

Theme: Self-Awareness

Lesson: My Approach to Conflict Management

Grade Level: 7 & 8

Duration: 60 minutes

Objective:

- Students will identify and understand different conflict management styles based on personality traits.
- Students will recognize their own conflict management style and how it impacts their relationships.
- Students will learn to respect different approaches to conflict and find balanced ways to handle conflicts.

Materials Needed:

- Pictures of animals representing different conflict management styles (e.g., Turtle, Shark, Fox, Owl, Teddy Bear)
- Whiteboard and markers
- Handouts/Activity Book with descriptions of the conflict management styles
- Reflection journals
- A short quiz on conflict management styles

Introduction (10 minutes):

1. Engage:

- Begin the lesson by asking students if they've ever noticed how differently people handle conflicts. Some avoid them, some confront them directly, while others try to make everyone happy.
- Introduce the idea that people often approach conflicts based on their personality traits and compare these approaches to the behaviours of different animals.

2. Introduce the Animal Metaphors:

- Turtle: Avoidance – Turtles withdraw into their shells and avoid conflicts at all costs. They prefer to avoid the issue rather than confront it.
- Shark: Competition – Sharks want to win at all costs. They approach conflicts aggressively and aim to dominate the situation.

- Teddy Bear: Accommodation – Teddy Bears prioritize relationships over conflict. They are willing to give in and compromise to keep the peace.
- Fox: Compromise – Foxes seek a middle ground. They are willing to give up something to reach a resolution that satisfies both parties.
- Owl: Collaboration – Owls approach conflicts thoughtfully. They seek to work together with others to find the best possible solution for everyone.

Explore (15 minutes):

1. Group Activity:

- Divide the class into small groups. Give each group a picture of one of the animals and a brief description of the corresponding conflict management style.
- Each group discusses the strengths and weaknesses of their assigned conflict style. For example, they might discuss when it's beneficial to avoid a conflict like a Turtle or why a Shark's aggressive approach might sometimes backfire.

2. Group Presentation:

- Have each group present their animal and its conflict management style to the class, explaining how this style might play out in a school or home setting.

Explain (10 minutes):

1. Class Discussion:

- After the presentations, discuss how different situations might call for different conflict management styles. For example, when might it be beneficial to avoid a conflict, and when might it be important to confront one head-on?
- Emphasize that no single approach is "correct" all the time. The key is to be self-aware and to choose the most effective strategy for the situation.

2. Personal Reflection:

- Ask students to think about their own approach to conflict. Do they see themselves as a Turtle, Shark, Teddy Bear, Fox, or Owl? Why? Encourage them to be honest in their self-assessment, embrace a growth mindset, and be flexible based on different situations.

Elaborate (15 minutes):

1. Conflict Management Role-Play:

- Set up role-playing scenarios where students can practice different conflict management styles. For example:
 - A group project disagreement (Shark vs. Fox)
 - A misunderstanding between friends (Teddy Bear vs. Owl)
 - A situation where someone feels wronged but is afraid to speak up (Turtle vs. Shark)
- Encourage students to try out different styles, even if it's not their natural tendency. This helps them understand the advantages and disadvantages of each approach.

2. Developing a Balanced Approach:

- Discuss how students can combine elements of different styles to develop a more balanced approach to conflict management. For example, they might start by addressing a conflict calmly like an Owl but be willing to compromise like a Fox if needed.

Evaluate (10 minutes):

1. Reflection Journal:

- Have students write a reflection in their journals about which conflict management style they tend to use and why. They should also reflect on whether this style has been effective for them in the past and what they might change in the future.
- Prompt questions:
 - Which animal do you relate to the most?
 - Has your approach to conflict been effective? Why or why not?
 - How could you improve your approach to conflicts in the future?

2. Quiz:

- Provide a short multiple-choice quiz to assess students' understanding of the conflict management styles. Questions could include:
 - Which animal represents the conflict style that avoids conflict at all costs?
 - What are the strengths and weaknesses of Fox's approach?
 - In which situation might the Owl's conflict style be most effective?

Extended Learning Activities:

1. Home Reflection Assignment:

- Ask students to observe and reflect on how conflicts are managed at home. They can write a short report on what they observed and which animal styles were evident.

2. Conflict Management Poster:

- Have students create posters that illustrate the different conflict management styles using the animal metaphors. These can be displayed around the classroom or school to reinforce the lesson.

3. Peer Mediation Training:

- Encourage interested students to participate in a peer mediation program where they can learn to apply these conflict management techniques to help resolve disputes among their peers.

4. Conflict Scenarios in Literature:

- Assign a reading activity where students identify conflict scenarios in a book or short story and analyze the characters' conflict management styles. They can compare the characters to the animals discussed in class.

Sample Case Studies

A Group Project Disagreement (Shark vs. Fox)

In a science class, the teacher assigned a group project to build a model of the solar system. Jake, who has a strong personality, immediately took charge of the group and started making decisions without consulting anyone else. He decided on the materials, assigned tasks, and set the timeline. However, Emma, who believes in fairness and teamwork, felt uncomfortable with Jake's approach. She had some good ideas about how to make the model more creative, but Jake didn't give her a chance to share them.

Practice:

- **Shark (Jake):** Jake could continue to dominate the project, insisting that his way is the best and pushing forward without considering Emma's input.
- **Fox (Emma):** Emma could approach Jake and suggest they find a compromise. She might say, "Jake, I think your ideas are great, but maybe we can incorporate some of my ideas too. Let's work together to make this project the best it can be."

Reflection:

Students can discuss which approach might be more effective in achieving a successful project and maintaining a positive group dynamic. How can Jake learn to be more inclusive, and how can Emma assert herself without causing conflict?

A Misunderstanding Between Friends (Teddy Bear vs. Owl)

Maya and Lily have been best friends for years, but recently, they've been having some misunderstandings. Maya noticed that Lily has been spending more time with a new group of friends, and she feels left out. Instead of talking to Lily about how she feels, Maya starts distancing herself, hoping that Lily will notice and make things right. Lily, on the other hand, is confused about why Maya is acting differently but doesn't want to push her to talk if she's not ready.

Practice:

- **Teddy Bear (Maya):** Maya might continue to avoid the conflict and keep her feelings to herself, prioritizing the friendship and hoping the problem will resolve itself over time.
- **Owl (Lily):** Lily could gently approach Maya, saying something like, "I've noticed that we haven't been hanging out as much lately. Is everything okay? I really value our friendship, and I want to make sure we're both happy."

Reflection: Students can discuss how avoiding conflict might lead to further misunderstandings and how a thoughtful, open conversation could strengthen the friendship. How can Maya learn to express her feelings, and how can Lily ensure she's being considerate of Maya's emotions?

A Situation Where Someone Feels Wronged but is Afraid to Speak Up (Turtle vs. Shark)

Carlos and Ethan were both interested in joining the basketball team. Carlos, who is quieter and more reserved, was excited about the tryouts. Ethan, who is more outspoken and confident, convinced the coach to let him have extra practice time, which meant Carlos didn't get as much time on the court. Carlos felt this was unfair but didn't want to cause trouble, so he kept quiet and let Ethan take the spotlight. Ethan, on the other hand, didn't realize that his actions had made Carlos feel left out.

Practice:

- **Turtle (Carlos):** Carlos might continue to avoid speaking up about how he feels, preferring to stay in his shell rather than risk conflict with Ethan.
- **Shark (Ethan):** Ethan could continue to push for what he wants without considering how it affects Carlos, focusing on his goal of making the team.
- **Owl (Carlos - Alternative):** Carlos could approach the coach or Ethan calmly and express his feelings, suggesting a fairer way to allocate practice time.

Reflection: Students can explore the consequences of Carlos staying silent versus speaking up. How might Ethan's perspective change if he knew how Carlos felt? How could Carlos gain confidence in expressing his needs?

A Disagreement Over Class Responsibilities (Fox vs. Owl)

Sophie and James are both members of the student council and were tasked with organizing the school's charity event. Sophie believes they should stick to the original plan to avoid any issues, while James thinks they should add new activities to make the event more exciting. They both want to make the event successful but have different ideas about how to achieve that.

Practice:

- **Fox (Sophie):** Sophie could suggest a compromise, perhaps by keeping the original plan but adding one or two new activities that James proposed.
- **Owl (James):** James could take the time to listen to Sophie's concerns and work with her to find a solution that incorporates both of their ideas in a balanced way.

Reflection: Students can discuss the value of compromise and collaboration. How can Sophie and James work together to ensure the event is both successful and enjoyable?

A Conflict Over a Mistake in Class (Teddy Bear vs. Shark)

During a math test, Mia accidentally looked at Emily's paper, thinking it was her own. The teacher noticed and thought Mia was cheating. Emily, who saw what happened, knows it was an honest mistake but is afraid that if she speaks up, the teacher might think she was helping Mia cheat. Mia is worried that Emily will be angry with her and doesn't want to lose her as a friend.

Practice:

- **Teddy Bear (Emily):** Emily might decide to stay quiet to avoid getting involved, even though she knows it might be unfair to Mia.
- **Shark (Mia):** Mia could confront Emily, demanding that she speak up and tell the teacher the truth.
- **Owl (Emily - Alternative):** Emily could approach the teacher privately and explain the situation calmly, advocating for Mia while also protecting her own integrity.

Reflection: Students can explore the impact of speaking up versus staying silent. How can Emily balance her concern for her friend with the need to be honest? How can Mia approach the situation in a way that resolves the conflict without damaging her friendship with Emily?

A Conflict Over Lunchroom Seating (Turtle vs. Teddy Bear)

Anecdote:

At lunchtime, Zach always sits at the same table with his friends, but lately, a new student, Oliver, has been sitting in his spot. Zach feels irritated but doesn't want to confront Oliver, so he just finds another seat. Oliver, on the other hand, is trying to make new friends and doesn't realize that he's taken Zach's usual spot. Zach's friends are starting to notice his frustration and wonder why he isn't saying anything.

Practice:

- **Turtle (Zach):** Zach might continue to avoid the situation, choosing to sit somewhere else rather than speak up.
- **Teddy Bear (Oliver):** If Zach eventually mentions it, Oliver might apologize and offer to move, prioritizing Zach's feelings over his own.
- **Fox (Alternative):** Zach could compromise by suggesting that they take turns sitting in the spot or find a new spot that works for both of them.

Reflection: Students can discuss how avoiding a conflict might lead to lingering resentment. How can Zach express his feelings in a way that is respectful and effective? How can Oliver be more aware of others' needs?

Theme: Relationship Building and Social Awareness

Topic: Conflict Resolution

Grade: 7 & 8

Objectives:

Cognitive Domain (Knowledge and Understanding):

- **Objective:** Students will understand and describe the key conflict resolution techniques (active listening, negotiation, and compromise) and explain how they can be applied in everyday situations.

Affective Domain (Attitudes and Values):

- **Objective:** Students will demonstrate empathy by discussing how they would feel in conflict situations and develop a positive attitude towards using conflict resolution techniques to resolve disputes peacefully.

Psychomotor Domain (Skills and Application):

- **Objective:** Students will apply conflict resolution techniques by role-playing various conflict scenarios, developing a "Conflict Resolution Toolkit," and reflecting on their personal experiences with conflict.

Content:

- **Conflict Resolution Techniques:** Active listening, negotiation, compromise
- **Understanding Empathy in Conflict:** Recognizing emotions in self and others, perspective-taking
- **Application of Techniques:** Role-playing, developing strategies, and practical application in real-life scenarios

5E Model

Engage:

- **Activity:** Start with a scenario where two students argue over a misunderstanding. Ask students to discuss how they would feel in each person's shoes and what they might do to resolve the conflict.
- **Activity:** In small groups, students role-play various conflict situations (e.g., bullying, a disagreement about a group project). Each group will discuss the conflict and brainstorm possible resolutions.

Explain:

- **Activity:** Introduce conflict resolution techniques such as active listening, negotiation, and compromise. Provide examples of how these techniques can be applied in everyday situations.

Elaborate:

- **Activity:** Have students create a "Conflict Resolution Toolkit" with strategies and steps for resolving conflicts. They can illustrate examples based on the role-play scenarios.

Evaluate:

- **Activity:**
 - **Reflection:** Students write a personal reflection on a conflict they've experienced and how they could have used the conflict resolution techniques to handle it better.
 - **Case Study:** Present a case study of a school conflict (e.g., a bullying incident) and have students identify the conflict resolution techniques used and suggest any improvements.
 - **Multiple Choice:** Create a quiz on conflict resolution techniques, asking students to choose the best way to handle specific conflict situations. (Give Activities in Guidance Activity Book by Anisa Wilson-Smith, MSc.)

Assessments:**1. Reflection:**

- **Description:** Students will write a reflection on a personal conflict they have experienced and how the conflict resolution techniques learned could have been applied to improve the outcome.

2. Case Study:

- **Description:** Students will be given a case study of a school conflict (e.g., a bullying incident) and asked to identify the conflict resolution techniques used and suggest any improvements or alternative strategies.

3. Multiple Choice Quiz:

- **Description:** A quiz assessing students' knowledge of conflict resolution techniques and their ability to choose the best approach to handle specific conflict situations.

Extended Learning Activities:

1. Peer Mediation Program:

- **Activity:** Students can volunteer to participate in a peer mediation program where they help resolve conflicts between other students under the guidance of a teacher or counsellor.

2. Community Service Project:

- **Activity:** Organize a project where students identify and address a conflict or issue within their community (e.g., organizing an anti-bullying campaign or a workshop on peaceful conflict resolution).

3. Conflict Resolution Journal:

- **Activity:** Have students keep a journal where they record and reflect on conflicts they observe or experience and the techniques they use to resolve them. They can review and discuss these entries periodically in class.

1. Conflict Resolution Techniques: Active Listening, Negotiation, Compromise

Active Listening:

- **Definition:** Active listening is the practice of fully concentrating, understanding, responding, and then remembering what is being said in a conversation. It involves paying close attention to the speaker, not just hearing the words but understanding the message behind them.
- **Key Components:**
 - **Focus on the Speaker:** Make eye contact, nod, and use body language to show you are engaged.
 - **Avoid Interrupting:** Allow the speaker to finish their thoughts without interrupting.
 - **Paraphrasing:** Summarize what the speaker has said to confirm understanding (e.g., "So what you're saying is...").
 - **Clarifying:** Ask questions if something is unclear (e.g., "Can you explain what you mean by...?").
 - **Feedback:** Provide feedback to the speaker to show that their message has been received (e.g., "I understand how you feel...").
- **Importance in Conflict Resolution:**
 - Helps to defuse tension by making the other person feel heard and respected.
 - Reduces misunderstandings by ensuring that both parties have a clear understanding of the issues at hand.

Negotiation:

- **Definition:** Negotiation is a dialogue between two or more parties aimed at reaching a mutually beneficial agreement or solution to a conflict. It involves discussing each party's needs, desires, and concerns and finding common ground.
- **Key Components:**
 - **Preparation:** Know what you want to achieve from the negotiation and understand the other party's position.
 - **Communication:** Clearly express your own needs and listen to the other party's needs.

- **Problem-Solving:** Work together to find solutions that satisfy both parties. This may involve brainstorming different options.
- **Flexibility:** Be willing to make concessions and adjust your demands if necessary to reach an agreement.
- **Importance in Conflict Resolution:**
 - Allows both parties to have their needs met in a way that is fair and equitable.
 - Promotes collaboration and cooperative problem-solving, reducing the likelihood of future conflicts.

Compromise:

- **Definition:** Compromise involves both parties in a conflict giving up something to reach a mutually acceptable resolution. It is often used when both sides have equally valid but opposing positions.
- **Key Components:**
 - **Give and Take:** Both sides agree to give up something of value to reach a middle ground.
 - **Fairness:** Ensure that the compromise is balanced and that both parties feel they are getting a fair deal.
 - **Long-Term Solutions:** Focus on finding a solution that will be sustainable and acceptable for both parties over time.
- **Importance in Conflict Resolution:**
 - Helps to resolve conflicts quickly by finding a middle ground.
 - Encourages cooperation and mutual respect as both parties work towards a solution that benefits everyone.

2. Understanding Empathy in Conflict: Recognizing Emotions in Self and Others, Perspective-Taking

Recognizing Emotions in Self and Others:

- **Definition:** Recognizing emotions involves being aware of and understanding your own emotions as well as the emotions of others in a conflict situation. It is the first step in developing empathy.
- **Key Components:**
 - **Self-Awareness:** Identify your own emotions during a conflict (e.g., anger, frustration, sadness). Understanding why you feel this way can help you manage your reactions.
 - **Emotional Awareness of Others:** Pay attention to the emotional cues of others, such as facial expressions, tone of voice, and body language. This can help you understand their perspective and feelings.
 - **Validating Emotions:** Acknowledge and validate the emotions of others by expressing understanding (e.g., "I can see that you're upset, and I understand why").
- **Importance in Conflict Resolution:**
 - Helps to prevent escalation by recognizing and addressing emotional triggers.
 - Builds a foundation for empathy, leading to more compassionate and effective conflict resolution.

Perspective-Taking:

- **Definition:** Perspective-taking is the ability to see things from someone else's point of view. It involves putting yourself in the other person's shoes to understand their thoughts, feelings, and motivations.
- **Key Components:**
 - **Imagining Other Perspectives:** Think about how the other person might feel and why they might see the situation differently from you.
 - **Empathetic Communication:** Use language that reflects understanding of the other person's perspective (e.g., "I see why you might feel that way...").
 - **Open-Mindedness:** Be open to changing your own perspective based on the insights gained from understanding the other person's point of view.

- **Importance in Conflict Resolution:**

- Promotes understanding and reduces biases or assumptions that can escalate conflict.
- Helps to find common ground and build stronger, more respectful relationships.

3. Application of Techniques: Role-Playing, Developing Strategies, and Practical Application in Real-Life Scenarios

Role-Playing:

- **Definition:** Role-playing involves acting out conflict scenarios in a controlled environment to practice conflict resolution techniques. This allows students to experience both sides of a conflict and develop their skills in a safe, supportive setting.
- **Key Components:**
 - **Scenario Selection:** Choose scenarios that are relevant to the students' experiences, such as disagreements over group projects, bullying, or misunderstandings between friends.
 - **Assigning Roles:** Have students take on different roles in the conflict (e.g., the person initiating the conflict, the person responding, and an observer).
 - **Practicing Techniques:** Encourage students to use active listening, negotiation, and compromise during the role-play.
 - **Debriefing:** After the role-play, discuss what happened, what techniques were used, and how effective they were. Encourage students to reflect on how they felt during the role-play and what they learned.
- **Importance in Conflict Resolution:**
 - Provides hands-on practice in using conflict resolution techniques.
 - Builds confidence in students' ability to handle real-life conflicts.

Developing Strategies:

- **Definition:** Developing strategies involves creating a plan or set of guidelines that students can use to resolve conflicts in the future. This strategy is personalized and practical, designed to be applied in everyday situations.
- **Key Components:**
 - **Identifying Triggers:** Help students identify situations or behaviors that often lead to conflict for them.
 - **Creating Action Plans:** Develop specific steps that students can follow when they encounter a conflict. This might include calming techniques, how to approach the other person, and how to communicate effectively.

- **Practice Scenarios:** Allow students to test their strategies in hypothetical scenarios or during role-play activities to refine their approach.
- **Importance in Conflict Resolution:**
 - Provides students with a concrete plan to manage conflicts proactively.
 - Helps students feel prepared and capable of resolving conflicts peacefully.

Practical Application in Real-Life Scenarios:

- **Definition:** Practical application involves using conflict resolution techniques in real-life situations, allowing students to apply what they have learned in the classroom to their everyday interactions.
- **Key Components:**
 - **Real-Life Challenges:** Encourage students to identify and reflect on conflicts they face at school, at home, or with friends.
 - **Implementing Techniques:** Students should consciously apply the techniques of active listening, negotiation, and compromise in these situations.
 - **Journaling Experiences:** Have students keep a journal where they document their experiences with conflict resolution, noting what worked, what didn't, and how they felt about the outcome.
 - **Reflection and Adjustment:** Regularly review these experiences in class discussions, helping students to learn from each other and adjust their strategies as needed.
- **Importance in Conflict Resolution:**
 - Reinforces the practical value of conflict resolution techniques.
 - Helps students develop real-world skills that will benefit them throughout their lives, promoting peaceful and productive relationships.

Conflict Resolution Case Studies

1. The Group Project Dilemma:

Sarah and her friends were assigned a group project in class. Initially, they were excited to work together, but as the project deadline approached, tension began to rise. Sarah felt like she was doing most of the work while her friends were not contributing as much. She started to feel frustrated and resentful but didn't know how to bring it up without causing a fight. Reflecting on this conflict, Sarah realized she needed to address the issue calmly and find a way for everyone to contribute equally.

Reflection Prompt: Have you ever been in a group project where you felt like you were doing all the work? How did you handle it? What could you have done differently to resolve the conflict?

2. The Misunderstood Text Message:

Jamal sent a text message to his friend, Jason, asking if they could hang out after school. Jason replied with a short, "Maybe, I'm busy." Jamal felt hurt and assumed Jason didn't want to spend time with him anymore. The next day at school, Jamal avoided Jason, and their friendship became strained. Later, Jamal found out that Jason had been overwhelmed with schoolwork and didn't mean to sound dismissive. This misunderstanding could have been avoided with better communication.

Reflection Prompt: Have you ever had a misunderstanding with a friend because of something they said or did? How did it affect your relationship? How could you have resolved the conflict more effectively?

3. The Family Chores Conflict:

At home, David and his younger sister, Mia, were constantly arguing over chores. David felt like he was doing more chores than Mia, while Mia thought David wasn't giving her enough credit for the work she did. Their parents were getting frustrated with the constant bickering. One day, their mom sat them down and suggested they create a chore schedule that clearly outlined each person's responsibilities. This simple solution helped reduce the conflict and made both siblings feel heard and respected.

Reflection Prompt: Have you ever had a conflict with a sibling or family member over responsibilities at home? How did you feel during the conflict? What steps could you take to resolve similar conflicts in the future?

4. The Exclusion from the Friend Group:

Lisa noticed that her friends had been hanging out without inviting her. She started feeling left out and assumed they didn't want to be friends with her anymore. Hurt and

confused, Lisa decided to distance herself from the group without asking why she wasn't being included. Eventually, one of her friends reached out and explained that they thought Lisa had been busy with other activities. They hadn't meant to exclude her, and they were happy to include her in future plans.

Reflection Prompt: Have you ever felt left out by your friends? How did you react? How could you approach the situation differently to understand what was really happening and resolve the conflict?

5. The Classroom Seating Dispute:

During a math class, two students, Kevin and Alex, argued over who should sit in the front row. Kevin wanted to sit closer because he had trouble seeing the board, while Alex preferred the front row because he believed it helped him focus better. The argument escalated, and both students became increasingly frustrated. The teacher intervened and suggested they take turns sitting in the front row, helping them to compromise and resolve the conflict peacefully.

Reflection Prompt: Have you ever had a disagreement with a classmate over something that seemed small but important to both of you? How did you handle it? What conflict resolution techniques could you use to find a fair solution?

6. The Borrowed Item Argument:

Maria borrowed a book from her friend, Jenna, but accidentally spilled juice on it. Embarrassed and worried, Maria didn't mention it to Jenna when she returned the book. When Jenna discovered the damage, she was upset and felt betrayed that Maria hadn't told her. This led to an argument between the two friends. Reflecting on the situation, Maria realized that honesty and taking responsibility for her actions could have prevented the conflict from escalating.

Reflection Prompt: Have you ever damaged something that belonged to a friend or family member? How did you handle the situation? What could you have done differently to resolve the conflict in a more positive way?

