

Lesson 3.3

Becoming a Peacebuilder



Rationale

In order to make peacebuilding a part of students' lives, they need to think about issues that are important to them and act on them in ways that create awareness for others and contribute to a global community. In these two lessons, students will think critically about peacebuilding and take action on an issue.

Objectives

1. To personalize conflict and develop empathy by stepping into the shoes of someone from a conflict zone.
2. To think critically about being a peacebuilder and taking action.

Standards

- ◆ Individual Development and Identity
- ◆ Global Connections
- ◆ Civic Ideals and Practices

Time: 4 hours (While this is written as a lesson, it is more like a mini-unit with several parts, culminating in an action project. You can choose to do all of the parts over several days, or you can select one or two of the activities, depending on your time.)

Materials

- Peacebuilding Speech Worksheet*
- Action Project Worksheet*
- Access to the Internet for research and to show videos



4 hours

Procedures

Learning from the past (30 minutes)

1. Write the following quote by Gandhi on the board: “Be the Change You Wish to See in the World.” Ask students to take 30 seconds to write down what the quote means to them. Then have them share their thoughts with the person next to them. Ask for a few volunteers to share their responses with the whole class.
2. Now have them look at the response they wrote and think more specifically. Have them answer the following questions individually. They can express their ideas in any way—writing, poetry, drawing, etc. Give students 10 minutes and then ask volunteers to share:
 - ◆ What changes do you want to see?
 - ◆ What thoughts, feelings, actions, and habits do you need in order to be that change?
3. As a whole class discussion, ask students what they recall from Lesson 3.1 (What does it take to be a peacebuilder?):
 - ◆ What characteristics make a good peacebuilder?
 - ◆ Who is an example of an effective peacebuilder? Why?
3. Explain that students will interview their parents, grandparents, or elders that evening about who was an effective peacebuilder when they were growing up. Divide students into pairs and have them work together to generate three to five interview questions. They should write these down.
4. Ask a few students to share their questions.

The Next Day: From the past to the present (30 minutes)

1. Ask students for their general reactions to their interview experiences the day before.
2. Divide students into groups of three or four and have them share the information from their interviews.
3. Lead a whole class conversation using some or all of the following questions:
 - ◆ What were the issues of your parents’/grandparents’/elders’ time? How did peacebuilders respond to these issues?
 - ◆ What strategies did the peacebuilders use? Who helped them?
 - ◆ What challenges did they face? How did they overcome these challenges?
 - ◆ How effective were they as a peacebuilder?
4. Transition to present day and ask students to focus on the world today. Ask the following questions:
 - ◆ What do you consider the major issues of today? Local, national, or international?
 - ◆ What are the international issues involving conflict that you are passionate about or that need transformation? How are these issues tied to conflict? Here, you can revisit the brainstorming session from the day before when students reacted to the quote, “Be the Change You Wish to See in the World.”

Personalizing Conflict and Change (90 minutes)

1. Tell students they are going to write a Peacebuilding Speech, using the *Peacebuilding Speech Worksheet* to guide them. Have each student imagine that they are a person who has been involved in one of the international issues around conflict which the class has identified. They have been asked

to present a peacebuilding speech to the United Nations about their experience and about the impact of the issue. You may want to have students research their issue/conflict the night before for homework. This allows more time for class readings of the speeches.

Examples include:

- ◆ a child in a refugee camp in Darfur who isn't able to go to school. (issue: education; conflict: Darfur)
- ◆ a former child soldier in Colombia who had difficulty reintegrating into his community (issue: child soldiers; conflict: Colombia)

Share with students the content guidelines below for their peacebuilding speech and allow them time to research their issue and their conflict:

- ◆ Describe who you are.
 - ◆ Explain why this issue is important.
 - ◆ Describe how the issue affects people's lives and how it has affected your life.
 - ◆ Explain what we can do to change things for the better.
2. Have students share their peacebuilding speeches in small groups or in front of the class, depending on time.
 3. After the speeches, lead a whole class discussion using some or all of the following questions:
 - ◆ Which speech stood out to you? Why?
 - ◆ What personal impact do international conflicts have on us?
 - ◆ Have you ever heard testimony from a survivor of a conflict? What impact did it have on you? Why might it be important for people around the world, and particularly people in positions of power, to hear these stories?
 - ◆ What role can we play in making a difference in responding to international conflicts?

Taking Action (90 minutes)

1. Share with students that now they will make their own Action Projects to address an international issue of their choice.
2. Divide students in groups of three or four depending on what they are interested in (you can refer them back to the issues they said were important earlier).
3. Introduce the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely) framework to help them develop their action plans.

Some examples of action ideas include:

Issue: Landmines

Project: Hold a "teach-in," in which you talk to classes about the number of landmines around the world and the impact on the lives of people who live near them, educating students about the conflict and how they can get involved.

Project: Hold a fundraiser to raise money to train a de-mining dog and give the money to an organization that provides the training.

Note: If time allows, you can access congressional testimony or download a video of a young person who was a victim of conflict giving their testimony and show it to students. Then ask students how they felt hearing the testimony. What kind of impact could such testimony have on the audience?

Extension Activity

After students have implemented their Projects, have them develop a creative presentation about it to share with younger students: "Use what you have learned in order to educate and motivate young people about peacebuilding."

Issue: Conflict in Uganda

Project: Have a creative fundraiser (bake sale, bracelets etc.) that shares information about the conflict and raises funds for a peacebuilding organization that assists orphans from the conflict.

4. Distribute the *Action Project Worksheet* on which students will develop their ideas. Students should develop a plan that they can implement and set a date when it will be achieved.

Alternative: Groups can present their action plans and the class can vote on the one they like the best. The entire class can then work together to implement this plan instead of each group implementing their own.

5. After the projects have been completed, lead a conversation using some or all of the following questions:
 - ◆ What were the highlights of the projects?
 - ◆ What did you do well?
 - ◆ What challenges did you face and how did you overcome them? What areas can you identify for improvement?
 - ◆ What did you learn as a group and individually about peacebuilding?

Assessment:

Peacebuilding Speeches, *Action Project Worksheets*, Project Implementation, group work and class discussion

Lesson 3.3 WORKSHEET: PEACEBUILDING SPEECH

Name _____

Directions: In this activity, you will play the role of someone who has been affected by an international issue involving a conflict. Imagine that you have been invited to present at the U.N. about your issue and its impact. The U.N. is hearing testimony from a “real world person” as part of their policymaking process. You have a big responsibility! Your speech must be well-prepared, personal, and passionate.

1. What issue will your speech address? What is the conflict connected to your issue?
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2. Who are you? Describe your character’s name, age, background, and experience with conflict.
 - a. Name _____

 - b. Age _____

 - c. Background _____

 - d. Experience with Conflict _____

3. Why is this issue important?
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Lesson 3.3 WORKSHEET: ACTION PROJECT

Be the Change You Wish to See in the World—Gandhi

Group Members _____

1. What issue of conflict will your group address?

2. Why is this issue important to you?

3. Write down three key facts about the issue that you can use in your Action Plan.
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.

4. Brainstorm three ideas of Action Projects. Remember be simple and creative! As you plan, use the SMART process to help you select a project: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely.
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.

5. Choose one idea and describe it below. Write the date your action project will be completed.
 - a. Project description (What will happen?):

 - b. Goal (What do you hope to accomplish?):

 - c. Timeline (What will happen when? List what steps toward implementation will occur and when they will occur.):

 - d. Human resources (How many people do you need for the project and what skills do they need?):

 - e. Financial resources (What materials will you need? How much money will you need to buy supplies or materials for the project and how will you get that money or where will you get the supplies?):

 - f. Evaluation (How will you know the project was a success?)

6. Decide on a role for everyone in the group. Examples are: group leader, teacher coordinator, artist, researcher, accountant, photographer. Write these roles below.