



# Decision Making

## ABOUT MORNINGSIDE CENTER

Morningside Center for Teaching Social Responsibility's evidence-validated programs engage young people in learning essential social and emotional skills and help educators build productive and respectful schools. The 4Rs Program combines superior children's books with engaging SEL activities that explore community, feelings, relationships, conflict, and problem-solving, adding depth to literacy instruction.

# Seeing the Ways a Conflict can Turn Out

By: The 4Rs



## Seeing the Ways a Conflict Can Turn Out

### Note to the teacher:

This activity is an excerpt from The 4Rs™ [Reading, Writing, Respect & Resolution] *Teaching Guide for Grade 1*, Unit 5: Problem Solving, pp 66-67.

Time: 10-15 minutes

Materials: a pair of puppets

*Puppet skits can be a valuable part of class meeting or weekly circle time, especially if certain kinds of conflicts keep coming up with your class.*

Present the following puppet skit:

There's a writing-and-drawing corner in the classroom. Two children can work in the area at one time. Eric and Frances have been chosen to work there during this period. Both are excited because they have projects they're looking forward to working on. Their excitement increases when both see a brand new package of beautiful multi-colored markers on the shelf. They both grab for the markers at the same time, and a tug of war ensues:

“I want the markers!” says Frances.

“No way,” says Eric, “I need them.”

Freeze the action and discuss: What is happening? How are the characters feeling? What do they want? Elicit that the two characters are having a conflict because they both want the markers.

Then ask: What could happen next? Elicit the children's thinking about possible outcomes:



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- They could decide to share the markers.
- They could take turns.
- One could grab the box away from the other and have it for him- or herself.
- They could get into a fight, and the teacher could take the box of markers away.

Now use the puppets to dramatize the outcomes.

Begin with an outcome in which the puppets fight and neither ends up with the new markers. Ask: Did the characters get what they wanted? How are they feeling?

Go on to dramatize an outcome in which one person is happy and the other isn't, and another outcome in which both people are happy.

Ask the children to think of recent conflicts they've seen or been involved in, and have a volunteer describe that conflict. Ask: How did that conflict turn out? Was one person happy? Both people? Nobody?

As conflicts arise in the classroom or you encounter conflicts in children's literature, you will have many opportunities to reinforce children's understanding of the kinds of outcomes that conflicts can have. Stress that, whenever possible, our goal is for the conflict to turn out so that both people are happy.

*The 4Rs™ Program combines superior children's books with engaging SEL activities that explore community, feelings, relationships, conflict, problem-solving and diversity, and adds depth to literacy instruction.*