

Alternative Suspension Activities



Story-based scenarios to teach empathy, problem-solving, & perspective taking



Alternative Suspension Activities

Thanks for purchasing this product!



One of the most difficult parts of working with students is helping them manage their behavior. Traditional discipline such as suspensions and expulsions that has been found to be ineffective at changing behavior has left teachers and administrators feeling powerless as to how to deal with negative school behaviors.

One of the best ways to help students learn to exhibit appropriate behavior is to teach them to think about their actions and their effect on others. While it's often difficult for students to think about their own actions after a behavioral situation, thinking about other people's similar actions is less threatening, which is where these scenarios can help. Scenarios address issues such as disruption, lying, disrespect, bullying, property damage, weapons at school, threats, LGBT bullying, racism, and physical aggression/fighting.

NOTE: All scenarios are also EDITABLE, so you can change anything about them to fit your student's needs. However, this product does contain mature content related to issues such as drugs/alcohol, sex/dating, adult language, violence, and racism. Please preview ALL activities before presenting to students.

These processing activities help students to take the perspectives of others, think about cause and effect, and learn empathy. They're best used in small group or individual in-school suspension or counseling sessions to help create an open dialog between the student and an adult in the school setting.



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Issue Key (lower left corner of each page):

A – drug/alcohol
B – relational bullying
C – racial/cultural bullying
D – disruption
F – fighting/physical aggression
G – LGBT bullying
L – lying/cheating
P – property damage
R – disrespect
S – stealing
T – threat
W – weapon

Age Group Key (lower right corner of each page):

E – elementary school
M – middle school
H – high school

Name: _____

Date: _____

_____ and _____

DIRECTIONS: Read through the following situation. As you're reading, think about what you would be thinking or doing if you were a character in the story. Then, answer the questions below.

THE SITUATION:

QUESTIONS:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

PREVIEW ONLY

Name: _____

Date: _____

_____ and _____

DIRECTIONS: Make up your own problem below. Then come up with 4 questions for a classmate to answer about the character's feelings, behaviors and about how to solve the problem. Then, switch papers and see how you answer each other's questions.

THE SITUATION: _____

QUESTIONS:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

PREVIEW ONLY

Name: _____

Date: _____

MEREDITH and LAUREN

DIRECTIONS: Read through the following situation. As you're reading, think about what you would be thinking or doing if you were a character in the story. Then, answer the questions below.

THE SITUATION: Meredith and Lauren were friends, but they weren't super close. They had the same group of friends, but never really hung out just the two of them because they didn't have a lot in common. During science class, Lauren kept seeing Meredith out of the corner of her eye giving her a glare. She had no idea what was going on; they'd barely even talked that week. Lauren tried to talk to Meredith about it, but she wouldn't talk to her. That day, another friend of the girls' told Lauren that Meredith had been spreading rumors that she was badmouthing people behind her back.

QUESTIONS:

1. What are some possible explanations for Meredith's glares?

If you were Lauren, what would you do to clear up the situation?

3. What do you think is going to happen next?

4. Tell about a time when spreading rumors or gossip created problems for you or your friends.

5. When people are having an issue with someone else, they often prefer to talk directly to the other person rather than talking to other people about the situation. Why do you think talking about problems to others is so much harder for people?

Name: _____

Date: _____

LASHANDRA and RYAN

DIRECTIONS: Read through the following situation. As you're reading, think about what you would be thinking or doing if you were a character in the story. Then, answer the questions below.

THE SITUATION: Lashandra had taken medication for ADHD since she was in first grade. Every month, she had to bring a bottle of pills to keep in the nurse's office for after lunch. Today, she was taking the bus to school and took out the bottle. Her friend Ryan asked if he could have a pill because he had an important math test and wanted to be able to focus. Lashandra agreed and knew the nurse probably wouldn't even notice one was missing. Just as she was opening the bottle, the bus driver walked by to her window and noticed what Lashandra was doing. Immediately when she arrived at school, Lashandra and Ryan were sent to the office.

QUESTIONS:

1. Why did Lashandra decide to share her medication with Ryan? Is this a good or bad idea? How do you know?

2. What are some of the rules or procedures for bringing medication from home at your school?

3. What do you think the principal's reaction will be to the situation?

4. What are health consequences if you can't afford to use someone else's medication?

What do you think is going to happen next?

Name: _____

Date: _____

DESHAWN and OLIVER

DIRECTIONS: Read through the following situation. As you're reading, think about what you would be thinking or doing if you were a character in this story. Then, answer the questions below.

THE SITUATION: Deshawn was really nervous about starting school in a new town. He moved from a larger city into the tiny town and it was clear he was the outsider here. Most of the students were white and there had to be maybe one or two biracial students and no other black students in the entire school. People asked him a lot if his family was poor, if he was in a gang, and laughed at him in PE because he couldn't catch the ball. One day, Oliver said was weird because "black kids are always better football players." Deshawn tried to laugh it off, but eventually he couldn't let it go. Tomorrow, another student, Oliver continued to make comments under his breath about Deshawn's abilities all during PE when Deshawn walked up to him and really said, "seriously. Knock it off. I'm done!" Oliver laughed and replied, "well, you ***** are the same. Always looking for a fight!"

QUESTIONS:

1. Imagine you are another student in the class. What would you do?

2. What do Oliver's comments reveal about his character? What type of person do you think he is?

3. What assumptions have people made about you because of what you look like? How did it make you feel?

4. Have you ever been a part of a conversation when someone made a joke about someone based on their race or what they looked like? What happened? What was your reaction?

5. Why do you think some people feel that it's okay to treat people differently because of their racial or family background?

Name: _____

Date: _____

PAYTON

DIRECTIONS: Read through the following situation. As you're reading, think about what you would be thinking or doing if you were a character in the story. Then, answer the questions below.

THE SITUATION: One Tuesday, Payton was sitting in Mrs. Harrison's class. She became very frustrated when her teacher asked her to move the computer away so that she could finish some other work. Payton slammed the lid shut and pushed it across the table. Mrs. Harrison then told her that she would not be able to use classroom computers for a week. That made Payton really mad. Payton stood up and walked out of the classroom without saying a word. When the Principal caught up with her, Payton threw a paper airplane at another student's tray at him.

QUESTIONS:

1. When did Payton first start feeling angry? What could she have done at that time to calm down?

2. List all the people who were affected by this situation.

3. What are some of the students in the cafeteria thinking and feeling?

4. What are some things Payton could have done differently to make this situation turn out better?

5. If you were Harrison or the Principal, what could you do next?

Name: _____

Date: _____

MIKA and CAROLINA

DIRECTIONS: Read through the following situation. As you're reading, think about what you would be thinking or doing if you were a character in the story. Then, answer the questions below.

THE SITUATION: Passing periods were always a stressful time in the hallway. Students only had 3 minutes and this class period Carolina had to get all the way across the school to get to Science. Carolina was late, and a girl, Mika ran from the other direction and bumped into her. Mika's books fell crashing onto the floor and Mika got up quickly and walked away. Carolina was fuming. Mika didn't even apologize! She stomped toward her classroom in a huff. Just as she was about to enter her math teacher stepped in and asked her what was happening. Mr. Green stepped in front of Carolina to separate the girls. Carolina threw out her arm to push past him, only it hit him right in the face.

QUESTIONS:

1. Predict what you think will happen next.

2. Tell the story from Mika's point of view.

3. How do you think Mr. Green knew that Carolina was angry with Mika?

4. Write three thoughts that were running through Carolina's mind and three ways her body was feeling as she was talking to Mika.

THOUGHTS

HOW HER BODY FELT

-

-

-

-

-

-

5. What would have been a better way for Carolina to express her frustration with Mika?

Name: _____

Date: _____

MIGUEL and JOSE

DIRECTIONS: Read through the following situation. As you're reading, think about what you would be thinking or doing if you were a character in the story. Then, answer the questions below.

THE SITUATION: Ever since he was in elementary school, Miguel knew that he was gay. He didn't make a big deal out of it at school, and his family was very supportive of him. However, other students often made derogatory comments to him, called him names, and talked about hitting him from behind. Jose was totally weirded out by the fact that Miguel wanted to date guys. He'd never met anyone else like him before and thought that Miguel was "a little bit of a fag." He had to just be messing around. There's no way he was actually going to date other guys! He called Miguel "fag," left girl's locker room, and his locker as a joke, and warned his other friends to, "Look out! Miguel might come kiss you!"

QUESTIONS:

1. Retell the story from Miguel's point of view.

2. What could other students around the school have done when Jose was bullying Miguel?

3. Using the internet, newspaper, or other source, list 3 statistics below regarding LGBT students.

-

-

-

4. Using the internet, newspaper, or other source, find 3 celebrities who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or gender fluid.

-

-

-

What would be the consequence be for _____?

Name: _____

Date: _____

DAVIS

DIRECTIONS: Read through the following situation. As you're reading, think about what you would be thinking or doing if you were a character in the story. Then, answer the questions below.

THE SITUATION: While using the restroom, Davis was messing around with a few friends of his. When they left the bathroom, their teacher, Mrs. Jenkins told them they would receive a discipline referral. Davis told her it was another group of students that were the ones messing around. After all, it's not like anyone was being mean. They were just flicking water at each other and laughing. This was so ridiculous. After talking to the other students in the restroom, Mrs. Jenkins sent all the boys who were in the bathroom to the office to talk to the Assistant Principal.

QUESTIONS:

1. Since no one was hurt, do you think Mrs. Jenkins cared if the boys were messing around in the bathroom?

Retell the story from Mrs. Jenkins' point of view.

3. What does the word "responsibility" mean? Tell about someone you know who is very responsible. How do people view them?

4. Tell about a time when you made a mistake but admitted what you did. Did it make the situation better or worse?

Using the table below, describe how your life may have turned out differently if you had admitted your mistake and accepted responsibility for your actions.

Admitted mistake; accepted responsibility	Did not admit mistake; did not accept responsibility
-	-
-	-
-	-

Name: _____

Date: _____

KALI

DIRECTIONS: Read through the following situation. As you're reading, think about what you would be thinking or doing if you were a character in the story. Then, answer the questions below.

THE SITUATION: Kali was working in her study hall room when she noticed her teacher was working with another student and not paying attention. Her teacher had just brought in lots of new supplies for the class to use: fancy markers, colored pencils, calculators, and mechanical pencils. She figured no one would miss a box of colored pencils and she really wanted to be able to color at home, so she quickly took a box and put it in her backpack. That night, she got them out to color as she was sitting on her bed. When her mom came in to say goodnight, she asked her, "Where did you get those?" Kali quickly thought up a story, but her mom didn't believe her and called the school.

QUESTIONS:

1. What do you think would be appropriate consequences for this choice?

How do you think this situation will affect Kali's relationship with her mom and teacher in the future?

3. How did Kali's actions affect the other students in her class?

4. If Kali was an adult, what could have happened if she had made the same choices?

5. Tell about a time when someone stole something from you. What happened and how did it make you feel?

Name: _____

Date: _____

NICHOLAS and CADEN

DIRECTIONS: Read through the following situation. As you're reading, think about what you would be thinking or doing if you were a character in the story. Then, answer the questions below.

THE SITUATION: Nicholas wasn't sure how much longer he could put up with Caden. He was constantly bothering. Even when Caden was supposed to be annoying, he was. Even the way he talked annoyed Nicholas. One day, Nicholas had just had it and told Caden that if he didn't stop bothering him, he was going to punch him in the face so he couldn't talk anymore. Caden quickly stepped between the boys and escorted Nicholas to the Principal's office. He ended up getting suspended from school.

QUESTIONS:

1. Do you think Nicholas was serious about his threat to punch Caden? Why or why not?

Often times, it doesn't matter if someone is serious or not about a threat they make. The consequences can be the same either way. Why do you think this is?

3. Retell the story from Caden's point of view.

4. What personality traits or behaviors do you like or get along with the most? Why do you think that is?

5. What are some ways adults you know like or get along with the most? What are some ways adults you know don't like or get along with?