



Week 25

Learn about Conflict with Zion and Zuri

MINDFULNESS PRACTICE: Squeeze and Release

OBJECTIVES: Learn what conflict means.
Practice kindness.

PREPARE: A bell or chime
Fun Saturday by Linda Ryden (included in the lesson)
Your Kindness Pals list

Welcome to our unit on Conflict Resolution! All of the lessons since Week 1 have been building to this unit, which would not be nearly as helpful without the foundation you have built with your students to this point. We strongly believe that mindfulness, empathy, and kindness practice together with a basic understanding of brain science create the necessary foundation for skillful, compassionate conflict resolution. Today students will get to learn about conflict through a role play. We will use skits in nearly every lesson of this unit to help students begin to internalize positive, skillful ways of working out conflicts. Have fun!

Mindfulness Practice

Say: *Today we're going to try Squeeze and Release again.* (Remind them how to do this practice from Week 16).

Invite today's Mindfulness Helper (MH) to come to the front of the class to sit next to you on a chair (or next to you on the floor).

Say: *Let's all be happy for _____.* (sign language applause)

Prompt the MH to say: "Let's get into our mindful bodies. Let's close our eyes or look down. Let's do Squeeze and Release."

You or the Mindfulness Helper can lead the class through the practice again.

Ask the MH to ring the bell when the mindful breathing is complete and return to their seat.

Conflict Resolution: What is Conflict?

You might say: *Today we are going to learn a word that might be new to some of you.*

Ask the class:

- Has anybody ever heard the word **Conflict** before?
- Does anybody have a guess about what it means?

Say: *In our Mindfulness lessons, we've been learning about what happens in our brains when we get angry. Well, sometimes when we are angry, it is because we have a conflict.*

A conflict can be any kind of small problem. Maybe you are having a playdate and you want to play outside but your friend wants to play inside. Maybe your little brother wants to play with you, but you want to read.

Conflicts can stay small or they can get bigger. Can anyone give an example of a conflict?

Take a few answers.

Today we are going to act out a conflict. I'm going to choose two kids to act out the story about a brother and sister named Zion and Zuri.

Act it Out: Fun Saturday (1)

Choose two kids to act out the story and ask them to pantomime what you are describing in the story — if you say they are jumping up and down the kids will jump up and down.

You will be the narrator and you will read their lines and then the kids can repeat the lines after you read them.

Here is the script to read aloud.

Narrator: *Every Saturday morning Zuri and Zion go to the park. **Zuri and Zion** LOVE Saturday mornings!*

They love to play basketball. (act out playing basketball) They love to go on the swings. (act out playing on the swings, etc.) They love to climb trees. They love to ride bikes. They love to count ladybugs. They love to play in the water fountain. They love to do the monkey bars.

Have the kids suggest more things for Zion and Zuri to do at the park and have the kids act them out.

*Last week **Zuri** was able to get all the way across the monkey bars for the first time and she really wanted to do it again this week.*

*But **Zion** had been dreaming about splashing in the fountain all during this hot week.*

***Zuri** said, "Let's go to the monkey bars! I can't wait to try going all the way across!"*

***Zion** said, "No! I'm hot! I want to splash in the fountain!"*

***Zuri** said, "But Mom said we have to stay together! And I want to go to the monkey bars!" **Zuri** was starting to get frustrated now. Her face was getting hot and her body felt tight and tense.*

***Zion** was angry. He always had to watch his younger sister and sometimes it made him feel frustrated. He could feel that frustrated feeling in his belly. He said, "The monkey bars are boring! I've been going across since I was 6 years old!"*

***Zuri** was really mad now. She said, "You're a show-off! Big brothers are the worst!"*

***Zion** was angry too. He said, "No, you're the worst!"*

***Zuri** said, "What?! I'm going to tell Mom that you're the meanest brother ever!"*

***Zion** said, "Fine with me!"*

They both stormed off and sat on separate benches for the rest of the morning.

The End.

Discuss and Reflect

Spark a discussion with these questions:

- What is the conflict between Zion and Zuri?
- How can you tell that they are getting angry? (Body language, yelling.)
- What part of Zuri and Zion's brains are controlling their actions? (Amygdala.)
- Has their amygdala chosen fight, flight, or freeze?
- How is that choice working out for them?
- What part of their brains would help them work this conflict out peacefully? (The prefrontal cortex.)
- If they were using their PFCs, how could they solve this conflict?

Take a few answers.

Act it Out: Fun Saturday (2)

Introduce the Role Play again.

You might say: *Now we are going to act out the story of Zion and Zuri again but we are going to write new endings to the story.*

Choose two new volunteers to be Zuri and Zion.

Invite the volunteers to act out the story as you read. Freeze the action at various points to ask the class for suggestions about how to solve their conflicts.

If they don't suggest it, offer these ideas:

- They could take turns playing on the monkey bars and then the fountain.
- One of them could just offer to do what the other one wants to do out of simple kindness.
- They could compromise and do something else, like play on the swings.

Ask: *Would things have turned out better for the Zuri and Zion if they had tried any of our ideas?*

Kindness Pals

Invite students to share what they did for their pals over the last week.

Assign new Kindness Pals after they are finished sharing.



Kindness Pals Activity: Hippocampus Workout

Have students sit with their Kindness pal and ask each other five questions: favorite color, favorite food, favorite pizza topping, favorite time of day, and favorite animal. Take turns answering the questions.

Then see if they can repeat back all of their Kindness Pal's answers, taking turns. If they manage that, then they can think of five more questions and try to remember all ten answers. Help them give their hippocampus a workout!

Closing words: *Okay our time is up for today. Thank you for a great class, everyone. Let's have a nice quiet moment for the bell. If you want to, you can close your eyes, picture your new Kindness Pal, and imagine yourself doing something kind for them this week.*

Ring the bell