

Date Reviewed

March 2023

Course

[Social Studies 6](#)

Topic

Conflict Resolution

Big Idea

Economic self-interest can be a significant cause of conflict among peoples and governments.

Essential Question

How can we resolve conflicts peacefully?

Content

Students are expected to know the following:

- regional and international conflict

Curricular Competencies

Students are expected to be able to do the following:

- Develop a plan of action to address a selected problem or issue.

Core Competencies

[Communication](#) – I can participate in discussions and collaborate to complete tasks related to peaceful problem solving.

[Thinking](#) - I can consider ways to resolve conflicts with my family and friends, within my community, and in the world.

[Personal and Social](#) – I can connect my beliefs and choices to perspectives on the Great Bear Rainforest Agreement.

First People's Principles of Learning

- Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational.

Introduction

- Explain that conflicts result from conflicting needs and wants. Conflicts are all around us: in our families, between our friends, in our communities, and in the world.

- Stand in the middle of the room and ask students to imagine that you represent conflict. Have them think about how they usually react when they experience a conflict personally or see a conflict happening nearby. Does conflict make them angry? Does it make them scared? Do they want to get involved or do they want to run away?
- Ask students to imagine that you represent a conflict with a parent. Get them to move to a place in the room that shows their first response to this type of conflict. Have them think about their distance from you, the direction they are facing, and their body position.
- Repeat this process with other types of conflict:
 - conflict with a friend
 - conflict with staff at a store
 - conflict with the police
 - other conflicts suggested by students
- Note that different people may have a different comfort level with the same conflict. A person's level of comfort with specific conflicts depends on various factors including our personalities, our past experiences, and our cultures.

Pre-Assessment

- Have students show what they already understand about conflict by completing the word map on the handout "What is Conflict?"

Interactive Learning Activities

Part 1: Resolving a Conflict

- Explain that conflicts arise every day, so it's important to know how to handle them.
- Have students watch the BrainPOP video [Conflict Resolution: How to Settle Your Differences Fairly](#) (4:35) to learn strategies they can use to calm down when they are angry or frustrated.
- Ask students to name the conflict resolution strategies they saw in the video and create a list on the board:
 - Calming down
 - Listening
 - Understanding
 - Cooperating
 - Asking for help or mediation
 - Compromising
 - Problem solving
- Have students work with a partner to choose one conflict from handout "Conflict Resolution Scenarios" and discuss which strategies would be helpful in resolving this conflict.
- Partners will role-play the conflict and the resolution.
- Debrief each role play by asking what approaches to conflict were shown and whether the students think there was an appropriate resolution to the conflict. Is avoiding conflict a useful strategy? Why or why not?

Part 2: Building Consensus

- Ask students to imagine that the class is allowed to get a pet. Have students suggest different types of class pets they would like to have. List the pets on the board. Ask, "How will we decide between all these options?" Students will likely suggest holding a majority vote.

- Explain that consensus is another way for a group to make a decision. Consensus means a group arrives at a decision by listening to the opinions and concerns of others - they work together to make a good decision. Not everyone is necessarily pleased with the outcome, but they realize it is the best decision for the community.
- Write the principles of consensus decision making on the board:
 - All group members are equal and have a valid perspective to contribute.
 - Everyone has the right, but not the obligation, to change their mind.
 - The decision is reached when all group members accept it.
- Model consensus decision making using a [Fishbowl Strategy](#). Select about six students to sit in a circle while the rest of the class sits in a larger circle around them. Explain that the inner circle will use consensus to choose a class pet. Those in the outer circle are to listen and see what they notice. Act as a facilitator for the discussion in the inner circle. You may need to model and provide specific sentence stems such as “I think/ because” or “they say/ I say.”
- Once the inner circle has come to consensus on a class pet, debrief the activity by having the outer circle share what they noticed.
- Divide students into small groups. Assign each group an issue that would be important to them:
 - games for class party
 - organization of classroom furniture,
 - selection of new playground equipment
 - destination for a field trip
- Provide each student with handout “Reaching Consensus” to organize their own thoughts about the issue.
- Allow groups time to come to a consensus on their issue. Each member should be prepared to report their group’s position to the entire class.
- Debrief the activity by asking
 - What was hard about reaching a consensus?
 - What worked well?
 - What is the value of trying to reach consensus?
 - When is consensus necessary?
 - When might consensus not be needed?
- Point out that consensus was a common foundation of traditional systems of Indigenous governance. In Canada today, consensus decision making is used in the governments of Nunavut and the North West Territories.

Part 3: Causes of Conflict

- Remind students that conflicts are caused by conflicting needs and wants. The causes on conflict within our families and communities are similar to the causes of conflict in the world.
- Divide students into four groups and assign each group one cause of conflict.
 - geographic (conflict over control of land)
 - political (conflict over who has power)
 - economic (conflict over resources)
 - historic (conflict over events that happened in the past)
- Then have each group create a skit that shows the role of their cause of conflict in a school setting. For example, the role of geography could be shown in a conflict about who gets to use the playing field after school, politics could be a conflict about a popular clique excluding a student, economic could be a conflict about a student bringing treats to school but not sharing them fairly, and history could be a conflict about two groups of students who dislike each other because of something that happened in an earlier grade.
- Groups can perform their skit for their classmates to ensure that all students have exposure to all four causes of conflict. Point out that the causes of conflict are often interconnected. Ask whether any of the skits showed more than one cause of conflict.
- Explain that some borders, like that between the United States and Canada, are peaceful ones. Others are places of conflict caused by rivalries about control of the land, disputes over national resources, or disagreements about the past.
- Provide students with the handout “International Conflicts” and access to Britannica’s [8 Hotly Disputed Borders of the World](#). Divide students into 8 small groups and assign each group a different conflict to research.
- Have groups present their findings, allowing time for all students to add information to the “International Conflicts” handout.
- Debrief by having students respond to the question: How are the causes of conflict interconnected?

Part 4: Negotiating an Agreement

- Explain that conflicts can be solved through peaceful negotiations. One example of a negotiated settlement in BC is the Great Bear Rainforest Agreement. In 2016, the Government of BC, First Nations, environmental groups, and forest industry representatives reached an agreement about how the Great Bear Rainforest would be managed now and into the future.
- Show the Government of BC video [Great Bear Rainforest](#) (2:36).
- Divide students into 4 groups:
 - First Nations
 - Government of BC
 - Environmental Groups
 - Forestry Industry
- Show the video again have students listen for the perspective of their assigned stakeholder group.

- Provide students with the handout “Negotiating an Agreement” and have each group research their stakeholders wanted and what they achieved. The links provided below and in the handout can provide a starting place for their research:
 - [First Nations](#)
 - [Government of BC](#)
 - [Environmental Groups](#)
 - [Forestry Industry](#)
- Using a [Jigsaw Strategy](#), have groups share the perspective of their stakeholder group so that all students can understand all four perspectives.

Post-Assessment

[Exit Slip](#)

- What are the causes of conflict?
- What strategies can be used to resolve conflicts in your life and in the world?

Extension Activities

- Read aloud the picture book *A Voice for the Spirit Bears: How One Boy Inspired Millions to Save a Rare Animal* which tells of former Vancouver resident Simon Jackson’s efforts to raise global awareness of the importance of British Columbia’s Great Bear Rainforest.
- You may also want to show the Canadian Geographic video [Simon Jackson on speaking up for the spirit bears](#) (3:29).

Additional References

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Materials and Resources

What is Conflict?

Complete the word map below to show your understanding of conflict.

Conflict

Definition (in your own words)

Examples & Synonyms

Sketch

Non-Examples &
Antonyms

Use the word in a sentence.

Conflict Resolution Scenarios

Select one of the following scenarios to role-play with your partner. Choose an appropriate strategy to resolve the conflict.

While getting ready for school, you notice your favourite sweater is missing. You figure your younger sister borrowed it, so you ask her where it is. She reluctantly pulls it out from under her bed, with a big stain on the front of it.

When you come home from school, your mom is upset because she thinks you broke her laptop without telling her about it. She automatically grounds you, but you know it was actually your brother who did it.

You want to go to the movies with your friends Friday, but your parents have a different idea: They want you to go with them.

You and your best friend have plans for the weekend, and you've been looking forward to hanging out all week. On Friday afternoon, your friend tells you you'll have to do it another time because he's doing something with someone else.

A classmate has asked you for the twentieth time to borrow a pencil. Every time you lend her one, you don't get it back, so this time you say no, she gets angry and starts to yell at you.

International Conflicts

Read about 8 Hotly Disputed Borders of the World <https://www.britannica.com/list/8-hotly-disputed-borders-of-the-world> and complete the chart to explain the causes of each conflict.

	Geographic	Political	Economic	Historic
Senkaku Islands				
Kuril Islands				
Korean Peninsula				
Western Sahara				

Antarctica				
Israel / Palestine				
Somaliland				
Taiwan				

How are the causes of conflict interconnected?

Answer Key--International Conflicts

Read about 8 Hotly Disputed Borders of the World <https://www.britannica.com/list/8-hotly-disputed-borders-of-the-world> and complete the chart to explain the causes of each conflict.

	Geographic	Political	Economic	Historic
Senkaku Islands	Controlled by Japan but claimed by China	One island sold to Japanese government	Oil and gas	
Kuril Islands	Controlled by Russia but Japan claims southern islands			Japan & Russia didn't sign peace treaty at end of WWII
Korean Peninsula	Two countries on one peninsula	North Korea & South Korea		Didn't sign peace treaty after Korean War
Western Sahara		Indigenous Saharawis want independence from Morocco		Fighting for independence since 1970s

Antarctica			Likely valuable natural resources	Antarctica Treaty 1959— countries not allowed to fight over area
Israel / Palestine	Country of Israel created as homeland for Jewish people which resulted in 100 years of conflict			Britain took control of Palestine after Ottoman Empire was defeated in WWI
Somaliland		Declared independence from Somalia in 1991 but not recognized by international community		Britain united all Somali territories except Somaliland during WWII
Taiwan	China claims ownership of island of Taiwan	Separate government from China.		When Japan was defeated in WWII, Taiwan became part of China. When communist government took over China, the former leader of China went to Taiwan to rule.

How are the causes of conflict interconnected?

Negotiating an Agreement

Research the Great Bear Rainforest agreement. In the chart below, summarize what each group wanted and what each group achieved.

Stakeholder Groups	What they wanted	What they achieved
First Nations https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=OnmDR8PtXIo&ab_channel=CoastalFirstNations1		
Government of BC https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/natural-resource-stewardship/great-bear-rainforest/gbr-agreement-highlights		
Environmental Groups http://www.savethegreatbear.org/		
Forestry Industry https://www.naturallywood.com/topics/forest-management-in-british-columbia/		

How is negotiation a peaceful way to resolve a conflict?

Answer Key--Negotiating an Agreement

Research the Great Bear Rainforest agreement. In the chart below, summarize what each group wanted and what each group achieved.

Stakeholder Groups	What they wanted	What they achieved
First Nations	26 First Nations wanted some control over their traditional territory where they have lived for thousands of years	Maintain areas of cultural, ecological, and economic significance to First Nations
Government of BC	Wanted to end this conflict which was having an economic and political impact on the province	An agreement that brought peace to the area
Environmental Groups	Protect this rainforest ecosystem for rare plants and animals (such as Kermode bear)	Rainforest protection (no logging in large areas)
Forestry Industry	To log the area and sell their forest products around the world	Improved logging practices (to ensure a more sustainable harvest)

How is negotiation a peaceful way to resolve a conflict?