



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.

Reflecting on Values

By: The Caring School Community

Reflecting on Values

Lesson Purpose

Students:

- Reflect on prosocial values
- Practice “Turn to Your Partner”
- Explain their thinking

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, helpful, caring, and respectful at school and how they can take responsibility for their own learning and behavior. In the days before this class meeting, stop the class periodically to point out ways the students are being fair, helpful, caring, and respectful and how they are taking responsibility for themselves. (For example, “Right now I can see that Darlene is helping Yolanda pick up her papers and notebook that fell on the floor. That is a very helpful and caring way to act” or “I saw LaTisha and Sandeep quietly discuss the book they were reading. That was a very responsible way to act.”) Drawing the students’ attention to this kind of interaction as it happens helps to define the values and increases the students’ awareness and understanding of them.

The Lesson

1 GATHER IN A CIRCLE

Review the procedure for forming a circle for a class meeting and have the class move into a circle with partners sitting together. Explain that during today’s class meeting the students will first discuss how they were fair, helpful, caring, respectful, and

Materials

- “Class Meeting Rules” chart

BEGINNING-OF-YEAR LESSON



Setting the groundwork by spending sufficient time helping the students understand how they are acting on prosocial values will make norm setting much more meaningful to them. If your students are not familiar with the values of fairness, helpfulness, caring, respect, and responsibility, you may want to focus on only two of them each week. At the end of the week, conduct a Check-in Class Meeting focusing on the week's values. Use the class meeting outlined in this lesson as a model.

responsible this week and then discuss ways they can act that will continue to build the classroom community.

Briefly review the “Class Meeting Rules” chart and let the students know that you will check in with them later to see how they did adhering to the rules.

2 DISCUSS WAYS THE STUDENTS HAVE ACTED ON VALUES

Remind the students that during the week you pointed out ways they were fair, helpful, caring, respectful, and responsible. Facilitate a discussion about the values by asking:

- Q What are some ways you were fair to one another this week?**
- Q What are some ways you were helpful to one another this week?**
- Q How did you take responsibility for your own learning and behavior?**

Have a few volunteers share their ideas with the class. If the students have trouble thinking of examples, prompt them with some of your own observations. (For example, “Yesterday I noticed that most students completed their homework and brought it back to school as requested. That was a very responsible thing to do.”)

3 DISCUSS OTHER WAYS TO ACT ON THE VALUES

Explain that today the students will talk in pairs about other ways to be fair, helpful, caring, and respectful, and how they can take responsibility for themselves.

Remind them that they have been practicing turning and talking to a partner. Review the procedure for “Turn to Your Partner.” (For example, “When I say ‘Turn to your partner,’ you will turn to face your partner and start talking about the question I ask. When I raise my hand, finish what you are saying, raise your own hand, and turn back to face me.”) Model the procedure if necessary. Explain that you expect the students to both listen carefully and explain their thinking clearly and completely.

Class Meeting Lessons

Ask:

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

Turn to Your Partner

Use “Turn to Your Partner” to have partners discuss the question. After a moment, signal to bring their attention back to you. Have two or three volunteers share their thinking with the class.

Using “Turn to Your Partner” again, discuss:

- Q** How can you act responsibly when lining up to go to recess?

Help the students think about why it’s important to act on prosocial values by asking follow-up questions such as:

- Q** [Emilio 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? How do you feel when you act in a caring way toward someone?

- Q** [Sandi said she could take responsibility lining up by not cutting in line or pushing other students.] How would that make the classroom a better place to be for everyone? How would that make your classmates feel?

4

REFLECT AND ADJOURN THE MEETING

Encourage the students to keep thinking about ways they can be fair, helpful, caring, and respectful, and how they can take responsibility for themselves. Explain that in class meetings over the next few days they will agree on classroom norms for the way they will treat one another this year. Define norms as “agreements about how we will treat one another.”

Ask and briefly discuss:

- Q** What examples can you give of how you and your classmates followed the class meeting rules?
- Q** What was one thing your partner did that helped you work well together?
- Q** When you work with your partner again, how might you improve the way you work together?

Review the procedure for returning to their seats with the students and adjourn the class meeting.

After the Lesson

As the students work together on various activities during the rest of the week, stop them periodically and ask, “How are you being [fair/helpful/caring/respectful] right now?” and “How are you taking responsibility for your own [learning/behavior] right now?” Having them identify the ways they act on the values will provide them with concrete examples and help them to recognize situations in which they can use the values to guide their behavior. Practicing identifying the way they act on the values will prepare them to generate classroom norms.