

FACILITATION STRATEGIES

CORE LESSON

1 PREVIEWING ACTIVITY

- Print the word “TWEEN” on the board. Ask the students to think about what this word means, and share their responses. Create a mind map around the word, including all of their comments.
- Explain that young people between the ages of eight and fourteen are the target of many studies these days. Ask the students to find a partner and discuss why retailers, youth support workers and other adults are suddenly taking such an interest in this age group. Share their responses.
- Ask them to think about young boys and girls of this age. Brainstorm what they think are the issues which are of most concern to tweens. Print them on the board.

2 LINK TO THE COMMERCIAL

- Ask them if they feel that these concerns are equally shared by boys and girls. Allow plenty of time for discussion.
- Explain that they are going to watch a commercial which is aimed at young girls who fall in the ‘tween’ age group.

FOCUS FOR VIEWING: WE ARE GIRLS

As you watch this commercial, be prepared to compare your list of concerns with those expressed in the ad.

VIEW THE COMMERCIAL

WE ARE GIRLS (45 SECONDS)

RATIONALE

As young girls grow and experience puberty, they also experience many changes in their physical, emotional, social and intellectual being. It is important for them to learn to be assertive, confident and true to themselves.

PURPOSE

To examine the skills, attitudes and behaviours that help young people to speak up for themselves, appreciate their talents and become advocates for each other.

3 POSTVIEWING ACTIVITY

ASSERTIVE VS. AGGRESSIVE

- Discuss the issues mentioned in the commercial:
 - thinking for yourself
 - speaking up, expressing opinions
 - taking on challenges
 - eating properly
 - being proud of who you are
 - making healthy and wise choices
- Which were similar to the ones you pointed out? Which were different? Do you agree that these are issues that affect young girls today? Discuss.
- View the commercial again and ask the students to listen to the tone and watch the expression of the girls as they make their statements.
- Explain that the girls look right into the camera lens, state their point of view clearly and effectively and that they have a serious look on their faces. Ask the students why they think this approach was used by the producer.
- Post the following definition for the word 'Assertive':
'... coming forward to assume one's rights; positive; confident; declarative'
- Discuss the definition, explaining that the girls in the commercial were simply stating the facts. They were presenting their case. They were telling the audience what they believed to be true, and that all of this helped them to make a point. Ask them to raise their hands if they would agree that this was an effective way to make a point. Discuss.
- Ask the students to raise their hand if they think they can tell you the difference between being 'assertive' and being 'aggressive'.
- Explain that being assertive is a positive way to make a point. It places the focus on the individual or the point they wish to make, rather than placing blame on anyone for what might be wrong.
- Discuss how being aggressive can cause problems for people – young and old.
- Divide the students into groups of four or five and ask them to role play the following two scripts: *(see next page)*

SCRIPT ONE

Tara: I'm sick and tired of boys getting to play all the sports!

Sarah: Me too! They get to play football and hockey and baseball and we are laughed at when we say we want to play too!

Tara: They think they are better than us. They are such show offs!

Sarah: It makes me sick! They think we can't do anything!

Tara: Let's just ignore them. Maybe they will get the hint that we are mad at them.

Sarah: Good idea! That'll show them who is better!

SCRIPT TWO

Tara: I'm sick and tired of boys getting to play all the sports!

Sarah: Me too! What can we do about it?

Tara: Well, I guess we could go to the coach or our teacher and tell them how we feel.

Sarah: Yeah, and maybe we could start a girls' football league and show them we are serious about wanting to play!

Tara: Great idea! Let's put up a list on the bulletin board and get everyone to sign up!

- After the groups have had the opportunity to act out both scenarios, discuss the following:
 - Which script do you think was assertive? Why?
 - What do you think the girls accomplished in script one? Discuss.
 - What do you think they accomplished by being assertive in script two, rather than aggressive as in script one?
- In their same groups, ask them to role play an assertive approach to one of the following situations:
 - Martha is constantly being left out when the girls play at recess.
 - Debbie feels badly about the fact that she can't afford to wear all the latest in designer fashions.
 - Kendra was asked to write a column on fashion for the school newspaper, but she really wants to design the math quiz page.
- Share the skits.

CLOSURE

Why do you think we sometimes react aggressively when our feelings are hurt? What might we do instead, that would help us to solve the problem?

Point out that when we put others in a position of control, we become frustrated and powerless. When we put ourselves in control, we feel confident, assured and appreciated.

How can your body language help you to make a point about an issue?

Think about something that you feel strongly about. What do you intend to do to about it? Share with a partner.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

SKILLS EXTENSION ONE

▶ TURNING NEGATIVES TO POSITIVES

SUBJECT FOCUS: LANGUAGE

- Watch the commercial again and ask the students to note the exact words that the girls are saying.
- Share responses, including the following:
 - We will not do as we are told.
 - We will not dump our friends just because someone says they're not cool.
 - We will not be shy when we have something to say.
 - We will not let boys have all the sports.
 - We will not be afraid to take on challenges.
 - We will not go on diets just to look a certain way.
 - We will not be ashamed of who we are.
 - We are girls. We will do what's right for us!
- Review the effectiveness of their statements by focusing on their body language, sincerity, clear statements, etc.
- Explain that the girls were making a point and that they chose to do this using the 'We will not...' approach.
- Tell the students that their challenge today is to create their own commercial in positive terms. Review the following statement and ask them to turn it in to a positive statement, which makes the same point:
'We will not dress...'
i.e. "We will wear what we feel is right for us."
- Allow the students to divide themselves into groups, explaining that their commercial does not have to be about the differences between boys and girls, but rather, to take some of the issues affecting tweens and make a commercial which uses positive language to express their point. Suggest that they select four or five issues that concern their group and prepare their commercial.
- Share the commercials, pointing out the positive language.

CLOSURE

Do you feel that your positive approach was as effective as the statements made in the “We Are Girls” commercial? Discuss.

When do you feel that negative language might be more convincing?

Think of a positive way to approach a problem that you need to deal with. Tell a neighbour.

A Step Further

Take your tween commercials on the road! Offer to share them with other schools in your community. Ask for feedback.

SKILLS EXTENSION TWO

▣ SURVEY SAYS...

SUBJECT FOCUS: LANGUAGE, MATH, THE ARTS

Educator's Note: *Consider setting up a schedule with teachers for the students to conduct their survey in classrooms that have students aged eight to fourteen.*

- Refer to the TWEEN chart from the core lesson. Review the issues that affect young people this age.
- Explain that they will be working in groups to take a survey of all the students in their school who fall into the 'tween' category.
- Divide the students into groups and provide each group with a copy of the "Tween survey". (Appendix I) Go over the questions, and explain that they are to pass out the survey. Explain the directions and set up a convenient time to pick up the completed surveys.

**** Note:** *Due to the sensitive nature of this survey, teachers must be prepared to deal with personal issues should they arise. Consult your school policy handbook, your administration or your guidance department for assistance if required.*

- Conduct the surveys by visiting the appropriate classrooms and circulating the surveys.
- Collect the data and challenge each group to display it in the form of a graph (bar, circle, line or pictograph), which shows the following information:
 - the total number of boys and girls surveyed, by age,
 - the responses, by age and gender, to each of the five questions.

CLOSURE

What did you learn about issues which affect 'tweens'?

Did you notice a difference in the responses between the boys and girls on your survey? Discuss.

What do you think might account for these differences?

What have you learned about being 'assertive' instead of being 'aggressive' when you want to accomplish something?

A Step Further

Use the computer to access websites, using the 'search' words 'self-esteem'. Share the information with your classmates. What information would you add after viewing this commercial? Why?

APPENDIX I

TWEEN SURVEY

Instructions: Answer the questions below as honestly as you can.

1. Please fill out the following information:

Age: _____ Grade: _____ Gender: M__ F__

2. Place numbers beside each of the following, and rate them in terms of how they affect the way you feel about yourself: (i.e. 1 is the most important concern)

my looks _____
my clothing _____
who I hang out with _____
what I am good at _____
how I get along with my family _____
how well I do at school _____

3. If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?

4. Please place a checkmark beside the answer that is most correct for you: (check only one)

I am a very happy person and would not change anything about myself. _____
I am happy most of the time, but I wish that I could change some things about myself. _____
I am not happy very often. I would like to change a lot of things about myself. _____
I am unhappy and wish that I could be someone else. _____

5. Place a checkmark beside the statement that you feel is most true: (Check only one)

Boys my age feel better about themselves than girls. _____
Girls my age feel better about themselves than boys. _____
There is no difference between the way boys and girls my age feel about themselves. _____

MEDIA LITERACY LESSON

HEAR YE, HEAR YE

1 PREVIEWING ACTIVITY

SUBJECT FOCUS: MEDIA LITERACY, STEREOTYPES

- Review with the students the old sayings that portray little girls as being made of 'sugar and spice and everything nice' and little boys as 'snakes and snails and puppy dogs' tails'.
- Ask: Do you agree with these sayings? Why or why not?

2 LINK TO THE COMMERCIAL

- Explain that outdated sayings like these are an example of how people used to put labels on what they thought girls and boys could do and how they should act. Remind them that they have just told you these are not accurate descriptions for boys and girls today.

FOCUS FOR VIEWING: WE ARE GIRLS

As you watch this commercial, be prepared to discuss how the producer has shown us what girls in today's world are really like.

VIEW THE COMMERCIAL

WE ARE GIRLS

(45 SECONDS)

3 POSTVIEWING ACTIVITY

THE REAL THING!

- Discuss the image that they are promoting of young girls. (strong, confident, self assured, capable, intelligent)
- Explain that today, they will have an opportunity to work with a partner and rewrite these sayings to reflect what they feel would be a good way to describe boys and girls today.
- Divide the students into pairs (gender mix is preferable). Ask them to prepare their sayings, keeping the following in mind:
 - Focus on the positive things that boys and girls represent.
 - Try to express your feelings in one or two sentences for each saying.
 - Prepare a statement for both genders.
- Once the new sayings have been prepared, share them with the class and post them on the board for all to see.

CLOSURE

Do you think that it would be possible to prepare just one saying that would represent both boys and girls? Explain your answer.

How are your sayings different than the original? How are they the same?

Do you think sayings like these have an effect on the way boys and girls feel about themselves? Share your thoughts with your partner.

A Step Further

Consider preparing 'Big Books' for your school library that portray what 'Girls and Boys of the New Millennium are Made of'.