

## **Lesson Plans on Violence**

**The importance of this lesson is to allow students the opportunity to examine the impact of youth violence in their lives and to communicate what they think should be done to change our culture of violence. Encourage students to make personal commitments to do something about violence in their homes, schools, and communities.**

**Have students brainstorm and come up with what their definition of violence is.**

(Have students brainstorm on their own paper 1-2 minutes, allow students to share with the class and define 3 minutes)

My students define it as any action that is used to scare, harass, control, or cause harm or injury to another person.

You may use the definition from the dictionary.

**Use a newspaper to find an article about youth violence.**

(5-6 minutes)

Write a paragraph about:

What happened?

What you know about the suspect?

What you know about the victim, how it made them feel, and how it affected him/her?

**Watch the news and look for youth violence.**

(Watch the news for 30 minutes, chose one and do write up at home)

Write a paragraph about:

What happened?

What you know about the suspect?

What you know about the victim, how it made them feel, and how it affected him/her?

**Brainstorm with the class about different types of youth violence.**

(Have students brainstorm on their paper 1 ½ -2 minutes, discuss as a class- maybe as long as 5 minutes)

Here are some examples:

Bully

Prejudice

Alcoholism

Child Abuse

Drug Abuse

Family Violence

Gangs

Hate Groups

Suicide

Rape

Racism

Exploitation of Children

Discrimination  
Theft/Burglary  
Emotional Abuse  
Physical Abuse  
Sexual Abuse  
Media Violence  
Dead-End Situations  
Absence of Positive Parental Role Models  
Gossip, Jealously, and Put-Downs

**Have a class discussion about why youth violence occurs.**

(5-7 minutes)

Have students tell why they think someone has been violent with them, people they know, or care for.

Examples of why:

To control others

To cause fear

They think it is fun and entertaining

To hurt someone

They can not control themselves-anger, hatred

Dysfunctional family

Has been a victim

They do not care how others feel

Peer pressure

Judgement of another person

Fear

For popularity and respect

**How does youth violence affect my home and community?**

(can be as short as 5-10 minutes)

Some of the examples can come from the write ups from the newspaper articles and the news.

Have students share personal experiences with the class or in writing.

**Find a newspaper article about a youth who has helped someone or their community.**

(5-6 minutes)

What did they do?

Why?

How did it make the helper feel?

How did it make the receiver feel?

How did it affect the receiver's life?

**Watch the news and look for information about youth who have helped others or their community.**

(watch news for 30 minutes, do write up at home)

What did they do?

Why?

How did it make the helper feel?

How did it make the receiver feel?

How did it affect the receiver's life?

**Read story/poetry about what youth can do to stop violence.**

(5 minutes)

Have students brainstorm on paper what they can do about violence.

(1-2 minutes)

Have a class discussion about how youth can stop violence.

(5-10 minutes)

Here are some examples:

Take personal responsibility for your actions

Make a personal commitment to not participate in violence

Be a positive role model for younger children

Be kind to others

Be a peer counselor or conflict mediator

Set positive goals for yourself

Make a commitment to avoid drugs

Talk with your parents

Promote faith in God and moral values

Get involved in doing community service

**Other sources:**

**Movie:** The Outsiders -clip of the boys going into the church to pull students out.

**Movie:** Pay It Forward -clip of the boy in the beginning with the bullies, clip of him with the bullies at the end.

**Movie:** A Christmas Carol

**Book:** Kids With Courage-short stories about youth who have made a difference in their communities.

**PACE Manual**-has themes about character development for each month. October, November, March and April discuss stopping violence, helping others, self respect, citizenship, and taking responsibility. There are lessons plans on each topic, lists of songs that can be played, poetry, list of movies and books that can be used, quotes, and activities.

**Have you ever become violent?**

This is the longest part of the assignment. Now that you have discussed what violence is, what causes youth violence, how it has affected their lives, and what they can do to make a difference, read an essay to the class, written by a former student, about a time he/she became violent or how they felt when they were a victim.

Have students write an essay about when they have become violent or felt out of control. If they have not experienced that, have them write about a family member, friend, stranger, or associate that has become violent. What did they do? Was someone hurt? What did it accomplish? How has it affected the victim's life? How could they have handled it?

Some students may want to write an essay about a time when they or someone they know was a victim of youth violence. What did the perpetrator do? How did you handle it? How did it make you feel? How has it affected your life? What could you do about it?

You may have the students share their papers with the class when they are done. I like to have my classes make personal commitments/goals in writing and come up with community service projects we can do for the school and/or community. We take pictures of the students doing the projects and have others in the class write an article about: Who the student was? What they did? How it made them and others feel? What they accomplished?