



Self-Awareness

ABOUT CENTER FOR THE COLLABORATIVE CLASSROOM

The Caring School Community (CSC) program is a nationally recognized, research-based program for grades K–6 that builds classroom and schoolwide community while developing students' social and emotional (SEL) skills and competencies.

Values Check-in, Fairness and Helpfulness

By: The Caring School Community

Fairness and Helpfulness

ABOUT VALUES CHECK-IN MEETINGS

The purpose of the Values Check-in Class Meetings is for the students to reflect on how they are creating a caring community by applying the social values of fairness, helpfulness, caring, responsibility, and respect in their day-to-day interactions. Do Values Check-in Class Meetings every one to two weeks. Allow 10–15 minutes toward the end of the week. This first Values Check-in Class Meeting focuses on the values of *fairness* and *helpfulness*. The second focuses on the values of *responsibility* and *caring* (see Week 4). Focus subsequent Values Check-in Class Meetings on whatever values seem appropriate at the time.

Lesson Purpose

Students:

- Reflect on the values of fairness and helpfulness
- Practice “Turn to Your Partner”

.....

Before the Lesson

At the beginning of the week, explain that you would like the students to think about ways in which they can be fair and helpful to one another at school. In the days before the class meeting, stop the class periodically to point out ways the students are being fair and helpful. (For example, “Martha and Julia are taking turns using the red paint to make their art project. That is a very fair way to act. I saw Joshua and Lisa clean up water that spilled on the floor. That was helpful.”) You may want to keep notes about your observations for use in the class meeting. Pointing out examples of fairness and helpfulness as they happen helps to define the values and increases the students’ awareness and understanding of them.

Materials

- “Class Meeting Rules” chart (from Introducing Class Meetings)
- Scratch paper and pencil for teacher notes (optional)

The Lesson

1 GATHER IN A CIRCLE

Explain that today the students will have a class meeting to talk with their partner about how they were fair and helpful to one another this week and to think of other ways to be fair and helpful in school. Remind the students how to move to the circle responsibly and have several pairs model the procedure. Ask:

Q I noticed that the partners walked slowly to the circle. What are some other ways they were responsible when they moved to the circle?

Students might say:

“They didn’t bump into each other.”

“They moved quietly.”

Have one or two students share what they noticed and have the rest of the class move to the circle with partners sitting together.

2 REVIEW CLASS MEETING RULES

Briefly review the class meeting rules with the students. (For example, “When we have a class meeting, it’s important to remember to look at the person who’s talking. What other things do you want to remember to do to show others that you are listening?”)



In subsequent Check-in Class Meetings, choose one of the class meeting rules to have the students focus on during the meeting. You may want to focus on one rule each week.

Class Meeting Lessons

3 DISCUSS WAYS THE STUDENTS HAVE BEEN FAIR AND HELPFUL

Remind the students that over the week you have been pointing out ways that they have been fair and helpful to one another. Begin a discussion about their use of the values by asking:

Q What were some ways you were fair to one another during [snack time]?

Q What were some ways you were helpful to one another during [today's art lesson]?

Provide the students with a few moments of wait time to think before you call on anyone to respond. Have a few volunteers share their ideas with the class.



If the students have trouble thinking of ways they were fair and helpful, prompt them with some of your observations. For example, "Today I noticed that Cassandra and Luis shared a book that they both wanted. That was a very fair thing to do."

4 DISCUSS OTHER WAYS TO BE FAIR AND HELPFUL

Explain that today the students will talk with their partner about other ways to be fair and helpful. Remind them that they have been practicing "Turn to Your Partner." If necessary, review the procedure. Use "Turn to Your Partner" to discuss:

Q If you arrived at school tomorrow morning and you saw a new student in our class, what could you do to help that student?

After a moment, signal to bring their attention back to you. Have two or three volunteers share their thinking with the class. Use "Turn to Your Partner" again to discuss:

Q How could you be fair on the playground when there are a lot of people who want to play on the monkey bars?

Turn to Your Partner





Rather than asking follow-up questions after every student's statement, keep the class meeting focused and moving by asking only questions that draw the students' attention to the values of fairness and helpfulness.

After another moment, signal to bring their attention back to you. Have two or three volunteers share their thinking with the class. Help them think about why it's important to be fair and helpful by asking follow-up questions, such as:

Q [Martin said he would help a new student by showing her where to put her things and where to sit.] **Why is it good to help a student who is new to our class?**

Q [Sandi said she could be fair on the playground by taking turns using the monkey bars.] **How would that make the playground a better place to be for everyone?**

5 REFLECT ON THE ACTIVITY

Encourage the students to keep thinking about ways they can be fair and helpful to their classmates. Let them know that you will check in with them throughout the year to see how they are doing building a community in which everyone is fair and helpful.

6 ADJOURN THE MEETING

Remind the students how you would like them to move from the circle. Adjourn the meeting and have them return to their seats.

.....

After the Lesson

As the students work together on various activities during the rest of this week, stop periodically and ask, "How are you being fair or helpful right now?" Pointing out how they are being fair and helpful provides the students with concrete examples of the values and helps them identify situations in which they can use these values to guide their behavior.