

Acceptance and Rejection

A Group Dynamic Activity

Grade level 7-12

Objectives

To help students become more aware of the effects of acceptance and rejection.

Materials

Instruction card for each group (five groups)

Reflections activity sheet for each student

Instructions

1. Divide students into five groups. (If you have students who seem especially withdrawn or isolated, do not put them in Group 1.)
2. Instruct groups to decide upon a secret password and secret handshake. (2-3 minutes)
3. Give each group an instruction card.
4. Ask each group to discuss the instructions among themselves. (2-3 minutes)
5. Each group should carry out its written instructions without revealing those instructions to anyone from another group. (5-15 minutes)
6. Afterward, everyone should share their hidden rules.

Instruction Cards for Groups

Group 1: Due to lack of space, we can only have four groups. The members of your group must split up and join other groups. You must learn the handshake and password to get in.

Group 2: Do not let anyone join your group. Do not tell anyone your secret password or show them your secret handshake no matter what!

Group 3: Allow anyone to join your group who wants to join. However, do not let them join right away. Ask them questions about why they want to join and why they should be allowed in. After a few minutes, accept them into your group and share your secret password and handshake.

Group 4: Vote on everyone who wants to join your group. If your last name starts with A-M, you should always vote "yes" on every person who is trying to join. If your last name starts with N-Z, you should always vote "no" on every person who is trying to join.

Group 5: Warmly welcome anyone who wants to be in your group. Make everyone feel accepted and appreciated. Share your handshake and password with them immediately. Make sure they know how glad you are that they chose to join your group!

Discussion

After the hidden rules are revealed, have students complete the Reflections Activity Sheet and record their responses as journal entries.

Discuss in small groups or as large groups some of the responses, using the following prompts:

- If you attempted to join more than one group, compare the two or three experiences.
- Each group had different criteria for inclusion/exclusion. Did you react differently to each group's set of criteria?
- Consider the standards your group enforces for including or excluding new members.
- How would you describe the standards and method?
- Can you justify your group's practice for accepting or rejecting members? Explain.
- Can you think of social groups that behave according to these models in real life?
- Have you experienced a social situation that resembles the dynamics of any one of these groups? What did you do?

This activity was submitted by Gaye Sharp, Language Arts Teacher/API Coordinator at Lee's Summit High School

HANDOUT

Acceptance and Rejection Exercise

Instructions

Cut out the groups below and distribute to each group.

Group One

Due to a lack of space, we can only have four groups. The members of your group must split up and join other groups. You must learn the handshake and password to get in.

Group Two

Do not let anyone join your group. Do not tell anyone your secret password or show them your secret handshake no matter what!

Group Three

Allow anyone to join your group who wants to join. However, do not let them join right away. Ask them questions about why they want to join and why they should be allowed in. After a few minutes, accept them into your group and share your secret password and handshake.

Group Four

Vote on everyone who wants to join your group. If your last name starts with A-M, you should always vote YES on every person who is trying to join. If your last name starts with N-Z, you should always vote NO on every person who is trying to join.

Group Five

Warmly welcome anyone who wants to be in your group. Make everyone feel accepted and appreciated. Share your handshake and password with them immediately. Make sure they know how glad you are they chose to join your group!

TAKE THE CHALLENGE • BRING DOWN THE WALLS
MIX IT UP AT LUNCH DAY 2005

