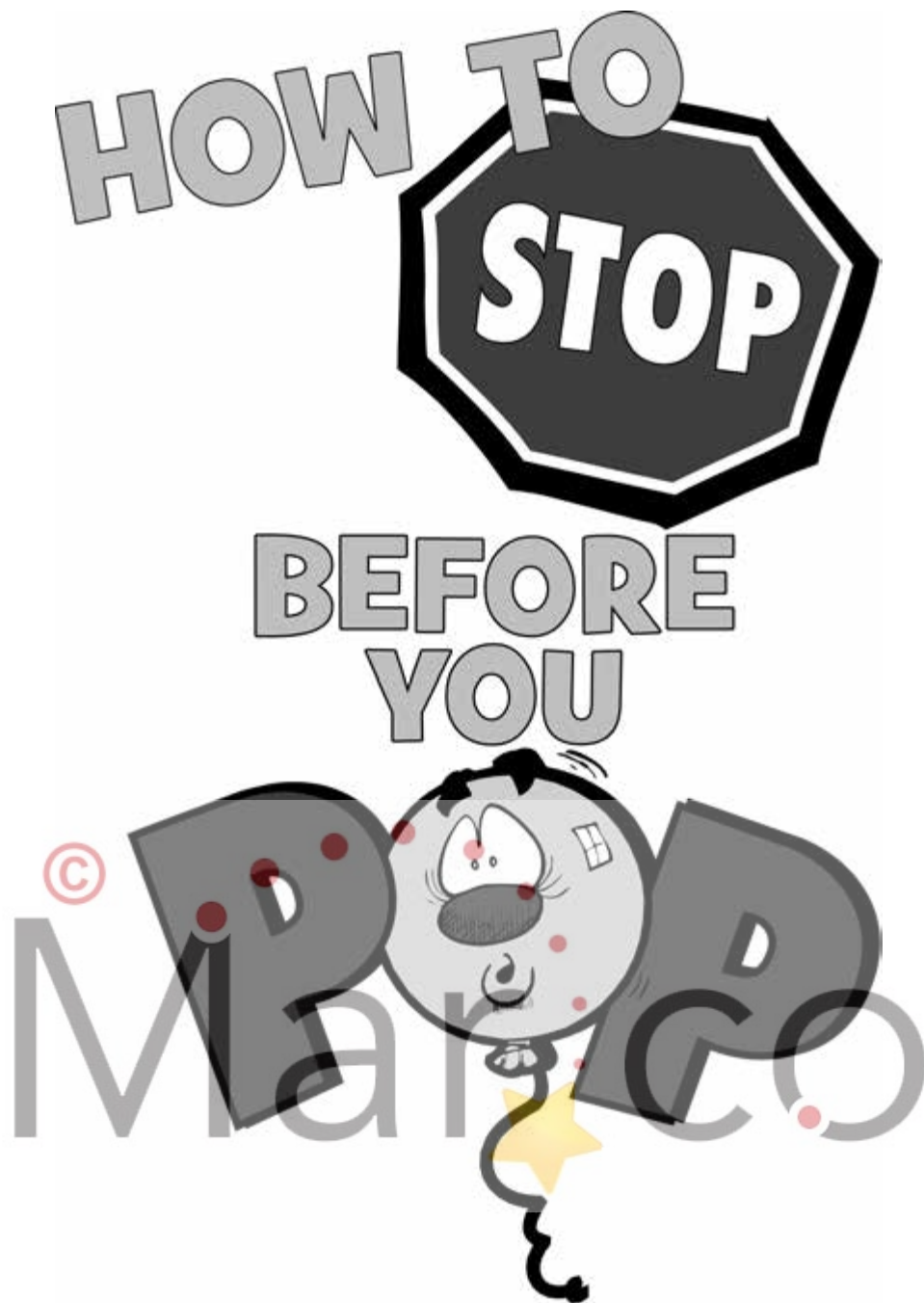




An Anger-Management Program For Grades 3-5

By Kathie Guild



HOW TO STOP BEFORE YOU POP

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How To Stop Before You



The *How To Stop Before You Pop* curriculum consists of various activities, science experiments, role-plays, class discussions, and student activity sheets focused on helping students identify and deal with sources of conflict while teaching communication skills and anger-management strategies. The curriculum is divided into six lessons best presented in sequential order. The lessons include enough material to cover 12 conflict-management classes. The curriculum is intended for Grades 3-5. Each lesson is approximately 45 minutes long.

Lesson 1: *Conflict* is defined, and students are asked to identify sources of conflict in their personal lives. Physical reactions to conflict are described, and students rate their individual levels of tolerance for managing conflict.

Lesson 2: The students focus on calming strategies. Basic stress-reduction skills are introduced and practiced, and the students are asked to identify visual imagery they can use to help calm themselves down. They are then given an experiment to raise their tolerance for frustration and asked to use a calming strategy in order to complete the task.

Lesson 3: This lesson teaches students about the personal power each of them has and the connection between their thoughts and their feelings. The students are taught ways to manage their negative thoughts in order to more effectively control their feelings.

The fourth and fifth lessons are aimed at both verbal and nonverbal communication. These lessons teach the students the ways that good communication skills can be instrumental in resolving conflicts.

Lesson 4: This lesson illustrates the importance of nonverbal communication. The students learn how to recognize their own body language and effectively read the body language of others.

LESSON 1

How To Stop Before You Pop

Materials Needed:

For the leader:

- ☐ Bubble wrap (large bubbles)
- ☐ Chalkboard and chalk or white board and markers
- ☐ Glass bottle with a cork
- ☐ Vinegar
- ☐ Baking soda
- ☐ Glass bottle with screw-on cap
- ☐ Oil
- ☐ Water
- ☐ Blue food coloring
- ☐ 3 tennis balls, preferably of different colors
- ☐ Scissors or sharp knife
- ☐ Transparency of *Anger Mountain* (optional, page 23)
- ☐ Overhead projector (optional)

For each student:

- ☐ Copy of *What Groups Do I Belong To?* (page 20)
- ☐ Copy of *My Rate Of Popping* (page 21)
- ☐ Copy of *My Physical Signs* (page 22)
- ☐ Copy of *What Are My Poppers?* (page 24)
- ☐ Pencil

Optional items for purchase:

- ☐ Poppers: Oriental Trading Company, 5455 S. 90th Street, Omaha, Nebraska 68127. 1-800-875-8480. www.orientaltrading.com
- ☐ Bubble Wrap: Staples. 1-800-3STAPLE. www.staples.com



Lesson:

Introduce the lesson by saying:

For the next few weeks, I will be coming in to talk with you about different ways to handle conflict. I hope to teach you specific strategies and skills that will calm you down when you get really angry and will help you resolve the conflict.

There is nothing wrong with feeling angry. Anger is a normal, healthy emotion that everyone feels and should express. People sometimes think the way to resolve conflict is to swallow their anger or not show that they are mad. That is not true.

It is OK to let others know you are angry or upset, but you must show your emotion in a way that does not involve hurting someone or breaking something.

Show the students the bubble wrap. Then say:

Many of you have seen bubble wrap before. We use it to wrap fragile things so they won't break. I brought it along because it is a good way to demonstrate what anger sounds like when it is released. The bubble wrap expresses itself, but does not do any damage. That is what you will be learning to do with your anger.

Raise your hand if you ever get mad. (Pop one bubble on the bubble wrap.) ***Raise both hands if you ever get really mad.*** (Pop two bubbles on the bubble wrap.) ***Wiggle your fingers if you ever get really, really mad.*** (Pop three bubbles on the bubble wrap.) ***Wave your arms if you ever get so mad that you feel like you are going to explode, pop, or lose control.*** (Pop several bubbles on the bubble wrap.)

All of us have different popping levels and different things that make us pop. In order for us to gain control over our emotions and over the sources of our conflict, it is important for us to know what things make us pop and how much we can stand before we do pop.

I have been using the word conflict quite a bit. What does the word conflict mean? (Pause for responses.) ***Conflict occurs when you disagree with a person or a group of people about how a situation should be resolved. A large conflict involves countries rather than individuals and is referred to as a war. Most conflicts involve possessions and resources or values and needs.***

On the board, write:

THE TWO MAIN SOURCES OF CONFLICT

1. Possessions/Resources
2. Values/Needs

Then continue the lesson by saying:

The first source of conflict is possessions and resources. Conflicts over possessions and resources occur when you want something that someone else has. This might be land, a house, shoes, clothes, a CD, etc. Some relationship problems fall into this category. If your best friend starts hanging out with someone else, for example, you may get possessive and blame the new friend. You might think this new person is "stealing" your old friend away from you. Another common problem in this conflict category is copying. If someone else starts using an expression you use a lot or dressing like you do, this could be the source of a conflict over possessions and resources.

My Physical Signs

NAME _____

DATE _____

Directions: List three physical signs you experience before you pop.



Tornado

NAME _____

DATE _____

Directions: Place a checkmark next to the *tornado feeling* that best describes you and list the main causes or reasons why this is true.



- ☐ I have never felt like I have a tornado inside.
- ☐ I sometimes feel like I have a tornado inside.
- ☐ I often feel like I have a tornado inside.
- ☐ I always feel like I have a tornado inside.

The main reasons I have *tornado feelings* are _____

Color the tornado below with a color that best fits your *tornado feelings*. Then tell why you picked that color.



I picked this color because _____

LESSON 4

Body Language

Materials Needed:

For the leader:

- ☐ Chalkboard and chalk or white board and marker
- ☐ Timer or watch with a second hand

For each student:

- ☐ Copy of *Optical Illusion* (page 57)
- ☐ Copy of *Movie Theater Seats* (page 58)
- ☐ Copy of *Elevator Rules* (page 59)
- ☐ Copy of *What Am I Saying?* (page 60)
- ☐ Copy of *Body Language* (page 61)
- ☐ Pencil



Lesson:

Introduce the lesson by saying:

In our lessons so far, we have identified our poppers, focused on our physical reactions to anger, recognized ways to help us calm down and regain our power, and learned that what we think is what we feel.

In our next two lessons, we will look at communication skills. When you are in a problematic situation, you need good communication skills to help resolve things. If you are armed with good communication skills, you can solve just about any problem that comes your way. We communicate with others in two different ways: verbally and nonverbally.

Today's lesson will focus on nonverbal behavior. This kind of communication is also called body language. Does anyone know what that means? (Pause for responses.) Body language is how we express ourselves without using words. Some people who study the way people behave believe that half of what we communicate is communicated through body language.

Activity: Optical Illusion

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is to show the students that nonverbal behaviors can be difficult to read.

Body Language

NAME _____

DATE _____

Directions: Draw a line from each statement to the facial expression that communicates those words.

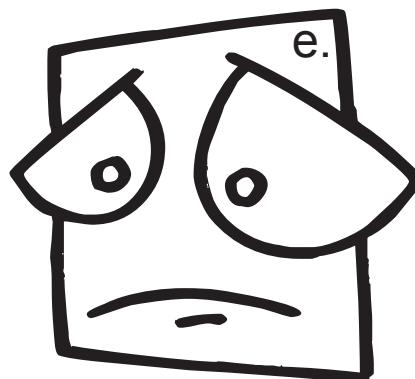
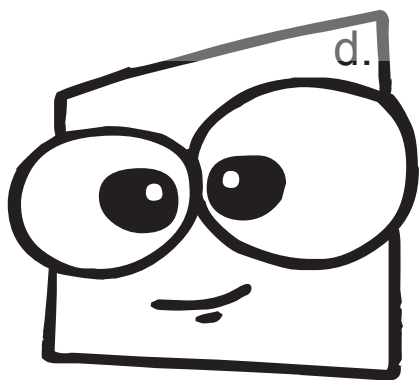
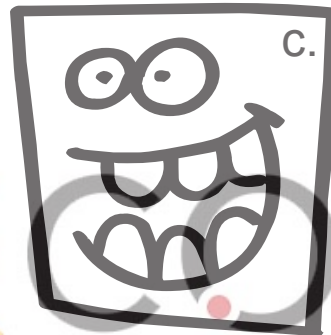
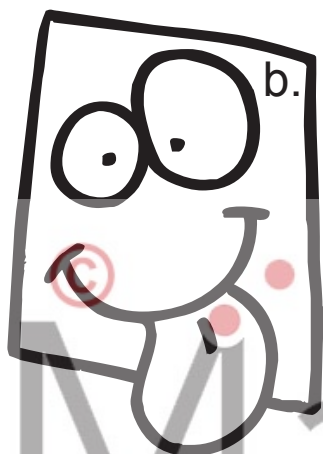
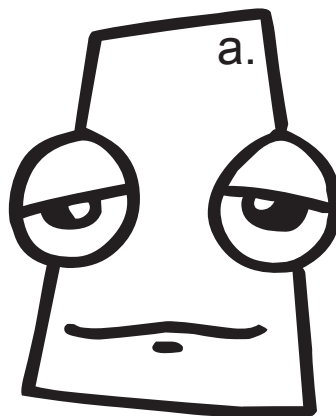
I'm paying attention.

I'm not listening.

I'm bored.

I'm in charge.

I'm confused.



Five Guided Tasks

Names _____

1. Identify The Problem Popper

Directions: Group members pick a common popper from the list below.

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Cheating | ☐ Copying Work |
| ☐ Lying | ☐ Copying Style |
| ☐ Stealing | ☐ Messing With Your Stuff |
| ☐ Name-Calling/Teasing | ☐ Talking Behind Your Back |



Directions: Group members pick a scene below that matches their common popper.

Cheating: During a card game, one kid tried to hide the extra cards drawn so he/she would win. The other kids tell him/her to stand up, because they suspect he/she is sitting on the extra cards.

Lying: A student says that he/she is flying in a private jet to Las Vegas over Winter Break. The other students don't believe it and ask him/her to prove it.

Stealing: A group of students is sitting at a table. A pink eraser belonging to a student at the next table has fallen to the floor. A student at the first table grabs the eraser and quickly writes his/her name on it. The student who dropped the eraser notices that it is missing and sees what looks like his/her missing eraser at the next table. The student who picked up the eraser refuses to give it back. He/she claims that he/she found the eraser, which has his/her name on it.

Name-Calling/Teasing: A student continually gets picked on because of his/her last name.

Copying Work: A student sitting at a table with a group of students doesn't complete his/her assignments and tries to get the answers from other kids at the table.

Copying Style: A student starts copying a popular student's expressions and mannerisms in order to be more like him/her.

Messing With Your Stuff: A younger brother/sister keeps coming into your room and messing with your stuff. You keep asking him/her to stop, but he/she laughs at you.

Talking Behind Your Back: A group of kids has told you that a certain friend talks behind your back. When you confront the friend, he/she denies it and says the other kids are lying.