

FOUR SQUARE FRIENDS – LESSON PLAN

Grades: Upper Elementary

CASEL Competencies: Refer to page 2

Topic: Collaborative Problem Solving

Lesson: Conflict Resolution and Effective Communication Using "I statements"

Learning Targets:

Academic: Students will identify and practice using "I feel" statements to express emotions and resolve conflicts effectively.

Language: Students will use sentence frames to create and share "I feel" statements in role-play scenarios.

Materials:

- Book: *Four Square Friends* Author: Renee Caballero
- Chart paper and markers
- "I Feel Statement" poster
- "I feel ...when... because..."
- "I need ... because ..."
- "I can help the problem by..."
- Conflict resolution sentence frames handout or sentence strips
- Index cards with role-play scenarios (see p. 3)
- Paper and pencils

Activity and Practice:

Warm-Up Activity (10 minutes)

Discussion Question: "Have you ever had a time when someone said or did something that hurt your feelings? How did you handle it?"

- Allow students to share (if comfortable).
- Introduce the "I Feel Statement" chart.

Read-Aloud and Group Discussion (15 minutes)

- Read *Four Square Friends* aloud.
- Discuss key questions during and after reading:
 - How did the main character feel when Robbie called them a loser?
 - What did Miss Moe teach about using words to solve problems?
 - How did the "I feel" statement help the main character and Robbie communicate?

Guided Practice Activity (20 minutes)

Activity: Role-Play Scenarios

- Students will be paired up and given a conflict scenario card (e.g., "Your friend took your seat at lunch," see p. 3 scenario examples)
- Using the "I feel" sentence frames, students will practice resolving the conflict.
- Model Example Aloud:
 - "I feel sad when you take my seat without asking. I need you to ask me next time. I can help the situation by letting you know with kind words that I was sitting there."
- Each pair will share their scenario and resolution with the class depending on class size, or share with another partner group. Lead debrief of the process and feelings associated with the role-play.

Assessment (10 minutes)

Quick Write Reflection:

- Students will write their own "I feel" statement about a situation they've experienced.
- Example: "I feel frustrated when my friend doesn't listen to me. I need them to listen when I talk."

Teacher Observation:

- Assess students' ability to use the sentence frame correctly during role-play and reflection.

Closure (5 minutes)

- Ask: "Why is it important to use kind and clear words when we have a problem with someone?"
- Reinforce the importance of using "I feel" statements to express emotions.

Takeaway: "When we use our words to share how we feel, we can solve problems and make our school a kinder place."

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Extensions (Optional)

Create a classroom "Conflict Resolution Center" with the "I Feel Statement" poster and sentence frame examples. In the classroom "Conflict Resolution Center," create a bulletin board to highlight or track how many conflicts were solved independently and celebrate this weekly as a closing activity each day or during classroom meetings.

Write "I feel" sentence frames individually on sentence strips using a different color for each sentence frame. Laminate sentence strips and put them on a ring for students to use in multiple areas of the classroom. If students are arranged in groups, each group can have a ring of sentence frames placed with their table group supplies for easy access.

Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) competencies addressed in this lesson are:

1. Self-Awareness:

- Students identify and understand their own emotions when facing conflict or challenging situations.
- They recognize how their feelings influence their behavior and responses.

2. Self-Management:

- Students learn to manage their emotions and reactions during conflicts.
- They practice staying calm and using structured communication tools ("I feel" statements) to express themselves effectively.

3. Social Awareness:

- Students learn to understand others' perspectives and recognize the feelings of their peers.
- They develop empathy by hearing and understanding how their actions impact others.

4. Relationship Skills:

- Students practice active listening, respectful communication, and cooperation.
- They build conflict-resolution skills through role-play and real-life applications of "I feel" statements.

5. Responsible Decision-Making:

- Students consider the consequences of their words and actions during conflicts.
- They make responsible choices to resolve issues respectfully and collaboratively.

These competencies collectively support students in developing essential emotional intelligence and interpersonal skills to create a positive and inclusive classroom environment.

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FIVE ROLE-PLAY SCENARIOS FOR GUIDED PRACTICE USING "I STATEMENTS"

1. THE LINE CUTTER

- SCENARIO: YOU ARE WAITING IN LINE FOR THE SWINGS AT RECESS. AND A FRIEND CUTS IN FRONT OF YOU.
- EXAMPLE "I STATEMENT": "I FEEL UPSET WHEN YOU CUT IN FRONT OF ME IN LINE. I NEED YOU TO WAIT YOUR TURN."

1. THE BORROWED PENCIL

- SCENARIO: YOUR FRIEND BORROWS YOUR FAVORITE PENCIL WITHOUT ASKING AND DOESN'T RETURN IT.
- EXAMPLE "I STATEMENT": "I FEEL FRUSTRATED WHEN YOU TAKE MY PENCIL WITHOUT ASKING. I NEED YOU TO ASK ME NEXT TIME."

1. THE LOUD TEAMMATE

- SCENARIO: YOU'RE WORKING ON A GROUP PROJECT. BUT ONE PERSON KEEPS INTERRUPTING AND NOT LETTING OTHERS SHARE THEIR IDEAS.
- EXAMPLE "I STATEMENT": "I FEEL FRUSTRATED WHEN I CAN'T SHARE MY IDEAS. I NEED YOU TO GIVE ME A CHANCE TO TALK."

1. THE NAME-CALLER

- SCENARIO: DURING MATH. SOMEONE CALLS YOU A MEAN NAME AFTER YOU SHARE THE WRONG ANSWER.
- EXAMPLE "I STATEMENT": "I FEEL HURT WHEN YOU CALL ME NAMES. I NEED YOU TO USE KIND WORDS."
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2. THE IGNORED INVITATION

- SCENARIO: YOU INVITE A FRIEND TO PLAY WITH YOU DURING FREE TIME. BUT THEY IGNORE YOU AND WALK AWAY.
- EXAMPLE "I STATEMENT": "I FEEL SAD WHEN YOU WALK AWAY WITHOUT SAYING ANYTHING. I NEED YOU TO LET ME KNOW IF YOU WANT TO PLAY OR NOT."

THESE SCENARIOS ARE DESIGNED TO HELP STUDENTS PRACTICE USING "I FEEL" STATEMENTS IN COMMON SCHOOL SITUATIONS. BUILDING THEIR CONFIDENCE IN EXPRESSING EMOTIONS RESPECTFULLY.