



Global Voices Information Sheet

Bullying



Oprah Winfrey joins singer Lady Gaga at Harvard University on February 29 to launch the Born This Way Foundation to fight bullying.

Background Info

- The National Education Association in the United States estimates 160,000 kids miss school every day because they are afraid of bullies.
- According to the Canadian Council of Learning, Canada has the ninth highest rate of bullying among 13-year-olds in the world.
- The Canadian Ministry of Public Safety asked students between four and 14 years old in 16 Toronto schools about bullying. Fifteen per cent of them said they had bullied other kids more than once or twice during the school term. Twenty per cent said they had been victims of bullies more than once or twice.
- Bullying can take many different forms:
 - Physical actions like punching and kicking other people
 - Verbal bullying like making threats, name calling, insulting people, or making negative comments about someone's race or sexual identity
 - Excluding other people socially, like spreading rumours, ignoring them, gossiping about them, or deliberately excluding them from group activities
- Bullying doesn't just happen in the schoolyard. It can happen online through social media and online multiplayer games, on sports teams, in activity groups outside of school, and anywhere people are interacting with each other.
- Kids are not the only ones affected by bullies. Adults can be bullies, and can be victims of bullying in their workplaces and activities.

Key terms

- **Bullying** – The Ontario Ministry of Education defines bullying as: "a form of repeated, persistent and aggressive behaviour directed at an individual or individuals that is intended to cause fear and distress and/or harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem or reputation."

Global Voices Elementary Educator Resources

Note to Educators:

The following activities are designed to stimulate a current events discussion. Generative in nature, these questions can be a launching point for additional assignments or research projects. Teachers are encouraged to adapt these activities to meet the contextual needs of their classroom.

In some cases, reading the article with students may be appropriate, coupled with reviewing the information sheet to further explore the concepts and contexts being discussed. From here, teachers can select from the questions provided below. Activities are structured to introduce students to the issues, then allow them to explore and apply their learnings. Extension and conclusion activities are included to challenge students and finally, encourage them to reflect on the issues at hand.

Since these activities are designed as discussions rather than formal lessons, assessment strategies are not included.

Themes and Course Connections

- Themes: Bullying, Empathy, Awareness, Action
- Course Connections: Social Studies, English, Art, Drama

Materials

- Global Voices column
- Paper and writing tools
- Board or chart paper

Specific Expectations and Learning Goals

Students will:

- Develop and express responses to issues and problems.
- Reassess their responses to issues on the basis of new information.
- Participate in active group work and class discussions.
- Communicate effectively in written and spoken language or other forms of expression.
- Demonstrate the ability to think critically.
- Develop, express, and defend a position on an issue and explain how to put the ideas into action.

Knowledge and Understanding

1. Guided Reading: The Global Voices Column (estimated time: 20 minutes)
 - a. Have students sit in a circle and distribute one copy of the Global Voices column to each student.
 - b. Pre-reading steps:
 - i. Make predictions: ask students to read the title of the column. After doing so, ask them to make predictions as to what the column is going to be about.
 - ii. Introduce vocabulary from the column.
 - iii. Assess prior knowledge: ask students to discuss what they already know about these topics.
 - c. Reading steps:
 - i. Go around the circle and have each student read a section of the column to the class, so that everyone gets a turn to read.

- ii. As students are reading, offer guidance and coaching by providing prompts, asking questions, and encouraging attempts at reading strategy application.
 - d. Post reading steps:
 - i. Encourage students to provide a summary of the column in order to ensure they have understood the series of events.
 - ii. Ask questions about the text to judge comprehension
- 2. Discussing the Global Voices Column (estimated time: 10 minutes)
 - a. Ask students the following suggested questions about the column, encourage them to use evidence from the Global Voices column to support their answers:
 - i. What is the message in this column?
 - ii. What perspectives are presented in this column? Which ones are left out?
 - iii. What problem is presented in this column?
 - iv. Is there any bias in the column?

Thinking

1. Bullying (estimated time: 10 minutes)
 - a. Write the word 'bullying' on the board, and give the class a minute to think about it. Then ask students to call out words that associate with bullying.
 - b. Create a word web around the 'bullying' and write down students' ideas.
 - c. Once the brainstorming is complete, as a class, define bullying. Ensure that the definition includes different types or methods of bullying such as cyber-bullying, verbal bullying and physical bullying.
 - d. Repeat the process for the word 'empathy'.
 - e. Next, refer to the Global Voices column. The column offers empathy as one way to combat bullying. Ask students the following questions, and hold a class discussion around them.
 - i. Do you agree with the column? Why or why not?
 - ii. Why do you think someone might bully someone else?
 - iii. Why do you think an empathetic person is less likely to be a bully?

Communication

1. Gaining Empathy through Point of View (estimated time: 30 minutes)
 - a. Divide the class into pairs and ask the students to choose one of their favorite songs. (Teacher Note: you may want to provide a list of class appropriate songs for students to choose from)
 - b. Ask groups to record the lyrics to their song. (Teacher Note: allow students to look up the lyrics if they are unsure)
 - c. Ask students to look for the bias of the artist by reading the lyrics and examining what ideas, beliefs, feelings, etc. are displayed by the artist. Ask:
 - i. What might be the point of view, or intent of the writer in this song?
 - ii. What might he/she be feeling while writing this song?
 - d. Once this is complete, instruct students to compare the point of view of the artist with the "nonmentioned" other side in the song (for example, if the artist is singing about a lost love, what might the other person be thinking who the artist is singing about).
 - e. Promote a class discussion around the topic of point of view, ask:
 - i. What is point of view?
 - ii. Was it easy to empathize with someone else's point of view? Why or why not?
 - iii. How does understanding someone else's point of view create empathy for that person?

Application

1. Creating a Safe Space (estimated time: 20 minutes)
 - a. Lay a large sheet of chart paper on the ground in the middle of the classroom.
 - b. Explain to students that you are all going to be creating a contract to make your classroom a safe space. Give the class 2 minutes to think about what they expect from a safe environment.
 - c. While they are thinking, ask students to come up (one by one) to a piece of chart paper, and using a marker, trace the outline of their hand onto the outer edges of the chart paper. These outlines should create a border all around the chart paper, leaving space in the middle for the content.
 - d. Next, come up with a name together for your safe space contract. Write the name in the middle of the paper.
 - e. Once this is complete, ask students to call out their ideas. Collectively decide, as a class, whether or not each idea should be in the contract. (Teacher Note: Prompt the class to think along the lines of respect, openness, appreciation etc.)
 - f. When the contract is full, ask each student to come up and sign their name in the outline of their hand.
 - g. Display the finished safe space contract around the room where everyone can see it.

Additional Resources

In addition to the above lesson plans, you may want to share some additional resources with your students. Listed below are some links to useful online resources:

Free The Children - www.freethechildren.com

Weday.com – www.weday.com

It Gets Better Campaign - <http://www.itgetsbetter.org/>

Born This Way Foundation - <http://bornthiswayfoundation.org/>

Roots of Empathy - <http://www.rootsofempathy.org/>