



# 6.4: De-escalating Conflict

# LESSON BOOSTERS

## 6.4 Get Connected-1: What's Your Calmness Level?

<p><b>Scenarios</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your teacher says you didn't turn in a major essay that you are certain you submitted.</li> <li>You forgot your phone at home on a school day and have no way of getting it.</li> </ul> <p><b>Get Connected</b></p>	<p><b>Lesson Booster Summary:</b></p> <p>“What’s Your Calmness Level” is a low-bar, get-to-know-you activity because of its relatability, appeal to curiosity, and ease of participation with even reticent students. The provided scenarios help students consider their calmness level with potentially frustrating situations. The use of a projector is helpful, but not necessary.</p>	<p>5 min</p>
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## 6.4 Lesson Extension-1: Conflict Styles – Win or Lose? (Handout 6.4.1)

<p><b>Activity: Step 1</b></p> <p>Recall the situation Coach Rudy provided in the video.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Situation:</b> Coach Rudy and his wife are going to the movies for date night. Coach Rudy's wife wants to see a romantic comedy based on the book she just read. Coach Rudy is excited to see a new action movie.</li> </ul> <p><b>STEP 1:</b> Work with your small group to help Coach Rudy resolve his conflict using each of the five conflict styles. Record your responses in the chart below.</p>	<p><b>Lesson Booster Summary:</b></p> <p>Students will view a video introducing them to five ways to solve a conflict. Then students will complete the handout by working in small groups of 4–5 to apply each conflict style to a scenario provided in the video. Students are encouraged to jigsaw this activity. Students will also use collaboration skills to agree on the best conflict style for the given situation. Conclude by having students share Step 2 from their handout with the class.</p>	<p>15 min</p>
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## 6.4 Lesson Extension-2: Understanding Underlying Emotions (Handout 6.4.2)

<p><b>Scenario #1: Brooklyn's Bad Day</b></p> <p>Brooklyn just learned a new dance routine, and her team is performing it tonight at the football game. She is the youngest member of the team, and it takes her longer to learn the routine than it takes the other girls. She's been stressing about it all week. When Brooklyn asks the team captain at practice to show her one of the steps again, the girl snaps, “What? You don't know it yet? You ought to know it by now.” Brooklyn storms off into the locker room, hitting lockers on the way. She thinks, “These seniors are so rude. Why are they against me?” When her mother arrives five minutes late to pick her up from practice, Brooklyn snaps, “Why are you always so late?”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What triggered Brooklyn's anger?</li> <li>Besides anger, what underlying emotions might Brooklyn be feeling?</li> <li>What did Brooklyn do/believe that escalated her anger?</li> <li>How did she respond to the situation? Was it an effective response? Why or why not?</li> <li>What is residual anger? And do you see it in this situation?</li> <li>How might Brooklyn reframe the situation?</li> </ul> <p><b>Wrap Up</b></p> <p>How can understanding underlying emotions and residual anger help you de-escalate conflict?</p>	<p><b>Lesson Booster Summary:</b></p> <p>Students will learn more about the impact of underlying emotions, which are sometimes not as overtly obvious as anger but important to consider in your own and others' emotional reactions.</p> <p>Have students work in small groups to answer the questions for one or both scenarios and then discuss them as a class. The scenarios present students who exhibited anger but were likely experiencing <b>underlying emotions</b> (e.g., embarrassment, anxiety, frustration) and then <b>residual anger</b> (e.g., Brooklyn has a bad day at practice, then is short-tempered with her mom). Help students <b>reframe the situation</b> by trying to imagine the other person's perspective, consider consequences, and propose a different approach.</p>	<p>20 min</p>
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## 6.4 Lesson Extension-3: Attributional Biases (Handout 6.4.3)

<p><b>Attributional Survey</b></p> <p>Directions for Handout 6.4.3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For each situation: 1) put an "N" beside a negative thought you might have, and 2) put an "R" beside a thought that reframes (reconsiders) the situation in a better way.</li> </ul> <p><b>LESSON EXTENSION</b></p> <p><b>LESSON EXTENSION</b></p> <p><b>Wrap Up</b></p>	<p><b>Lesson Booster Summary:</b></p> <p>This lesson extension was inspired by the research of psychologists Ronald Slabby and Nancy Guerra. Drs. Slabby and Guerra showed adolescents a scene of two boys with a soccer ball and asked them to interpret the situation. Youth with a record of aggressive behavior were more likely to perceive the situation as hostile or a conflict, compared to others who perceived the situation as more neutral and collaborative. They coined the phrase “<b>negative attributional biases</b>” and helped raise awareness for the need for youth (and adults) to assess unconscious biases that may lead to misinterpreting a situation and responding with aggression rather than an open mind to gather more information and try to de-escalate.</p> <p>In this lesson, students will start with an Attributional Survey to identify negative tendencies in perception, and then apply this to a scene that could be considered a conflict or not. Wrap up by discussing how attributional biases might influence their decisions and interactions with others.</p> <p>[See Slaby &amp; Guerra (1988) and Guerra &amp; Slabby (1990) studies for more about attributional bias.]</p>	<p>15 min</p>
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