would make the protagonist feel. In the second lesson, students are asked to design their own role-play scenarios to help them to focus on how they would react to conflict, what causes conflict among peers and what are the most effective means of resolving conflict. Following each activity, students will be asked to participate in a group discussion – this will allow the teacher to assess their understanding of these topics; and will allow the students to reflect on what they have learned and to address any issues they have with this content.</p> <p>These activities have been designed to ensure that students become aware of their natural responses to social scenarios; through writing their response to the role-play scenario presented, writing their own role-play scenarios and writing a reflection piece, it is envisaged that the students will gain more self-awareness of their communication style and their emotions, and will learn to control their responses to social situations in a way that is</p>

	<p>assertive but non-confrontational to the other party.</p> <p>For this activity, the teacher will need pens and paper for the students to complete the written exercises detailed below; as well as a whiteboard and markers to facilitate the group discussions and to address any issues that arise from this activity.</p>
Tags:	Social and Communication Skills, Assertiveness, Conflict Resolution, Bullying related to Underdeveloped Social Skills, Victimization as a Result of Not Being Assertive, Conflict Resolution as a Means of Stopping Bullying
Aim:	The aim of this lesson plan is to increase the students' awareness of how they interact with peers in social situations, to improve their communication skills to be more assertive but non-aggressive and enhance their conflict resolution skills as a means of diffusing tense social situations and resolving instances of bullying.
Objectives:	<p>This lesson intends to enable students to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand the skills they need to be effective communicators – much of bullying stems from miscommunication so this activity aims to help students to avoid bullying instances by communicating more effectively. 2. Use communication skills of assertiveness to defend themselves and stand up for themselves so that they do not become victims of bullying. 3. Understand the skills they need to effectively resolve conflicts which arise, and know how to use these skills when conflict occurs between peers.
Learning outcomes:	<p>On the successful completion of the lesson, students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify the characteristics of good and bad communication. 2. Identify the difference between assertive and aggressive behaviour. 3. Identify the benefits of being assertive and understand how being assertive can make an individual feel. 4. Identify the skills required for using conflict resolution techniques to be successful.
Material:	WhiteBoard, Markers, Pens, Paper
Activities	
Activity 1	Assertiveness (10 minutes)

	<p>The teacher uses the whiteboard and marker to instigate a group discussion on the topic of communication skills. Students are each asked to identify one aspect or characteristic of good and bad communication. Once the teacher has received one example of good communication and one example of bad communication from each student, the class can review the list together.</p>
<p>Activity 2</p>	<p>Assertiveness (15 minutes)</p> <p>Next the teacher introduces the topic of assertiveness. S/he asks the students to work in pairs to write a definition of assertiveness (5 minutes). Bringing the group back together, the teacher asks for the pairs' definitions. S/he writes them on the whiteboard until the class can come up with a common definition they all agree on.</p>
<p>Activity 3</p>	<p>Assertiveness (15 minutes)</p> <p>Role-play: the teacher introduces the following scenario and asks students to work in pairs to come up with 3 different responses to the scenario – 1 that they think is assertive (not letting them cut in); 1 that they think is aggressive (not letting them cut in but in a confrontational way) and 1 that they think is non-assertive (letting them cut in and feeling angry about it).</p> <p>The scenario is as follows: “Mary’s favourite band is playing a concert in her town. She is so excited and she begs her parents to let her go. They tell her she can. She goes to queue for tickets for the concert because she thinks this is the best way to guarantee she will get a ticket in case the website is down when the tickets go on sale. This is likely to be a sold-out concert so there is a limit of one ticket per person. Mary stands in the queue for 4 hours, there are hundreds of people in front of her and she is finally nearing the top of the queue. She is feeling anxious; she is wary that the concert may soon be sold out and also that she told her parents she would be home with the ticket two hours ago so she hopes she is not in trouble. There are only 3 people left in the queue in front of her and she is sure she will now get a ticket. Just then, she notices three girls from her school cutting in line right in front of her. They are making a big deal about knowing the boy in the queue in front of her and they are acting like his best friend in order to skip the queue. They step into the queue right in front of Mary, forcing her to push back. People behind Mary in the queue ‘tut’ and moan under their breath but nobody tells them not</p>

	<p>to cut in.</p> <p>What do you think Mary should do?"</p>
Evaluation Activity	<p>Assertiveness (5 minutes)</p> <p>Following on from this small group activity, students are asked to re-join the class group and discuss how Mary would feel based on the 3 reactions they have written about, i.e. how she would feel afterwards if she had been 1. Assertive, 2. Aggressive or 3. Non-assertive. They should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How the 3 girls would react to Mary in all 3 scenarios and, ➤ How Mary would feel telling her parents what happened in all 3 scenarios.
Activity 1	<p>Conflict Resolution (10 minutes)</p> <p>The teacher uses the whiteboard and marker to introduce some common techniques in conflict resolution. These can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stepping back from the conflict and trying to understand it from all sides; • Communicating effectively with the other party/ies in conflict; • Brainstorming practical solutions to the problem; • Negotiating a satisfactory resolution; • Evaluating the effectiveness of the resolution. <p>The above list represents the typical steps involved in resolving conflict. Students are asked to review this list and suggest the communication skills which a person would need for each step listed. The group reviews the list of skills together.</p>
Activity 2	<p>Conflict Resolution (15 minutes)</p> <p>Role-play: the teacher asks the students to work in groups of 3 to write a short scenario which presents a conflict situation and how it can be resolved.</p> <p>In this role-play, 2 students will be in conflict with each other and the third will act to resolve the conflict between the pair and find a solution. The group will brainstorm the role of all 3 actors together to design the role-play scenario.</p> <p>The topic of the role-play and the conflict are left up to the students – it is important that they think of a scenario which is relevant to them and design a dialogue for the scene that</p>

	<p>will allow them to demonstrate what they have learned about conflict resolution techniques and communication skills.</p>
<p>Activity 3</p>	<p>Conflict Resolution (15 minutes)</p> <p>Students are then asked to perform their role-play scenarios in their small groups.</p> <p>At the end of all performances, in the larger class group, students are asked to suggest alternative ways that the conflicts could have been resolved through a group discussion.</p>
<p>Evaluation Activity</p>	<p>Conflict Resolution (5 minutes)</p> <p>Students are invited to engage in a short reflection exercise:</p> <p>They are asked to reflect on the part they played in the role-play and how they felt when the conflict had been resolved. They are then asked to write a short paragraph (150 words max.) on how the conflict made them feel, how they felt after the resolution was found and what skills they used to reach that point.</p>