

LESSON
9

Solving People Problems

TEACHER NOTES

★ **Purpose**

- To teach students to solve problems with others

★ **Objectives**

- Students will describe problems that might occur between friends.
- Students will review Ways that Help in dealing with anger.
- Students will review Happy Talk.
- Students will practice problem-solving strategies.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Henry (stuffed animal mascot)
- Supplement 9.1 (laminated card)
- Book from the literature list (or one of your choice)
- Strong Start* Bulletin

2
minutes

Review

To activate prior knowledge, review and discuss previous topics and main ideas from Lesson 8, Being a Good Friend. Make sure to provide feedback and refer to the use of nice voices, good listening, and eye contact.

Sample Script

During our last meeting, we discussed how to be a friend. Raise your hand if you can tell me one way that you might be a friend.

1
minute

Introduction

Communicate the lesson's purpose and objectives clearly.

Sample Script

Today, we will talk about solving problems with others. Everyone has problems sometimes. Problems often happen when we don't agree or when we want to do something that our friends don't. Problems often make us feel mad or sad, and these are not good feelings. Today, we will think about how we can make ourselves feel happy when we are mad or sad and how we can solve problems when they happen.

10
minutes

Read a Book from the Literature List

Read a book from the following list of examples or choose your own book to share with students.



- *Words Are Not for Hurting* by Elizabeth Verdick and Marieka Heinlen
- *Move Over, Twerp* by Martha Alexander
- *I Can't Wait* by Elizabeth Crary
- *I'm Frustrated* by Elizabeth Crary
- *Bet You Can't* by Penny Dale
- *The Knight and the Dragon* by Tomie dePaola
- *Chester's Way* by Kevin Henkes
- *Peter's Chair* by Ezra Jack Keats
- *When Pigasso Met Mootisse* by Nina Laden

Be sure to point out all of the actions or ways in which the characters behave when they are acting on their feelings. Use the following questions to guide your discussion:

- What was one of the feelings the character had?
- Do you think it was a good or not good feeling?

- What was the problem?
- What did the character do when he or she was faced with a problem?
- How did the character solve his or her problem?

10
minutes

Types of People Problems

Explain the idea of disagreement, or *people problems*, and use Henry to provide an example.



Sample Script

We have a problem when we disagree or we want to do something our friends don't. Problems often make us feel sad or mad, and these are not good feelings.

For example, one time Henry was excited for a playdate at his friend's house because his friend has really cool Legos. When Henry arrived, he had a problem, and it was not a good feeling.

Act out the following scenario with Henry:

Henry: “Hi there. I am so excited for our playdate. I was hoping that we could play with your Legos.”

Friend: “Sorry, Henry, but I want to paint with my new paint set.”

- Have students share problems they have encountered. Possible examples include arguing over toys, not taking turns, cutting in line, and not working together on a group assignment.
- Ensure respectful sharing by reminding students not to use names and to remember to use nice words.

5
minutes

Review Ways that Help and Happy Talk

Review the concept of Ways that Help (Supplement 9.1) for handling anger and using Happy Talk.



Sample Script

When we have a problem, we usually feel mad or sad. It is important for us to remember Ways that Help us feel better when we are angry.

Sample Script

It is also important to remember Happy Talk. Happy Talk will help us to feel better when we have a problem. Remember, when we use Happy Talk, we

feel better and have the feeling that everything is going to be okay. When we use Happy Talk, we can name how we are feeling and tell someone we trust. When we don't use Happy Talk, we might get stuck feeling sad or mad.

10
minutes

Comforting Yourself and Solving People Problems

Introduce strategies for solving problems.

- Stop, Count, In, Out
- Use Happy Talk.
- Be a friend.
- Make it better.

Sample Script

When a problem sparks a not good feeling, we need to Stop, Count, In, Out. After taking a deep breath, we need to continue to comfort ourselves by remembering how to be a friend. When we use nice voices, listen, and look at our friends, it will be easier for us to tell them what is wrong and fix the problem. When we work together, we share ideas for fixing the problem so that we both feel better.

There are many different ways for friends to fix problems. When Henry and his friend wanted to do two different things, they came up with many ideas for solving the problem. They thought about picking a whole new activity, painting first and then playing with Legos, playing with Legos first and then painting, asking an adult for help, or deciding to play together on another day. They decided to paint pictures for a while and then switch to playing with Legos so that they both got to do what they wanted. When you think of ideas with your friends, remember there are many ways to solve the problem.

The Stop, Count, In, Out Strategy

STOP	When you feel a spark, stop what you are doing.
COUNT	Count to 10.
IN	Take a deep breath in .
OUT	Breathe out .



Act out the following scenarios with Henry.

Nonexample of problem solving:

Henry: “I wanted to play with Legos, and I am not going to play with you again if we don’t play with Legos.”

Friend: [Begins to cry] “Fine. You are not my friend anymore.”

Example of problem solving:

Henry: [Uses the Stop, Count, In, Out strategy] “Hmm. I really wanted to play with Legos, and you want to paint. That makes me feel a little mad on the inside.”

Friend: “Maybe we could make it better. We could ask my mom to help fix the problem, or we could decide to play something else.”

Henry: “I know! First, we could paint, and then we could play with Legos!”

Friend: “Great idea, Henry!”

Make sure children understand the difference between the scenarios, and encourage them to remember to use strategies for fixing problems.

1
minute

Closure

Gather your students together, and review the lesson objectives.

Sample Script

Today, we learned about fixing problems we have with others. Everyone has problems sometimes, and these problems often make us have not good feelings. We can use the Stop, Count, In, Out strategy and Happy Talk to solve problems with others.

10
minutes

Additional Activity: Role Play

Complete this activity within 2 days of lesson implementation.

To help your students build fluency in solving people problems, use Henry to act out more nonexamples of problem solving similar to the one provided in the lesson. After you have acted out the nonexample, have students come up and act out how they might fix the problem. Be sure to praise students’ efforts to use Ways that Help and Happy Talk. Try to use scenarios that are relevant to daily situations that arise in your classroom. Example scenarios are provided in the chart. Use topics such as sharing, cleaning up, following rules during a game, and choosing a friend to sit next to.

Problem	What happens	Making it better
Henry wants a turn on the swings, but they are all being used.	Henry yells loudly at you, "It's my turn!"	Henry takes a deep breath and says to you, "Could I have a turn in a few minutes?"
You and Henry are playing with blocks, and it is clean-up time.	Henry walks away and does not help you clean up.	You take a breath and use a nice voice to say, "Henry, you played this game with me. Will you help me clean up?"
You and Henry are coloring. You both want to use the green crayon.	You and Henry both grab at the crayon and yell, "It's mine!"	You decide to let Henry use it first and choose a different part of the picture to work on. Henry gives you the green crayon when he is done with it.

Applying What We Learned

Anticipate

Encourage your students to be problem solvers when they disagree with one another. Remind them to use the Stop, Count, In, Out strategy and Happy Talk when a problem arises. Be sure to prompt them prior to events during which problems might arise (e.g., a difficult board game, a game with a lot of rules, a group project).

Remind


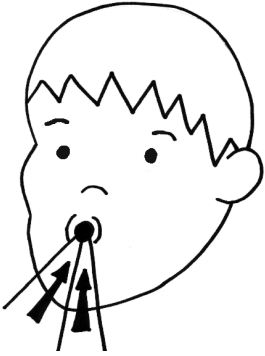
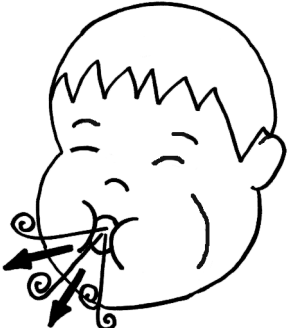
If you notice a student who is not problem-solving, remind him or her to use the strategies learned in class. You might have to break the problem-solving process into manageable parts. For example, first encourage the student to engage in the Stop, Count, In, Out strategy, and then prompt him or her to use Happy Talk and be a friend in order to help solve the problem.

Acknowledge

If you see your students problem-solving, be sure to give specific praise (e.g., "I really liked that you stopped and took a breath and then decided to take turns with that game. Great problem solving!").



The Stop, Count, In, Out Strategy

<p>STOP</p>		<p>When you feel a spark, stop what you are doing.</p>
<p>COUNT</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 6 5 9 7 8 10</p>	<p>Count to 10.</p>
<p>IN</p>		<p>Take a deep breath in.</p>
<p>OUT</p>		<p>Breathe out.</p>



Strong Start Bulletin

Dear Family,

This week, our **Strong Start** lesson focused on how to **solve problems** with others. We brainstormed a list of potential problems we might have with our peers. Then, we talked about the actions we might take when problems arise. We learned that we could use the **Stop, Count, In, Out breathing strategy** when we get angry, and after taking a deep breath, we could comfort ourselves by remembering how to be a friend. When we use nice voices, listen, and look at friends, it will be easier to work together and share ideas for fixing the problem so that we all feel better. We practiced our **problem-solving skills** by role-playing with classmates. The following table reflects an example of problem-solving behavior.

Problem	What Henry does after Stop, Count, In, Out	Is he problem-solving or not problem-solving?
Henry wants to play with Legos, but his friend wants to paint.	Henry and his friend decide to paint for a while and then play Legos.	He is problem-solving.
Henry wants to play with Legos, but his friend wants to paint.	Henry does not listen to his friend's ideas and says, "I'm not going to play with you anymore."	He is not problem-solving.

To better understand how to solve people problems, we read

Following are great examples of relevant stories that you may want to read at home:

- *Chester's Way* by Kevin Henkes
- *I'm Frustrated* by Elizabeth Crary
- *I Can't Wait* by Elizabeth Crary

When problems arise at home, help your child to

- Stop and take a deep breath
- Be a friend by looking and listening to others
- Work with others to brainstorm a solution

If you see your child problem-solving, be sure to congratulate his or her efforts (e.g., "I really liked that you stopped and took a breath and then decided to take turns with that game. Great problem solving!"). Thanks again for your support!