

## Revised Conflict Resolution Activity

(Revisions are Type in Italics)

**Classroom Application:** Secondary Resource Room      **Skill:** Conflict Resolution

**Materials Needed:** - 1 piece of black construction paper glued back-to-back to a piece of white construction paper.  
- A copy of the story "On the Road"- (see below)

### Activity:

In preparation, glue a piece of black construction paper to the back of a piece of white construction paper. Keep the paper out of sight when starting the activity. *Begin by having the students find partners (you can assign is they have a hard time pairing up by themselves.* Once everyone has a partner, ask two students to come up to the front of the room. Have them face each other and close their eyes. Now bring out the glued construction paper and hold it up between them at eye level with the black side facing one of them and the white side facing the other. Have them open their eyes. Ask each student, "**What color do you see?**" For effect, repeat the question when both of them give different answers. Then ask the group, "**Why are they giving different answers when they are both looking at the same piece of paper?**" After taking comments, show the class that the paper is actually two colors different colors.

Now read the following story. Explain that they should listen carefully because you will be asking *partner groups* for feedback.

### On The Road

One afternoon a man and his family were driving slowly along a road enjoying the view when in the distance they saw a boy lying in the grass to the side of the road. They could barely spot him because the weeds were so tall. Down in the ravine they could also see a bike lying down. As they get closer to the boy, they saw him rise up slightly and cock his arm as if he was going to throw something. Sure enough, the boy let loose with a rock thrown out into the street. As the car got closer, they see him wind up and throw another rock directly at their car. The man speeds up to get away as quickly as possible, but the boy has time to throw one more rock which hits the side window of the car and causes it to crack, scaring his children that were in the backseat of the car. The car sped off to safety. A couple of miles down the road, the driver spotted a police car. He stopped and complained to the officer and asked him to arrest the boy for breaking his car window and putting his children in danger.

Stop reading at this point and ask, ***Talk to your partner and decide if you agree that the driver has a right to want the police to deal with this boy?*** Acknowledge, without comment, those that raise their hand.

Continue by saying, **“Now here is Michael’s, which is the name of the boy at the side of the road, view of this same event.”**

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Early that morning, Michael was out on his bike delivering the morning newspaper. As he was riding along the road, a large truck swerved and almost hit him. The wind from the passing truck caused the bike to sway and the newspapers that were loaded on the back made it impossible for Michael to keep the bike from going off the road. He careened uncontrollably down the side of the road into a ravine and smashed into a tree. The impact threw him off of the bike and flipped him into the air. He landed with such force that one of his legs was broken, and he passed out from the pain. When he woke up, his leg was hurting so badly he could hardly move. He spent a lot of time slowly pulling himself up the side of the ravine back to the road. He then spent over an hour waving at passing cars, but he was so well hidden in the weeds that no one stopped. His leg was bleeding and he was becoming very weak. As a last desperate move, he decided to throw rocks at passing cars to see if he could get their attention. Unfortunately, most cars were going so fast that no one noticed him. When a car finally came by that was driving slower than the others, Michael gave it his best shot. He was relieved then the rock hit the car, but disappointed when the car kept on going.

Now ask the partner groups, **“How does this new information affect what you were thinking about the kid who was lying in the weeds?”**

***PARTNERS SHOULD DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AND BE READY TO ORALLY SHARE THEIR THOUGHTS AND SUPPORT THEM FOR ONE QUESTION FOR FROM EACH GROUP OF QUESTIONS.***

**“What” Questions:**

- Are both people in this story telling the truth as they saw it? Support your answer.
- At what point did you start to reconsider how you felt about Michael? Why?

**“So What” Questions:**

- Why can two people see the same event and feel differently about it?
- Can two people with different stories both be right?
- What is the difference between “listening” to someone and “understanding” what they are saying?
- How do our past experiences influence how we feel about an event?
- Why is it important to see things from the other person’s point of view?
- What does it mean to “walk a mile in someone else’s shoes”?

**“Now What” Questions:**

- How can listening and understanding help us solve a conflict?
- Why is it beneficial to consider a problem from the others person’s point of view?

**Final Task:**

*As we have learned, understanding and respecting someone else's point of view is a very important skill to possess when solving conflicts. Now it is time to practice what you have learned. Together with your partner, please select and complete one of the following tasks.*

*1. Think of a time in your life in which you were involved in a conflict that involved two different points of view. Together with your partner, role-play the conflict, clearly establishing both points of view. Then, role-play how you would solve the conflict in a way that would be acceptable to all parties involved.*

*2. It is your turn to stump the teacher or class. Partners should come up with a conflict scenario in which individuals display different or opposite viewpoints. Role play the conflict and choose either the teacher or another student to state the different viewpoints and find a way to resolve the conflict peacefully.*