

REALITY AVENUE "Bullying: Who Holds the REAL Power?"

Follow-Up Discussion Prompter and Classroom Activities & Assignments with
Sunshine State Standards Benchmarks
for Elementary, Middle and High School Students

Follow-Up Discussion Prompters

Questions can be utilized as a resource for an interactive teacher driven activity or as a prompter for written assignments. Classroom ground rules for the discussion should be set, if not already, for example: confidentiality (no names – "I know someone who..."), respect (all ideas accepted), what is said in the class stays in the class, we all get a chance to talk, keep an open mind, etc.

ANY GRADE LEVEL DISCUSSION PROMPTERS:

Sunshine State Standards Benchmarks:

The student writes to communicate ideas and information effectively.

The student uses listening strategies effectively.

Elementary (LA.B.2.1) (LA.C.1.1)

Middle (LA.B. 2.3) (LA.C.1.3)

High (LA. B.2.4) (LA.B.2.4)

1. What is Bullying?
 - a. Look up the word bully in the dictionary. Write the definition.
 - b. Write some examples of bullying.
2. What do bullies get out of being mean to other kids? Do you think it makes them more popular with their friends?
3. Does bullying always mean threatening or physically assaulting someone? Can it also include gossiping, name-calling, teasing, excluding someone? Explain why or why not.
4. In your opinion, which values help prevent bullying?
5. How would you like to see your school encourage these values?
6. What do you think is the worst bullying problem at school? How would you change or fix it?
7. What would be a good way for your school to involve students in an anti-bullying plan?

MIDDLE AND HIGH DISCUSSION PROMPTERS:

Sunshine State Standards Benchmarks for Middle School:

(LA.B.1.3) The student uses writing process effectively.

(LA.B.2.3) The student writes to communicate ideas and information effectively.

(SS.A.2.3) The student understand the world from its beginnings to the time of the renaissance.

(FL.A.1.3) The student engages in conversation expresses feelings and emotions, and exchanges opinions.

(TH.E.1.3) The student understands applications of the role of theatre, film, television, and electronic media in everyday life.

(HE.B.1.3) The student knows health-enhancing behaviors, and how to reduce health risks.

Sunshine State Standards Benchmarks for High School:

(LA.A.1.4) The student uses the writing process effectively.

(FL.A.2.4) The student understands and interprets written and spoken language on a variety of topics.

(HE.B.2.4) The student analyzes the influence of culture, media, technology, and other factors on health.

(HE.C.2.4) The student knows how to advocate for personal, family, and community health.

1. Based on what you know and what you have learned through today's Reality Avenue, define *bullying*.
2. How is bullying different than teasing?
3. What does bullying look like in your school, home, and community?
4. According to Reality Avenue, what are some of the root causes of bullying?
5. Why do bystanders "hold the power"?
6. How is bullying different in elementary, middle, and high school?
7. How have you or someone you know been affected by bullying?
8. Define the role of the *target*, *bully*, and *bystander* in bullying?
9. What "power" does each party have within the act of bullying?
10. How can bystanders safely intervene in an incident of bullying?
11. Describe what is meant by the statement, "bullying occurs within a continuum of violence"? And understanding this, when is it safest to intervene and why?
12. What are some of the ways that bystanders can intervene - Directly and Indirectly?
13. What can be the short and long-term damage caused by bullying – to the target, bystander and bully?
14. Is it ever OK to ignore bullying? How do you feel about *adults* who fail to intervene?
15. How is *reporting* to an adult that someone is being harmed or bullied different from *tattling/snitching*?
16. Considering the stories of the individuals interviewed (*Andrew, Keith & Christian*), discuss/detail how *you* have been changed or affected by bullying?
17. How can we "harness" the power of the bystanders to decrease bullying in our school and community?
18. What power do YOU hold to make a difference? In what ways and in whose lives?
19. How can a parent or guardian help their child who is being bullied?
20. How can your school or community combat bullying?

Additional information, activities and support are available from: www.isafe.org

Classroom Activities & Assignments

Exercise #1: Stand Up/Sit Down Similarities/Differences Exercise

Sunshine State Standards Benchmarks:

The student uses listening strategies effectively.

Elementary (LA.C.1.1)

Middle (LA.C.1.3)

High School (LA.B.2.4)

INTRODUCTION: This exercise is ideal for classroom settings and may not work with a larger group of students in an assembly – use your judgment, you know the students in your school best. The purpose of this exercise is to set the tone of inclusion and respect by emphasizing the similarities and differences that we all have, especially as they relate to bullying and violence. The sample questions below can be modified to suite your audience and school. Ask the audience to Raise their hands (or stand up) if the question

applies to them. Tell the class, "I'm going to give a list of characteristics that may or may not be true about you. As I say each characteristic, if it's true for you, Stand UP. If it's not true, Stay Seated or Sit Down."

Then begin the questions by saying, "**Stand up if you are someone who...**

Likes to eat Pizza.....burritos.....Burgers.....Chinese Food....Grits....chocolate? That was a test! :-)

Has a sister.....brother.....pet?

Plays sports Can sing? Can dance? Play an instrument?

You were born in Broward County? In Florida? In the United States outside Florida?

Outside the United States? Off Planet Earth (Test 2!)??

You speak more than one language? More than 2 languages?

Can make a sandwich?

Have ever been embarrassed?

Have told someone you love him or her

Have ever heard a gunshot

Been affected by violence at some point in your life

Used your words or actions to hurt others

Have been hurt by others words or actions

Had a family member or friend harmed or killed through violence

Have felt good walking away from a potential fight

Have been in a situation when they wish they had NOT lost their temper

Have someone they can talk to

Have seen someone hurt and wished you could help

Want to be treated with respect?"

Discussion & Conclusion: This exercise shows us that we all have more in common than not. Also, most of us at some point have been hurt or hurt someone else, whether intentionally or not. When we use this with students, across populations you will see the participants scan the room looking for others who share the same things in common with them. It can create a situation where a student will approach another later on because they saw that they had something in common with someone they might have previously seen as "different". Consequently, bonding and attachment begins and as research has shown we are less likely to hurt each other if we feel we are alike and are connected to one another.

- Point out similarities/dissimilarities
- Did you learn something new about someone you thought you knew?
- Learn you had something in common with someone you did not think you did?

Final Point: We all have been affected by violence and we all want to be treated with respect.

Exercise #2: Breaking through the Myths – What is True and What is False?

Sunshine State Standards Benchmarks:

The student writes to communicate ideas and information effectively.

The student uses listening strategies effectively.

Elementary (LA.B.2.1) (LA.C.1.1)

Middle (LA.B. 2.3) (LA.C.1.3)

High School (LA. B.2.4) (LA.B.2.4)

Answer the following questions true or false and/or explain why:

1. Bullying is mostly a male behavior.

Answer: False - males and females may vary in HOW they bully, but both bully with almost equal frequency.

2. Once a bully always a bully.

Answer: False - bullying is a learned behavior and we are never too old or foolish to learn a new way to cope.

3. Bullies come from families representing all socioeconomic levels - from poor to rich.

Answer: True - anyone and everyone has the ability to bully, how much money you have does not determine how you choose to use your power.

4. Bullies are just as likely as the rest of us to be successful in life.

Answer: False - bullies are much more likely to have criminal charges and substance abuse problems than those who do not engage in that behavior.

5. You can spot bullies because they are large and aggressive.

Answer: False - bullies can be very subtle in their forms of intimidation and social isolation. They may just bully on the internet and you will never know their size.

6. Fighting back against a bully will not solve the problem.

Answer: True – it may even be dangerous. There are many ways to handle a bully, both direct and indirect, but your safety is #1!

7. Bullies are insecure and have low self-esteem.

Answer: False – many bullies have good self-esteem and think they are doing what those around them WANT them to do. They may be very popular and think highly of themselves.

8. You can change a bully's behavior by focusing on what happens at home.

Answer: False – you can change a bully's behavior by changing how WE as bystanders respond to him or her. The home may or may not change, but that person always can.

9. Targets of bullies are usually kids with physical differences (overweight, glasses, funny looking, etc.).

Answer: False – Targets don't look different any more than each of us does – but, their DIFFERENCES *are targeted*.

10. We adults and students should report bullying because it almost always makes the situation better.

Answer: True – it is a myth and just a fear that reporting will make matters worse, it almost always results in improvement for the target, bully and bystander.

Exercise #3: De-Myth-Stifying Bulling

Sunshine State Standards Benchmarks

Middle School

(LA.A.1.3) The student uses the reading process effectively.

(LA.B.1.3) The student uses the writing process effectively.

(LA.B.2.3) The student writes to communicate ideas and information effectively.

Below please find ten myths about bullying that Dan Olweus, an expert in bullying, has identified through his research. Have each student choose a myth and create a report as to the FACTS of bullying. In this report, each student will De-Myth-Stify the erroneous belief, detailing the research that supports the fact as well as anecdotal tales or personal experiences that may provide personalized support.

1. THE MYTH: **Bullies suffer from insecurity and low self-esteem. They pick on others to make themselves feel better.**

THE RESEARCH: Most bullies have average or above-average self-esteem. They "suffer" from aggressive temperaments, a lack of empathy, and poor parenting.

2. THE MYTH: **Bullies are looking for attention, ignore them and the bullying will stop.**

THE RESEARCH: Bullies are looking for control, and they rarely stop if their behavior is ignored. The level of bullying usually increases if the bullying is not addressed by adults.

3. THE MYTH: **Boys will be boys.**

THE RESEARCH: Bullying is seldom outgrown; it's simply redirected and it will continue into adulthood. Also, female bullying is equally prevalent.

4. THE MYTH: **Kids can be cruel about differences.**

THE RESEARCH: Physical differences play only a very small role in bullying situations. Most victims are chosen because they are sensitive, anxious, and unable to retaliate due to their lack of physical or social power.

5. THE MYTH: **Victims of bullies need to learn to stand up for themselves and deal with the situation.**

THE RESEARCH: Victims of bullies are usually younger or physically weaker than their attackers. They also lack the social skills to develop supportive friendships. Therefore, they cannot deal with the situation themselves.

6. THE MYTH: **Large schools or classes are conducive to bullying.**

THE RESEARCH: No correlation has been established between class or school size and bullying. In fact, there is some evidence that bullying may be less prevalent in

larger schools where potential victims have increased opportunities for finding supportive friends.

7. THE MYTH: **Most bullying occurs off school grounds.**

THE RESEARCH: Although some bullying occurs outside of school or on the way to and from school, most occurs on school grounds: in classrooms, in hallways, and on playgrounds.

8. THE MYTH: **Bullying affects only a small number of students.**

THE RESEARCH: Although only approximately 2 out of 10 students are bullied or bullying on a REGULAR basis, at any given time, about 25 percent of U.S. students are the victims of bullies and about 20 percent are engaged in bullying behavior. The National Association of School Psychologists estimates that 160,000 children stay home from school every day because they are afraid of being bullied.

9. THE MYTH: **Teachers know if bullying is a problem in their classes.**

THE RESEARCH: Bullying behavior usually takes place out of sight of teachers. Most victims are reluctant to report the bullying for fear of embarrassment or retaliation, and most bullies deny or justify their behavior.

10. THE MYTH: **Victims of bullying need to follow the adage "Sticks and stones will break your bones, but names can never hurt you."**

THE RESEARCH: Victims of bullying often suffer lifelong problems with low self-esteem. They are prone to depression, suicide, and other mental health problems throughout their lives.

For more info and exercises go to: <http://www.education-world.com>

Exercise #4: Bullies, Targets & Bystanders in the News & through History

Sunshine State Standards Benchmarks

High School

(SS.A.1.4) The student understands historical chronology and the historical perspective.

(SS.B.2.4) The student understands the interactions of people and the physical environment.

NOTE: This can be done as an art project, an oral presentation, an essay or as a combination of each.

Have the students collect newspapers, magazines and internet stories and create a collage of images that tell a story or evoke the feelings of being a target of bullying,

bullying someone else, or being a bystander to bullying (violence). These images can be from today, or from our past. It can even be a timeline of violence that helps to illustrate the power that bystanders have when they pick up and use the power they hold.

Example: Rosa Parks was a victim of bullying – those who held more power (the Caucasian majority) victimized her until she refused to be bullied any longer. Her refusal to be excluded and treated as less by not going to the back of the bus activated the bystanders within her community and finally the entire country to step up and intervene, staging protests and eventually changing this America's laws and unspoken rules, removing the power of the bullies. Find news stories and images to create a timeline of slavery, then segregation, then Rosa Parks and the news stories of those times, and finally pictures and images of today's de-segregated America.

Other Examples – Nazi Germany, Anne Frank, etc.

Exercise #5: To Ignore or Not to Ignore?

Sunshine State Standards Benchmarks:

The student writes to communicate ideas and information effectively.

The student uses listening strategies effectively.

Elementary (LA.B.2.1) (LA.C.1.1)

Middle (LA.B.2.3) (LA.C.1.3)

High School (LA.B.2.4) (LA.B.2.4)

You've probably heard people say "Just ignore it!" as a way of dealing with any form of bullying. Sometimes that works, especially if the bully wants a reaction, he or she will often give up and leave to find a target that gives a more interesting reaction (fear, anger, etc.) so they can feel more powerful.

BUT more often, bullying is too serious to ignore and it may even get worse (much worse!) if ignored. How do you decide what to do? Please share your ideas:

1. I would just ignore gossip, taunts, bullying, and being excluded WHEN... and this is WHY....
2. I would stand up and intervene to stop a rumor, taunts, and bullying WHEN...and this is WHY....and this is HOW...

Exercise #6: What Kind of Bullying Is It?

Sunshine State Standards Benchmarks:

The student uses listening strategies effectively.

The student knows how to advocate for personal, family, and community health.

Elementary (LA.C.1.1)

Middle (LA.C.1.3)

High School (LA.B.2.4); (HE.C.2.4)

(FL.A.1.3) *The student engages in conversation expresses feelings and emotions, and exchanges opinions.*

Possible Discussion Points: How might one type of bullying change and/or evolve over time if friends, teachers (bystanders) do not intervene? How do you think these types of bullying change as we age? Boys vs. Girls?

What kind of Bullying is it?

Work on this chart in small groups. For each action, check off whether it is physical, verbal or mental bullying and present to the class afterwards your thoughts as to why.

	physical	verbal	mental
Spreading a rumor/gossiping			
Shoving/bumping			
Damaging something that belongs to someone else			
Ignoring			
Grabbing			
Name - calling			
Threatening			
Excluding others from activities			
Making fun of someone on the Internet			
Making faces/rude gestures			
Writing notes/graffiti about someone			