



## GAY STRAIGHT ADVOCATES FOR EDUCATION

Working to Make Every Student and Every Educator SAFE at School  
Regardless of Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity/Expression

### What About Fighting?

Grade Levels: 3 - 8

**Essential Question:** *What do I know about fighting in school and how does it affect me?*

#### Objectives

- Students will identify the potential positive and negative consequences of using violence to resolve conflicts.

#### Materials

- **Dry erase board, markers; individual dry erase boards and markers for students (optional)**
- **Chart paper, markers**

#### Procedures

1. Facilitate a class discussion by asking students how they would define violence. Why do they think people sometimes use violence to handle conflicts?
2. After the students have offered a few suggestions, ask them to name everything positive they can think of about fighting or using violence to resolve conflicts. **(Use T form sheet of paper for listing positive on one side. Negative will be listed in a later step.)**
3. If they have trouble naming any, ask them to think about a fight they won. What feelings did they have? What positive things did the fight accomplish?
4. List their contributions on the board. Continue the brainstorm for five to ten minutes. **(Use chart paper to record for posting in classroom later.)**
5. Next ask students to name all the potential negative consequences of fighting or using violence to deal with conflicts.
6. Repeat the brainstorming process.
7. **Group students together in 3 or 4 and make individual lists. They can use their dry erase boards for this. One student lists for schools. One lists for home, etc.** If necessary, ask about specific areas of students' lives: What might be the consequences of fighting at home? At school? On the playground? The negative list will probably be significantly longer.
8. As a way to conclude the activity discuss the following questions with your students:
  - a. Which list is longer? Why?
  - b. Which of these negative things is a short term consequence? Which is long term?
  - c. What are some ways you could get the positive effects of fighting without fighting?
  - d. If there are so many reasons not to fight, why do people fight?
  - e. Where do we get our ideas about fighting?

**For follow up:** *Students write a unified pledge of what they will do after having this discussion on fighting in school.*

Excerpted from *Elementary Perspectives: Teaching Concepts of Peace and Conflict* by William J. Kreidler.

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