LESSON PLAN AND EXTENSION ACTIVITIES
**Teaching Point:** Words That Hurt

**Subject Area:** Character Education

**Grade Level:** 3-5

**Relevant Standards:**

CDC National Health Education Standards, Grades 3-5

1.5.2 Identify examples of emotional, intellectual, physical, and social health.

2.5.3 Identify how peers can influence healthy and unhealthy behaviors.

4.5.1 Demonstrate effective verbal and nonverbal communication skills to enhance health.

4.5.3 Demonstrate nonviolent strategies to manage or resolve conflict.

4.5.4 Demonstrate how to ask for assistance to enhance personal health.

5.5.5 Choose a healthy option when making a decision.

**Learning Objectives:**

Students will be able to...

- Distinguish harmless or playful words from hurtful, serious language
- Explain three ways in which words can hurt a person
- Describe three assertive behaviors they can use to deal with teasing, rumors, and insults
- Implement a two-step strategy in response to teasing, gossip, and insults
- Judge when it is appropriate to solve a problem on their own and when it is best to seek help from an adult

Click here to buy this video.
Materials:

- *Words That Hurt* Teacher’s Resource Book and video
- scenario cards (see page 28 for template)
- set of rumor cards per student pair (see page 30 for template)
- index card and crayon or marker for each student
- removable adhesive or magnet to attach index cards to board
- large piece of paper or poster board per group of 4
- student handout: What You Can Do When Words Hurt (see page 37 for template)
- two copies of pre-/post-test per student (see page 25 for template)
- two copies of assessment rubric (see page 27 for template)
- Optional: Extension Activity 1 Journal Entry page per student (see page 29 for template)

Advance Preparation:

- Give students the pretest and fill in the pre-assessment rubric before teaching the lesson. Use this data to help you differentiate the lesson for your students.
- Cut out the scenario and rumor cards.
- Prepare each poster on a large piece of paper as shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hurtful words:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How those words hurt someone:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ways to deal with the problem:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What bystanders can do to help:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vocabulary:

assertive  
communicate  
counselor  
depressed  
dyslexia  
exclude  
gossip  
insult  
personal  
respect  
rumor
Lesson Plan

Procedure:

1. MOTIVATION

- Gather the class in the meeting area and ask students to think of everyday things that can hurt someone, such as a bee, a piece of paper, or a heavy door. Ask students to share their ideas and explain how those things could hurt someone. For example, a bee can sting you, a piece of paper can cut you, and a heavy door can pinch your finger.

- Now ask students to think of everyday words that can hurt someone, like ugly, loser, or get lost. Pass out index cards and crayons or markers and have each student write a word or phrase that can hurt in large print. Write the heading Words That Hurt on the board and post students’ cards underneath.

Teacher Note: If you think your students will have difficulty managing materials, have them share their responses orally for you to write on the board.

Adaptation for students with special needs:

If your students have social or emotional difficulties, be sure to set clear rules for the discussion before you ask them to share responses. Rule #1: Use appropriate language—no curse words. Rule #2: No naming others—if you write a word that a person in the room said, do not name, look at, or point at the person. Rule #3: Listen respectfully to other responses, even if you don’t agree.

Depending on your students, you may not want to write any words that you do not allow in your classroom, such as stupid, on the board. If you are uncomfortable with a student’s word, tell the student that he or she has a good point, but that you are not going to write the word on the chart. Ask the student to share a different word with the class.

- Ask students to read the words on the chart and explain how they could hurt someone. For example, words can embarrass a person, make a person feel different, or leave someone out.
2. INTRODUCE VOCABULARY
Familiarize students with the lesson vocabulary.

Adaptation for English Language Learners:
Teach English Language Learners the vocabulary words ahead of time. When you introduce each word, say it, write it, give a simple definition and familiar synonym, and use it in a sentence. Then have students say their own version of the sentence by repeating one part and changing another. For example, if you say “Please don't exclude me from the game just because I haven't played it before,” a student could echo with “Please don’t exclude me from the game just because I am new in school.” Repeat this exercise with related forms of the word that students will need to know, like excluded, excluding, and exclusive. Reinforce the vocabulary words throughout the lesson by using them frequently and reviewing their definitions as needed.

Adaptation for students with special needs and English Language Learners:
Students who have language impairments or are non-native English speakers may have difficulty interpreting the figurative expressions they hear in the video. Introduce the expressions below and discuss the meaning of each one.

- get lost
- take a hike
- you can't hang with us
- go jump off a bridge

3. SHOW THE VIDEO
Introduce the video and tell students to pay close attention to what the characters do to deal with each problem.

Teacher Note: Depending on your time frame, you may want to pause for a brief discussion after each video segment.
4. DISCUSSION

Lead a class discussion, using the following questions as a guide.

Discussion Questions

- How well do you think each character responded to hurtful words? What are some other ways each character could have dealt with the problem?

- Who were the bystanders (people who watched the conflict without really participating in it) in each segment and what did they do to help or to make the problem worse?

- Is there a difference between playful teasing and hurtful teasing? If so, how can you tell the difference?

- When Robert’s friends call him dumb, he says that he is not dumb. But later, he tells Ms. Benson that he is dumb. Why do you think he says this?

Teacher Note: This is a good opportunity to discuss that words can hurt when a person internalizes them. A person who hears insults over and over may begin to believe them.

- Do you think that Jamal and Kathy are true friends to Robert even though they won’t stop teasing him? Why or why not?

- Why do you think Josie felt hurt by the rumor that she is poor even though it made kids at school act really nice to her?

- One person can create gossip, but it takes many people to spread a rumor. When a rumor is spread, whose fault is it?

- Sometimes people spread rumors unintentionally. How can someone start or help spread a rumor by accident?

- Why is the expression go jump off a bridge such serious thing to say? How can expressions like that hurt someone?

- If you witnessed someone teasing, spreading gossip, or using words to exclude someone, what could you do to help?

- When is it best to deal with a conflict on your own, and when should you go to an adult for help?
5. ACTIVITY

- Divide the class into groups of 4. Give each group a scenario card and poster (see Advance Preparation). Read the poster with the class and explain that each group will work together to identify the hurtful words in their scenario, explain why those words can hurt someone, describe ways to deal with the problem, and suggest things that bystanders can do to help. Clarify any questions students have, and make sure they know the meaning of the word bystander. Give out the student handout What You Can Do When Words Hurt and tell students to use the two-step strategy to help them think of ways to deal with the problem. Remind students to discuss their ideas as a group and make sure everyone agrees before they fill in their posters.

- Spend a few minutes observing and meeting with each group. You can begin filling out the post-assessment rubric as you do this.

Teacher Note: If you plan to extend the lesson over more than one class period, you can set up a rotation so that each group makes a poster for every scenario.

Adaptation for students with special needs:

If students are not ready to apply what they learned to a new context, you can have them make posters about the scenarios from the video instead of using the scenario cards.
6. WRAP UP AND ASSESSMENT

- At the end of the activity, have each group present their work to the class by reading their scenario card, showing their poster, and explaining their thinking. Allow a few minutes for questions and comments after each presentation. Continue filling out the post-assessment rubric as you listen to each group present their work.

Adaptation for gifted students:

Instead of reading their scenario cards and posters to the class, challenge students to act out the scenario from their cards with the solutions they came up with. Each skit should clearly show which words were hurtful, how those words hurt someone, how each character dealt with the problem, and what bystanders did to help. Allow a few minutes after each skit for questions and comments from the class.

- Give students about five minutes to complete the post-test. Use their performance on the test to help you finish the post-assessment rubric.

HOMEWORK

Extension Activity 1 can be given as a homework assignment. Give each student a copy of the Journal Entry page (see page 29 for template) and explain the assignment: write a journal entry about a time when someone’s words hurt you. In your entry, include the words that were used, how they hurt you, what you did to deal with the problem, whether any bystanders were involved, and what you would do differently if it happened again. Provide an opportunity for students to share their journal entries the next day if they would like to do so.
EXTENSION ACTIVITY 1:
JOURNAL ENTRY

Interdisciplinary connection—WRITING
Students will write a journal entry about a time when someone's words hurt them. In their journal entries, students should include the hurtful words that were used, how those words hurt them, how they dealt with the problem, whether any bystanders were involved, and what they would do differently if it happened again. You can use the Journal Entry page provided (see page 29 for template) or have students write in their student journals.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY 2:
RUMOR ROLE-PLAY

Interdisciplinary connections—DRAMA
In this activity, students explore the power a rumor can have to change the way a person is treated. Tell the class that a rumor can do more than just upset someone; it can change the way other people think of that person. Remind students that the rumor about Josie made her peers feel bad for her and treat her differently.

- Post the script (see Advance Preparation) where students can see it. Demonstrate the role-play with a volunteer playing Student 2. Begin by following the script and then make up your own response to Student 2’s question. Then, stick a rumor card on Student 2’s forehead, making sure the class can see it but the volunteer cannot. Repeat the role-play and show how your response to Student 2’s question changed because of the rumor.

  Teacher Note: Even though rumors are a serious topic, it is okay for students to have fun with the activity. If any students are bothered by their peers' laughter, clarify that the class is laughing about the funny acting and not at anyone's hurt feelings.

- Break the class into pairs and give each a loop of tape. Give each student five of their pair's ten rumor cards (see Advance Preparation) and tell them to keep the cards hidden from their partner. Instruct students to perform the role-play once without a rumor card and then repeat it with each of their cards. Explain
that students should take turns playing Student 1 and Student 2. Student 1 sticks one of his or her own rumor cards to Student 2’s forehead. Remind students that the focus of the skit should be Student 1’s reaction. Skits should consist of only one scene and be under two minutes long.

- After the activity, gather the class for a discussion. Have students share their reactions to the role-play and insights about rumors.

**Advance Preparation:**
- Make a chart of the role-play script as shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role-Play Script</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student 1:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Finishes the last problem on a math page and starts checking over the work).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Student 2:** |
| (Walks up to Student 1). |
| “Hey, I’m a little confused about multiplication. I see you finished your work. Can you help me with problem 4?” |

- Cut out a page of rumor cards for each pair of students (see page 30 for template).
- Make a loop of removable tape for each pair.
- Optional: If you do not wish to stick rumor cards directly onto students’ foreheads, make headbands to stick them to instead. You can make a headband by forming a sentence strip into a loop and taping the ends together.
EXTENSION ACTIVITY 3: WRITE AND PERFORM A SONG

Interdisciplinary connection—MUSIC/POETRY

In this activity, students will work in groups of four to write and perform songs about what to do when words hurt. The songs can be instructional or descriptive, and they can be serious or funny. Group members can write and perform the song together, or they can divide up the work and choose different jobs based on their skills and interests. Possible jobs include singer, lyricist, cover artist, musical director, and accompanist (who can play an instrument they are learning in school). If any groups have trouble making up a melody, they can use a familiar tune or write a rap instead. Have each group practice singing their song and give it a title before they perform for the class.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY 4: MAKE A CARTOON

Interdisciplinary connection—VISUAL ARTS

Each student will make a cartoon about hurtful words. Tell students that a cartoon is a drawing with a message and show some sample cartoons (see Advance Preparation). Explain the following information about cartoons and write it on the board:

- cartoons send a message or express an opinion about something
- cartoons are often funny because they show things in a simplified or exaggerated way
- cartoons usually have speech bubbles and a caption or title
- cartoonists sometimes draw animals or superheroes instead of people

Give out the cartoon templates (see page 31 for template), read the directions, and have students begin.

Teacher Note: If students have trouble getting ideas for their cartoon, have several students share the work they have done so far to help inspire students who are stuck.
EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

EXTENSION ACTIVITY 5:
TURN HURTFUL WORDS AROUND

Interdisciplinary connection—LISTENING AND SPEAKING

Give each student a Turn Helpful Words Around worksheet (see page 35 for template) and explain the directions: turn hurtful words around by restating each negative phrase in a more friendly and positive way. Encourage students to make the new version of each phrase sound like something they would actually say. For example, a student could rewrite go away as Hey, I’m kinda in the middle of something right now…is it cool if I talk to you later?

• At the end of the activity, have students share their work. They can present their cartoons one at a time, or you can make a “cartoon museum” by posting student work on the wall and allowing students to walk around as if they were in a museum.

Adaptation for gifted students:

Instead of making a cartoon, students with prior cartooning experience can make a comic strip. Remind students that a comic strip is a sequence of drawings that tells a story in a comical way. Allow students to choose an appropriate template for their comic strip (see pages 32 - 34 for templates) and begin.

Advance Preparation:

• Bring in some sample cartoons and comic strips. You can ask students to bring in their favorite school-friendly comic books from home too.

Advance Preparation:

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES