

School Appropriate Conversation Topics

Hot Thoughts



Purpose

- To teach students appropriate conversation topics for school

Group Size

- Teams

Materials

- 10–20 sticky notes or small writing paper pieces per team
- 1 writing utensil per student
- 1 class timer (optional)
- 1 School Appropriate Conversation Topics Brainstorming Mat (optional)
- 1 School Appropriate Conversation Topics Sorting Mat (optional)

Preteaching

- Using a T-chart, give examples of things that are okay and not okay to talk about at school.
- Explain why some things are not appropriate for school.



Activity Overview

Students each have multiple slips of paper. Teammates “cover the table,” writing ideas about school appropriate conversation topics on their slips of paper.

Activity Steps

- 1 The teacher names a topic such as school appropriate conversation topics, sets a time limit, and provides Think Time. (E.g., “Think about how many fun ideas you can talk about with peers at school.”)
- 2 Students write and announce as many ideas as they can in the allotted time, one idea per sticky note or slip of paper. You can also use the optional Brainstorming Mat. Students place their sticky notes on the mat as they come up with ideas.
- 3 After generating ideas, students may sort their ideas into categories. The Sorting Mat is designed for sorting ideas into categories. Students label the top of each box for each category.

Note: You can have teams share ideas to compile a classroom list, or teams can share their ideas with other teams.

Structure Alternatives

- RallyRobin
- Talking Chips

Feeling Annoyed

AllRecord Consensus



Purpose

- To teach kids it is okay to be annoyed
- To build relationships with teammates

Group Size

- Teams

Materials

- 1 Feeling Annoyed Recording Sheet per student
- 1 writing utensil per student
- 1 class timer

Preteaching

- Review what feeling annoyed means.
- Discuss with students that it is okay to be annoyed and the ways you can handle these feelings.



Activity Overview

In teams, students take turns stating a definition or example of feeling annoyed. If there is consensus, all teammates reword the idea on their sheets.

Activity Steps

- 1 The teacher may break down feeling annoyed into different sections such as feeling disappointed, feeling impatient, etc. The teacher then selects a student on each team to begin.
- 2 The selected teammate suggests the first description of how it feels to be annoyed or provides an example of when he or she felt annoyed.
- 3 Teammates put thumbs up, down, or sideways to indicate agreement, disagreement, or doubt.
- 4 If teammates agree, all students write the answer on their Feeling Annoyed Worksheets. If there is disagreement or doubt, the team discusses the answer until agreement is reached.
- 5 The process is continued: each student in turn suggests a new idea RoundRobin-style, the team reaches consensus, and then all teammates record the idea.

Structure Alternatives

- RoundRobin
- AllRecord RoundRobin

Cheating

Talking Chips



Purpose

- To make sure all students understand when assignments need to be completed independently and when it is okay to see other students' work

Group Size

- Teams

Materials

- 1–2 Talking Chips per student
- 1 class timer

Preteaching

- Teach the definition of the word “cheating.” As a class, hold a short discussion on your expectations on what work is to be completed independently and what work is okay to be completed together.
- Cheating in school means you take someone else’s work as your own. Cheating disregards the rules of honesty.



Activity Overview

Teams discuss cheating. Teammates have Talking Chips to make sure everyone contributes to the team discussion.

Activity Steps

- 1 The teacher passes out one or two chips to each member of the team, provides one discussion question below, or posts them all to facilitate a longer discussion. The teacher sets a timer for an appropriate amount of time, approximately 3–5 minutes.
 1. “Sometimes people have the temptation to cheat. What are some reasons why people would decide to cheat?”
 2. “What are some reasons why people would decide NOT to cheat?”
 3. “Who does cheating hurt? How so?”
 4. “What are some examples of the ways people cheat?”
- 2 Any student begins the discussion, placing a chip in the center of the table.
- 3 Any student with a chip continues discussing the cheating question, using his or her chip.
- 4 When all chips are used, teammates each collect their own chips and continue the discussion using their Talking Chips. Teams are not finished until the timer beeps.

Structure Alternatives

- RoundRobin
- Timed Pair Share

Showing Respect

Fact or Fiction



Purpose

- To teach students to be respectful

Group Size

- Teams

Materials

- 1 set of Showing Respect cards per team
- 1 “Fact” and 1 “Fiction” response card per student

Preteaching

- Teach the word “respect.” Respect means treating people well or treating others the same way you like to be treated. Give several examples of the respect and disrespect. It is a skill that students need to be successful in life. Respect is a personal characteristic that staff members expect students to demonstrate in all areas of the school.
- Teach the words “fact” and “fiction.” Practice several easy statements to make sure the class understands how to play.



Activity Overview

Students detect facts that appear false and fictions that appear true about showing respect.

Activity Steps

Teacher Directed

- 1 The teacher reads a true or false statement from the Showing Respect cards.
- 2 Each teammate makes his or her best guess by holding up a “Fact” or “Fiction” response card indicating if the statement is fact or fiction.
- 3 The teacher applauds students who answered correctly.
- 4 The process is repeated.

Student Directed

- 1 In teams, one student per team stands and reads the statement on the Showing Respect card.
- 2 Teammates think and then share their guesses by holding up a “Fact” or “Fiction” response card indicating if the statement is fact or fiction.
- 3 If correct, the standing student claps for those who are correct.
- 4 The process is repeated as teammates take turns reading a new card and leading the team through the cards.

Structure Alternative
• Showdown