

CLASSROOM EXPERIENCE GUIDE

EXPERIENCE 7: STINKY FISH

TIME

15 minutes

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Identify behaviors that get in the way of the culture they want.
- Take responsibility and ownership for creating the classroom culture they do want.

MATERIALS

Stinky Fish Diagram poster

PROCESS

Say: “For each of us, there are things at school that keep us from feeling safe, keep us from enjoying our time here or get in the way of learning. Because we want classrooms that work for everyone, we should look at the behaviors that get in the way.”

Using the Stinky Fish poster, make a list of these behaviors (e.g., sarcasm when someone gives a wrong answer, put-downs about clothing or personal appearance). It’s possible that you may get a few joking comments, such as “Having to study or answer questions.” For now, go with it and write it down, but redirect the conversation to behaviors that make people feel unsafe. After the students have listed several Stinky Fish, feel free to add a few of your own, as you are a part of this culture too.

This is a good time to emphasize that jokes or negative comments about a person’s race, religion or sexual preference, as well as crude sexual humor or words like “retard” are never okay.

After a few minutes (if you get more answers than bones, list them out to the side), discuss your list of Stinky Fish.

- Which of these are serious issues for us or our school? Why?
- Are any of these items not really an issue for the people in this room? Why?
- Do any of our Stinky Fish surprise you? Why?

Before concluding the discussion, take a minute or two to discuss the difference between behavior that is not intended to hurt and that which is. Although many people may feel unsafe if teased, some people find that joking with friends can be a form of Play. Point out to the students that it’s possible to have safety without creating

Character

>COMMUNITY

Social Skills

BEGINNING THE DISCUSSION

a place where people are so hypersensitive that you can't have any meaningful interaction. The goal is to raise awareness of others' feelings.

EVALUATION

Seek consensus. Ask, "Can we all agree that we don't want these behaviors in our school, and that each of us, including me, will do our best not to exhibit them?"

Ask each person to sign the Stinky Fish list. Say: We all agree we don't want these behaviors in our class. Can we also agree that if we see these behaviors—in ourselves or in others—we will speak up respectfully and try to help one another to live up to our commitment?" Then ask for a show of hands.

Agreement by all, on the behaviors that do not work in class, establishes a social standard to which everyone is committed and accountable. If there is disagreement, don't get bogged down by the few areas of conflict. Focus on the common ground, and then talk as a group and in private to come to agreement about the rest.

EXTENSION

- Share the Stinky Fish list and discussion with colleagues. Look for areas that you can collaborate on to improve.

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EXPERIENCE 8: FRESH FISH!

TIME

15 minutes

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Make action plans to alleviate some issues they identified in the Experience 7.
- Take responsibility and ownership for creating the classroom culture they *do* want.

MATERIALS

Stinky Fish/Fresh FISH! Worksheet (1-8_Stinky_Fresh.pdf)

PROCESS

“Having identified detrimental behaviors, it’s time for us to identify the behaviors we *do* want.”

Divide students into groups of 4-6 students and pass out the Stinky Fish/Fresh FISH! worksheet. Ask them to write the behaviors listed on the Stinky FISH! poster in the Stinky Fish column, then come up with preferable behaviors in the Fresh FISH! column.

GRAPHIC SAMPLE WORKSHEET

Examples of Stinky Fish behaviors:

- Interrupting each other.
- Sarcasm when someone gives a wrong answer.
- Making fun of clothing or appearance.
- A joke that puts someone else down.

Examples of Fresh FISH! behaviors:

- Waiting for people to complete their thoughts.
- Support each other with comments like, “You know, I get confused on that one too!” or “I admire people like you who are willing to try. That’s a great quality.”
- Complimenting each other’s appearance (That’s a cool sweater. Where’d you get it?).
- A funny anecdote from your own life that everyone can relate to.

After five minutes, invite each group to share a few of their Fresh FISH! examples with the class.

BEGINNING THE DISCUSSION**EVALUATION**

Discuss the responses as a group.

“As we explore The FISH! Philosophy, I think we will see that the Fresh FISH! behaviors fit well and help us create the kind of place we want to have. The more we work with the four practices, we’ll see even more opportunities to make our class an even better place.”

Post the worksheets as a reminder of the environment you all will create.

EXTENSION

- Invite students to complete a Stinky Fish/Fresh FISH! worksheet for home, a club, a sports activity—any activity that is relevant to their lives.

CHOOSE YOUR ATTITUDE

EXPERIENCE 3: SHOW ME SOME ATTITUDE

TIME

15 minutes

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Deepen their understanding of Choose Your Attitude.
- Recognize the difference between productive and counterproductive attitudes.

MATERIALS

- Roles and Responses cards created from handout (5-3_Roles_and_Responses.pdf)
- Productive/Counterproductive worksheet (5-3_Productive_Counter.pdf)
- Container for cards (bowl, pail, hat, etc.)

PROCESS

Arrange the desks in a circle and call on two volunteers to improvise a scene in the center. Explain that they will be given roles to act out as well as attitudes to display. Invite the pair to draw one Role Play Card and decide who will play each role. Then, each student draws their own Response Card, but keeps it hidden from view. The attitude on the Response Card will guide the way they act out their roles. Give the students a moment to collect their thoughts, then let the show begin.

Examples of roles depicted on the Role Play Cards:

- A shopper asking a grocer to help him/her find an unusual cooking ingredient
- A customer waiting for a clerk to finish a phone conversation
- A single parent shopping with a tired and crabby four-year-old

Examples of various attitudes depicted on the Response Cards:

- Impatient
- Dedicated
- Frustrated
- Amused

Invite the pair to act out the same role-play scene using Response Cards. Invite new volunteers to act out scenes from other Role Play Cards with various responses/attitudes.

EVALUATION

Distribute the Productive/Counterproductive worksheet, which encourages students

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to explore when and how certain attitudes are appropriate and inappropriate (e.g., an aggressive attitude is productive on a football field but not when driving, etc.). Invite students to work in groups and share the answers with the class.

EXTENSIONS

- Repeat the Roles and Responses activity, but with each performance, pause to discuss how the attitude was productive or counterproductive. If the attitude was counterproductive, ask the class to identify a productive response.
- Invite students to complete a Productive/Counterproductive worksheet in response to a movie they watched or a conflict they recently experienced.