

SASO MIDDLE SCHOOL CHARACTER EDUCATION LESSON

TOPIC: BULLYING

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Note to Teacher: This lesson is about bullying—i.e., content about bullying, bullies, and victims of bullying. It offers the teacher guidelines to follow after students have viewed the SASO VIDEO entitled *Bullying is NEVER okay!* Twelve WVU student athletes and the Mountaineer Mascot discuss the topic of bullying.

Discussion questions, suggestions for writing and speaking assignments, and scenarios have been designed to develop student critical thinking, reflection, interaction, and creativity. They are interchangeable and should be determined by the teacher.

With regard to discussion questions and scenarios, teachers may pose questions to students individually or in small groups. With regard to the scenarios, a spokesperson for each group should be selected to summarize his or her group's discussion to the rest of the class.

Discussion Questions:

1. What is bullying?
2. What are reasons that people bully others?
3. Have you ever been bullied? If so, how did you feel? What did you do about it?
4. Have you ever witnessed someone else being bullied? If so, how did you feel about it?
5. Why are students afraid to report bullying to teachers?
6. Would you tell your parents if you were being bullied? Why or why not?
7. How do you think your parents would react if you told them that you were being bullied?
8. Is it the school's role to control bullying while at school?
9. How should schools discipline those who bully?
10. Give examples of situations where bullying is most likely to occur.

Scenarios: What would you do?

1. When the teacher is not close by, somebody in your class bullies you...calls you names, makes fun of you. What would you do?
2. You have witnessed somebody in your class bullying a younger child on the school bus on several occasions. What would you do?
3. The principal has called you to the office and asked if you know who is cyberbullying a very distraught student in your class. You know the bullies who have bragged about the vicious things they have said and written about her... What would you do?
4. You are in a very popular social group. You know that they gossip, spread false rumors, and say and write very hurtful things about others that they don't like, especially online. They expect you to do the same. What would you do?

Writing/Speaking Assignments: Students either may write a paper or give an oral presentation about the topic (length and guidelines to be determined by the teacher).

1. Describe a bully you have known personally. Describe his/her personality characteristics, temperament, and background. Why do you think this person became a bully?
2. Research a celebrity who has the reputation of being a bully. Give examples of his/her bullying.
3. Discuss who has taught you about bullying, how to react to it, and what to do if you are a witness to it.
4. Discuss your school's policy about bullying.
5. Discuss what students can do as a group to prevent bullying.
6. Discuss how bullying affects the lives of those who are victims.
7. What are the recent statistics on bullying in schools? How do they compare with statistics from 20 years ago? 10 years ago?
8. Are some types of people more likely to be bullied than others? Discuss and explain.
9. Discuss what society can do to control or prevent bullying.
10. Discuss the difference between "reporting" and "snitching."
11. Discuss cyberbullying and give examples of it.
12. Should the government control cyberbullying? Why or why not?
13. Is bullying a societal problem? Why or why not?
14. Write a nonfiction or fiction story about bullying.
15. Write a poem or song about bullying.

16. Select one of the quotes about bullying below and explain what it means. Or, find a quotation about bullying and explain what it means. Identify the author of the quote and describe who that individual is (e.g., Abraham Lincoln, 16th President of the United States).

Quotations about Bullying:

1. We must become the change we want to see. (Mahatma Gandhi)
2. Courage is fire, and bullying is smoke. (Benjamin Disraeli)
3. Never be bullied into silence. Never allow yourself to be made a victim. Accept no one's definition of your life, but define yourself. (Harvey S. Firestone)
4. When people hurt you over and over, think of them like sand paper. They may scratch and hurt you a bit, but in the end, you end up polished and they end up useless. (Chris Colfer)
5. Bullying is an underestimated and pervasive problem. (Gerard Kennedy)
6. When life hands you a lemon, make lemonade. (Arlene White)
7. Victims of bullying should keep a log of their mistreatment, so that any allegations can be substantiated. (Hernan Daguerre)
8. There is no gesture more devastating than the back turning away. (Rachel Simmons)
9. The greatest opportunity to fix bullying or harassment would be with the bystanders. There are many more bystanders than there are bullies and victims. (Jerry Misik)
10. Life is a fight, but not everyone's a fighter. Otherwise, bullies would be an endangered species. (Andrew Vachss)
11. Do not be bullied out of your common sense by the specialist; too often, he is a pedant. (Oliver Wendell Holmes)
12. The opposite of love is not hate, it's indifference. (Elie Wiesel)
13. All people who observe bullying may not know what to do, but they feel bad. It affects all kids. (Jerry Misik)
14. Science may have found a cure for most evils; but it has found no remedy for the worst of them all the apathy of human beings. (Helen Keller)
15. Always behave like a duck – keep calm and unruffled on the surface but paddle like the devil underneath. (Jacob Braude)

16. It's one of those silent issues. With the physical forms of bullying, you can see the black eye or the bloody lip or the torn up clothes. But here, the damage to students is to their psyche. (Kevin Storr)
17. Kids will surprise you if you give them the opportunity to do good things. (Kevin Storr)
18. What if the kid you bullied at school, grew up, and turned out to be the only surgeon who could save your life? (Lynette Mather)
19. There is always an underlying reason why the student is bullying someone. (Angie Jacques)
20. Better to bend than to break. (Scotts Proverb)
21. When people don't like themselves very much, they have to make up for it. The classic bully was actually a victim first. (Tom Hiddleston)
22. If you are patient in a moment of anger, you will escape a hundred days of sorrow. (Chinese Proverb)
23. All I wanted to do was go back inside to the library and read a book. I used to spend all my time reading books, or watching television. It was safe. Nobody ever was hurt or teased or looked stupid while reading books or watching television. (Kathryn Magendie)
24. He who believes is strong; he who doubts is weak. Strong convictions precede great actions. (Louisa May Alcott)
25. The test of courage comes when we are in the minority. The test of tolerance comes when we are in the majority. (Ralph W. Sockman)
26. The only thing we have to fear is fear itself. (Franklin D. Roosevelt)
27. The common mistake that bullies make is assuming that because someone is nice that he or she is weak. Those traits have nothing to do with each other. In fact, it takes considerable strength and character to be a good person. (Mary Elizabeth Williams)
28. Be sure of yourself, don't let anyone bully you, be a strong and independent woman or boy. (Nicole Polizzi)
29. Everyone has the bully or the mean girl or the ex-boyfriend who tried to bring them down. (Demi Lovato)
30. Conformity is the jailer of freedom and the enemy of growth. (John F. Kennedy)