Let's talk about healthy relationships:

lesson series overview

Anna Freud

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Lesson series overview
Let's talk about healthy relationships: friendships and conflict

Age group: 10-11	**Key words:** healthy relationship, disagreement, conflict, resolution, empathy, respect, support network, mental wellbeing, emotional regulation
Timings: 3 hours in total – split across 4 parts: 1. Healthy friendships and wellbeing (50 mins) 2. Resolving conflict and supporting our wellbeing (55 mins) 3. Our digital world (50 mins) 4. Over to you (25 mins)	**Learning outcomes:** By the end of this series of learning, pupils will understand: • the importance of healthy friendships and how they support our wellbeing • the characteristics of a healthy friendship applying in person and online • how their own feelings can fluctuate in everyday situations • the importance of showing empathy towards others, particularly when there is a difference of opinion • the difference between disagreement and conflict and how this impacts our wellbeing.

Delivery guidance

Lesson style:
These lessons follow on from the 'Let's talk about healthy relationships: friendships and conflict' assembly. The series can be delivered in an individual morning or afternoon session, or can be delivered as separate lessons across several of weeks or a term.

This learning series forms part of a wider curriculum around emotional literacy and how children manage their emotions. This learning is best embedded through further lessons that build on the strategies and skills they have learned.

Accessibility:
The lesson series is largely discussion-based, with activities that support a range of learning needs. The resources have been designed with accessibility in mind, offering flexibility for teachers to adapt them to best support their pupils.

Lesson structure:
Lessons follow the 5E Model, a structured approach designed to make learning engaging, pupil-led and meaningful. This model supports deeper understanding by guiding pupils through different stages of learning.

- Engage – assesses prior knowledge, identifies gaps and sparks curiosity.
- Explore – encourages hands-on activities and discussion to investigate concepts.
- Explain – introduces key ideas and vocabulary, clarifying misconceptions.
- Elaborate – reinforces learning by applying knowledge in new contexts.
- Evaluate – assesses understanding through reflection, discussion and formative or summative assessment

Ground rules:
We recommend that you establish ground rules around respectful listening and confidentiality.
For further guidance, please see the PSHE Association's guide to handling complex issues safely in the classroom.
If you have any concerns during the session about a pupil's safety or wellbeing, follow your school's safeguarding policy and procedures.

Curriculum links:
See our curriculum guidance for further information.

Resources: lesson series presentation slides, sticky notes, colouring pens or pencils, paper, whiteboards
Please note: the presentation slides are designed to be used with a screen or interactive whiteboard so that pupils can follow along visually.

Part 1:	Part 2:	Part 3:
• 'Comic strip conflict' senario and comprehension questions	• 'What would you do?' scenarios	• Advice column print out • 'How would you react?' scenarios

Part one: healthy friendships and wellbeing (50 minutes)

This lesson builds on the assembly and introduces the concepts of healthy relationships and friendships, conflict and managing strong emotions.

Resources needed:

- 'Comic strip conflict' senario and comprehension questions

Learning outcome:

Pupils will understand what makes a friendship healthy and how they support their wellbeing.

Pupils will have the opportunity to:

- list and describe the key characteristics of a healthy friendship
- recognise the difference between a simple disagreement and a conflict
- identify and name their own emotions and recognise emotions in others
- demonstrate basic conflict resolution strategies.

Suggested timings:	
Engage	10 mins
Explore	10 mins
Explain	10 mins
Elaborate	15 mins
Evaluate	5 mins

Slide	Main activities	Overview
4-5	Learning objectives	Overview of the session and key learning objectives.
7	Our positive learning environment	Pupils establish ground rules for respectful communication and collaboration by reviewing or creating a class agreement.
8	What does a healthy friendship look like to you?	Baseline assessment activity: pupils create a visual representation of a healthy friendship to assess their knowledge before exploring key concepts.
10	Words match	Recap on the learning from the assembly on what constitutes a healthy relationship.
11	Relationships and wellbeing	Pupils recap key points from the assembly by discussing mental wellbeing, its link to relationships and how awareness can help manage wellbeing.
12-13	Friendship in the spotlight	Pupils identify and share friendship qualities by describing their partner(s) and themselves using verbal, written or visual responses.
14-19	Understanding conflict in friendships	Pupils revisit key learning from the assembly about how healthy friendships support wellbeing. They will explore the difference between disagreements and conflicts, defining key terms through a matching activity. Pupils will also be introduced to conflict resolution, considering how it helps maintain positive relationships.

Slide	Main activities	Overview
20-22	Conflict and big feelings: comic strip conflict	Pupils explore the impact of conflict on their feelings and wellbeing through a comic strip resource. They respond to comprehension-style questions, analysing friendship fallouts and considering emotional responses. Pupils reflect on their own experiences of resolving disagreements and discuss strategies for managing emotions. Teachers facilitate discussions on how emotions build and fade over time, helping pupils understand how conflict affects behaviour and decision-making.
23	How can we manage big feelings?	This slide explores self-care strategies for managing strong emotions and the importance of a support network. Pupils will reflect on who they can trust and may share their own self-care ideas.
25	Reflection	Pupils revisit and build on their visual representation of a healthy friendship, adding new ideas and discussing their learning with a partner or group.

Part two: resolving conflict and supporting our wellbeing (55 minutes)

This section explores conflicts in friendships, helping pupils build on emotional intelligence and understand that there are ways to manage emotions which arise in conflict situations.

Please note: *this section comprises an interactive, drama-based activity that involves role-play which may require consideration of space and movement, particularly for larger classes.*

Resources needed:

- 'What would you do?' scenarios

Learning outcome:

- Pupils will explore how conflicts arise in friendships and learn strategies to resolve these conflicts while caring for their own wellbeing.

Pupils will have the opportunity to:

- identify different types of conflict in friendship scenarios
- actively participate in role-play, showing how to use conflict resolution strategies effectively
- explain how conflicts impact their feelings and overall wellbeing
- apply strategies to resolve conflicts and maintain your emotional wellbeing.

Suggested timings:

Engage	10 mins
Explore	15 mins
Explain	10 mins
Elaborate	15 mins
Evaluate	5 mins

Slide	Main activities	Overview
2	Check in	An opportunity for teachers to check in with how the pupils are feeling after the learning so far, find out whether anyone needs additional support and remind pupils of group agreement.
4	Learning objectives	Overview of the session and key learning objectives.
5-7	Friendships and conflict: what do you think?	Baseline assessment activity: Pupils reflect on their beliefs about friendships and conflict by voting on statements and discussing their responses.
8-13	Exploring conflict in friendships	Pupils role-play friendship conflict scenarios in small groups, with observers considering emotions and possible resolutions.
14	Feelings thermometer	Pupils analyse their performed conflict scenarios, using a feelings thermometer to explore emotions and discuss strategies for managing feelings in challenging situations.
15-19	Managing our emotions	Pupils explore different emotions and discuss strategies for managing them through class feedback or a written activity.

Slide	Main activities	Overview
20-23	Finding what works for you	This section explores different strategies for maintaining wellbeing and resolving conflicts in friendships. Pupils reflect on their own approaches, consider the role of positive relationships in mental health and learn key conflict resolution strategies. Teachers guide discussions, provide examples and encourage pupils to think about how these strategies can be applied in real life.
24-25	How can we do this better?	Pupils re-enact conflict scenarios, selecting and applying strategies to reach a positive, safe outcome.
26-27	Friendships and conflict: what do you think now?	Pupils reflect on their initial views about friendships, conflict, and wellbeing, identifying how their opinions have changed, what influenced their thinking and discuss their learning with peers.

Part three: our digital world (50 mins)

In this section, pupils are invited to consider a conflict scenario that begins in the playground at school and escalates later online. They will be encouraged to think about how we can be misunderstood when we are communicating from behind a screen and the importance of empathy and respect when navigating friendships online.

Resources needed:

- Advice column print out
- 'How would you react; scenarios

Learning outcome:

- Pupils will explore how conflicts arise in friendships and learn strategies to resolve these conflicts while caring for their own wellbeing.

Pupils will have the opportunity to:

- identify different types of conflict in friendship scenarios
- actively participate in role-play, showing how to use conflict resolution strategies effectively
- explain how conflicts impact their feelings and overall wellbeing
- apply strategies to resolve conflicts and maintain your emotional wellbeing.

Suggested timings:

Engage	10 mins
Explore	15 mins
Explain	10 mins
Elaborate	10 mins
Evaluate	5 mins

Slide	Main activities	Overview
3	Learning objectives	Overview of the session and key learning objectives.
4-5	How would you react?	Baseline assessment activity: pupils explore how friendship challenges arise both online and in person, responding to scenarios, reflecting on their reactions and discussing different perspectives.
6-15	The impact of digital conflict: how might you feel?	This activity allows pupils to explore how conflict escalates online, considering how empathy, misunderstanding, and digital communication impact relationships. They reflect on how emotions can be misread and how empathy helps de-escalate situations.
16-18	Empathy in online communication	This section explores how messages can be misinterpreted, especially online, and the importance of empathy in communication. Pupils will reflect on different interpretations of a message, discuss how misunderstandings can escalate and consider where to seek support when dealing with friendship issues. They will explore a diagram of support networks, identifying trusted people inside and outside school, and professional support. They will also learn about self-regulation strategies to manage emotions before seeking help.
19-20	What advice would you give?	This activity allows pupils to take on the role of an advice columnist. They will apply their understanding of online conflict resolution, empathy and emotional regulation to offer thoughtful guidance on friendship challenges.
21-22	Reflection: 3-2-1	Pupils reflect on their learning by recording what they've learned, noting any remaining questions and considering how to apply their insights to real-life friendships.

Part four: over to you (25 mins)

This section encourages pupils to reflect on their learning, consider how they can apply conflict management strategies, and explore ways to support healthy friendships within their school community.

Through discussion, pupils consolidate key lessons on empathy, communication and wellbeing, identifying ways to create a positive impact. The session concludes with signposting to support services and a recap of the main learning points.

Learning outcome:

- Pupils will reflect on their learning, consolidate their understanding of healthy friendships and conflict management and propose ways to support wellbeing in their school community

Pupils will have the opportunity to:

- articulate what they have learned about healthy friendships, conflict resolution, and emotional wellbeing
- generate practical ideas to enhance friendships and support wellbeing in their school
- identify when and how to seek help if friendship challenges arise, for themselves or others
- contribute thoughtfully to group discussions and written reflections, demonstrating their understanding of the key concepts.

Suggested timings:	
Engage	5 mins
Explore	15 mins
Explain	3 mins
Elaborate	2 mins
Evaluate	5 mins

Slide	Main activities	Overview
4	Over to you!	Pupils will review their learning through a written or verbal activity, reflecting on key ideas and discussing their understanding in pairs, groups or as a class.
5	How can we make a difference?	This activity will encourage pupils to apply their learning by developing practical ways to support friendships and wellbeing in their school community. Pupils will consider how their ideas could be implemented, who would be involved and how they can make a positive impact.

Extension activities

We have included a few extension activities to help extend and deepen your pupils' learning about healthy friendships, conflict resolution and emotional wellbeing.
These tasks are designed to reinforce the key concepts covered in the lessons while encouraging self-reflection and creative expression.
Below is an overview of each extension component along with key instructions and ideas for pupils.

How big is the problem?	Pupils work through various scenarios using a problem scale and a feelings wall to assess their emotional responses and identify appropriate strategies to support their wellbeing. This activity encourages them to think critically about the intensity of different situations and explore practical ways to manage their feelings.
Self-reflection assessment	This assessment asks pupils to reflect on what it means to be a good friend by sharing examples (using words or pictures) and summarising their understanding of resolving conflicts in friendships. It is designed to reinforce and consolidate the key concepts from the lesson series, allowing pupils to articulate the qualities of healthy friendships and the strategies for managing disagreements.
Continued learning ideas	Continued learning helps pupils deepen their understanding and share knowledge. Here are some ideas they could use to implement and share their learning with the wider school community: • run an assembly for the school community or parents • write an article for the school newsletter • design posters or flyers on healthy friendships and conflict resolution • producing a skit or role-play performance that demonstrates conflict resolution strategies • organising a community challenge or week-long awareness initiative to promote positive interactions. These suggestions are just a starting point. Feel free to adapt them or come up with your own ideas to suit your setting.