

“Mural”

Peace Concept: EFFECTIVE DIALOGUE

I. OBJECTIVES

- A. To be able to explain the importance of effective dialogue in resolving conflict;
- B. To be able to name the proper and effective communication skills
- C. To be able to practice these communication skills in role-playing

II. SUMMARY OF EPISODE

Ato, Majid, Farida and Lorena are four very good friends. They often go to the river together to talk, swim and have fun. The day arrives when the strength of their friendship is tested.

They team up for the mural painting contest to be held in their school. They decide to combine all their ideas and draw their own symbol of peace for their mural. Farida and Majid decide to stay behind to continue working on the mural. Then, Farida decides to modify Ato’s drawing. When Ato finds out the next day, he angrily confronts Farida. Lorena wants to resolve the conflict between Ato and Farida; but instead is drawn into the conflict. Majid tries to talk to all of them to patch things up but they continue insulting each other.

Majid does not know what to do. He talks to his teacher about the conflict among his friends. Ms. Juan teaches him some effective communication skills such as: avoid insults; and use “I” instead of “you” to express one’s thoughts and feelings. He is so happy and cannot wait to tell his friends; but all three of them do not want to make the effort. Frustrated and hopeless, Majid goes back to the mural to rub off what Farida drew until his hands bleed. Unknown to him, Ato and Lorena are watching. Later, he also goes to the river to say goodbye. Since his friends are all fighting, he knows they will not be together anymore to spend happy times there. To his surprise, his friends follow him to the river and tell him that they would like to try the proper way to communicate to resolve their conflict. The river becomes even more important to them as friends.

III. SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

A. Pre-viewing

Ask the children to relate an experience when they fought with their peers.

*** What did you fight about?**

*** What did you say to each other while you were fighting? Did you insult each other?**

*** How did you resolve your differences?**

Conclude the sharing by highlighting based on their answers some possible factors that characterize common disputes or misunderstanding:

- 1) The cause is usually petty;
- 2) Someone was offended or insulted and retaliated by using insults
- 3) The problem escalated to more name calling until both avoided each other.

Introduce the episode by saying that we will meet four good friends whose friendship was threatened by conflict. Let us see how they were able to resolve their conflict and to restore their friendship.

B. Post-viewing

The following questions for discussion are being suggested:

1. What did Ato and Farida fight about? How did Lorena become part of the conflict between Ato and Farida?

2. Why did Miguel say goodbye to the river even when they enjoyed going there very much?

3. From whom did Majid ask help? What did Ms. Juan taught him?

4. How was the conflict finally resolved? What was the difference between Lorena’s and Majid’s ways in resolving the conflict?

Conclude the discussion with a short explanation on the importance of proper dialogue and communication skills in resolving conflicts. Enumerate on the board the two basic communicate skills used to resolve conflict and to prevent it from escalating.

1. Avoid name-calling and insults.
- “You meddle in other’s work!”
- “You are making a big deal of nothing!”

2. Use “I” instead of “You” to express one’s emotions and thoughts.

- “I was hurt when you modified my drawing without asking me first.” Instead of, “You think you are the one who can draw. You think you are so great!”
- “I thought you will not mind so I modified your drawing.” Instead of, “Your drawing is so ugly, I just had to modify it!”

Role-Playing

Divide the class into groups of 3-4 people and ask each group to pick a situation written on card that they will role-play. Use their own experiences which they shared earlier. Ask them to present 2 plays, the first one is what really happened and the second one is when they used the proper communication skills to resolve the conflict.

Journal Writing

Encourage them to write about what they have learned about the proper ways to talk to the person they are in conflict with. Why is it important not only to learn about them but also to practice them in daily life?

IV. EFFECTIVE DIALOGUE AS A PEACE CONCEPT

Many conflicts would be prevented when we hold and restrain our strong negative emotions so we can communicate properly. When we suspend our judgment, we can give people the chance to explain. As what the adult, Ms. Juan, in the episode admitted, this is not easy to do. Even adults have a hard time remembering not to lose their temper in arguments and to strive to resolve and not to make the conflict worse than it is.

The effort here is clearly to start teaching the proper way to communicate and to create the atmosphere conducive to resolving conflicts. When these skills become part of the children’s foundation, these will be their guiding principles in peacefully settling disputes and resolving conflicts in their lives.