



CRUMPLED PAPER

empathy • individual • 4th-12th

Objective:

Students will identify hurtful words.
Students will realize the power of their words (both negative and positive) and see that positive words can encourage and empower.

Time:

20-25 minutes

Materials:

Three small pieces of paper for each student.

Method:

Have students write down all the negative things people have called them or said to them (slut, dumb, gay, fat, ugly, airhead, etc.) that hurt their feelings on the first piece of paper.

Students turn their list in to you. Read one word at a time off the students' papers. While you are reading the words, the students will take the second paper and crumple it if the word ever hurt them. Make sure the students are silent to hear the crumpling.

Do discussion questions.

For the second round have the students write all the positive things anyone has ever called them or said to them (good athlete, pretty, smart, you rock!) that made them feel good on the third piece of paper and hand in. As the instructor reads these words students uncrumple their papers (using the same paper that is crumpled) if that word has ever made them feel good.

Discuss how this was different than the first round.

Discussion Questions:

- Which words had the most crumpling sound when they were read outloud?
- Which words hurt you the most? Why?
- Do you consider yourself a bully?
- Who do we hear these words from the most?
- When you use these words, are you usually "just kidding," or "just joking?"
- Do we use these words on social media where it is sometimes easier to "crumple" people?
- Why is it easier to use these words online than in person?

Discussion Notes:

To save time you can have the lists of words prepared ahead of time.

You want to end this activity on a high note. Talk about how the positive words feel so much better to hear, and how simple kind words and acts can "uncrumple" someone.

Give simple examples of "uncrumpling-" example: asking how someone is doing, giving them a high-five, telling another you like the way they did their hair, congratulating someone on an academic or athletic achievement, etc.

Positive Challenge:

Go "uncrumple" five people today. Make a point to not "just joke" with people in a negative way.





WORDS HURT

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Objective:

Students will understand the connection between hurtful words and self-esteem. Students will acquire skills to respond to negativity. Students will be able to identify hurtful comments and how to stop them. Students will understand how group dynamics affect negativity.

Time:

15 minutes

Materials:

Internet access to view YouTube video

Method:

Watch the YouTube clip "Words Hurt- Bullying Video" with students.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1j6YA03hm4k>

Discussion Questions:

- What happened in this video?
- What moments could you relate to in this video?
- What hurtful comments do you hear or say?
- How can you stop this?
- When someone is hurtful, what do you think that says about their self-esteem?
- How can group dynamics' impact negativity?

Discussion Notes:

Help students realize that group dynamics can increase negativity, or stop it. We don't always realize the power that a group has in stopping hurtful behavior.

Writing Extension:

Write about a time that you went along with a group of friends and did or said things you may not have normally done by yourself. Discuss ways you could have disagreed with the group and stood up for your values.

*group dynamics: the interacting forces within a group of people

Positive Challenge:

Watch your words. Try not to even "just joke" with mean words. Use only positive words with your friends, family, peers, and teachers.