

Month at a Glance: December

Activity	Enduring Understanding	Vocabulary	Time Needed for Completion
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Friend vs. Frenemy	It is important to choose your friends wisely.	friendship, frenemy, characteristic, relationship	45 minutes
Bullying vs. Conflict	Conflict and bullying are not the same.	bully, conflict	45 – 60 minutes
It's Okay Not to Be Okay – Part 1	It is important to be aware of your feelings and respond accordingly.	social-emotional behavior	45 minutes
It's Okay Not to Be Okay – Part 2	Pretending to be okay when you are not can impact your emotional and physical well-being.	emotions, communicate	45 minutes
What would Ace Do?	Reflective opportunities.		5-30 minutes

December



Activity Plan

Title: Friend vs. Frenemy

Suggested Time: 45 minutes

Suggested Grade Level(s): 6th–8th

<p>Activity Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the differences between friendships and negative relationships that aren't examples of genuine friendship. <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> copy of silhouette makers craft materials <p>Vocabulary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> friendship frenemy characteristic relationship 	<p>Activity Overview: Middle school students will determine the difference between a friend and a "frenemy."</p>	
	<p>Bridge (Connect & Engage)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitator: <i>Today we will explore differences between being a friend and a being a "frenemy." In this activity, we will learn how to identify the characteristics of genuine friendship and explore ways to end a relationship with a "frenemy." Some of you may not have heard the term "frenemy" before. Hopefully, you have started to come to some understanding based on my tone and what has been said.</i> The facilitator will divide scholars into cooperative groups and make sure each group has a piece of chart paper to chart their responses.
	<p>Boost (Teach)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The facilitator will display a sheet of chart paper separated into two columns. Friend should be written on one side and frenemy should be written on the other side. The facilitator will model a think-aloud to share one example of a characteristic of each. Facilitator: <i>Think for a minute. What characteristics describe a healthy friend? Add to the chart. What characteristics does a person who is a "frenemy" display? In case you haven't guessed, a frenemy is not a real friend. You might even notice a familiar word within the word. Add to the chart.</i> Scholars will then have an opportunity to work within their groups to create a list of characteristics of each. The facilitator can give suggestions to students when walking around to guide students through the group activity. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Friend characteristics: honest, trustworthy.</i> <i>Frenemy characteristics: dishonest, sneaky.</i>

**Build (Rehearse
& Build for
Transfer/Close)**

- The facilitator will give students a silhouette cutout of a person who will represent a friend on the front and a frenemy on the back. Students will work to display the characteristics on the silhouette creatively and share their display. Scholars will share their silhouettes with the class, citing the different characteristics of each.

Differentiation Station

Suggestions for Remediation

Suggestions for Acceleration

Special Education & English Learner Scaffolds



The facilitator asks prompting questions.

Scholars can reference graphics/pictures/choice boards.

Pair scholars with a peer for support throughout the activity period.

Have scholars create additional characteristics of a friend and "frenemy."

Create a PSA or positive social media post on the importance of healthy relationships that encourage friendship characteristics.

Have scholars create additional silhouettes for multiple categories (physical, mental, emotional, social).

Provide sentence stems for scholars to state the characteristics.

Scholars can think in pairs and share ideas with a partner during the activity for support.

Reference graphics/pictures for support of the academic language.

Translate the document or use Word to Word dictionary.

Pair with a peer (when available, one who speaks the same language).

Activity Reflection:

Scholars will reflect on how people can be confused by a friend's or frenemy's characteristics. Scholars will explain ways to determine the difference. Consider whether the person's actions and words align.

Supplemental Resources: N/A

Activity Plan

Title: Bullying vs. Conflict

Suggested Time: 45-60 minutes

Suggested Grade Level(s): 6th-8th

<p>Activity Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To determine the difference between engaging in bullying and engaging in conflict. <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> statement template <p>Vocabulary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> bully conflict 	<p>Activity Overview: Scholars will determine some differences between being a bully and being a buddy.</p>	
	<p>Bridge (Connect & Engage)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitator: <i>How do we know when we are being bullied? How do we know when we are just engaging in conflict with a peer? Exploring the responses to these questions can help us to understand the difference between the actions of a bully and those of a friend or individual we are engaging in conflict with.</i> Allow scholars to first think of the difference between bullying and conflict independently. Next, allow them to share their ideas with their elbow partners or in small groups.
	<p>Boost (Teach)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitator: <i>Bullying refers to someone aggressively using their "power" to target another individual with repeated and unwanted words or actions. Let's take a moment to think about how those (bullying) actions would make a person feel? Those actions hurt others, either physically or emotionally. Conflict is uncomfortable, but we can learn to monitor the behavior of others to determine whether or not they are being a bully.</i> The facilitator will project the statements found on the Bullying/Conflict activity sheet or pass out statements to groups and explain how specific red flag words support knowing the difference.
	<p>Build (Rehearse & Build for Transfer/Close)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitator: <i>Now you will sort the statements to determine if they describe bullying or examples of conflict. Identify the word or phrase that supports your thinking. Once you have matched all of your statements, you may go to one neighboring group to compare your answers.</i> Once most groups have finished, the facilitator will review the statements aloud and allow scholars to share how they determined whether the statements described were examples of bullying or conflict.

Differentiation Station

Suggestions for Remediation

Suggestions for Acceleration

Special Education & English Learner Scaffolds



The facilitator can ask prompting questions.

Scholars can reference graphics/pictures/choice boards.

Pair scholars with a peer for support throughout the lesson and activity period.

Have scholars create additional statements that describe the difference between a conflict and bullying.

Create a PSA or positive social media post on the importance of healthy relationships that encourage managing conflict.

Have scholars create a self-help quick reference sheet for scholars to know the difference between conflict and bullying.

Scholars can think in pairs and share ideas with a partner during the activity for support. Reference graphics/pictures for support of the academic language.

Translate document or Word to Word dictionary.

Pair scholars with a peer (when available, one who speaks the same native language).

Activity Reflection:

Scholars will reflect on how people can confuse the characteristics of conflict with those associated with bullying. They will develop an explanation to help people know the difference. They can also discuss ways to be advocates for those who are being bullied, particularly in spaces where it is frowned upon to be a "snitch."

Supplemental Resources:



Conflict	Bullying

- A disagreement with someone where both people can speak their view of the situation.
- Continued targeted behavior even when a person realizes it is hurting someone.
- The person in the argument of disagreement is using their power to engage in a situation negatively.
- Both people have equal power in a disagreement or situation, and power is not used to solve the problem.
- The goal of the disagreement is to hurt, harm, or humiliate another person.
- Each person agrees to stop the behavior intentionally harming the other after it's expressed/stated.

Activity Plan

Title: It's Okay Not to Be Okay (Part 1)

Suggested Time: 45 minutes

Suggested Grade Level(s): 6th–8th

<p>Activity Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Scholars will explore the implications of pretending to be okay and identify tips to actually be okay. <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">template <p>Vocabulary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">social-emotional behavior	<p>Activity Overview: This activity increases scholars' awareness of the impacts of pretending to be okay.</p>			
	<table border="1"><tr><td><p>Bridge (Connect & Engage)</p></td><td><ul style="list-style-type: none">Facilitator: <i>Scholars, what does it mean to be okay with not being okay? Encourage scholars to respond.</i>Facilitator: <i>Today's activity will focus on tips to help us acknowledge our true feelings. Raise your hands if you often keep your feelings to yourself. Have you ever pretended to be okay when you really weren't? I want to inform you that you could be doing even more harm to your wellness by pretending to be okay. Studies have shown that not sharing feelings can lead to high blood pressure, cardiovascular problems, anxiety, and depression. I have three tips for you to keep in mind when you're experiencing those feelings of discomfort. The tips are:</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">1. Allow yourself to feel the emotions; don't ignore them.2. Give yourself grace; try not to be hard on yourself.3. Be honest with yourself AND someone you trust about how you feel.</td></tr><tr><td><p>Boost (Teach)</p></td><td><ul style="list-style-type: none">Facilitator: <i>For this activity, I will place you into groups. You will use the "It's Okay Not to Be Okay" template to come up with a solution to a problem that either you or someone you know might have experienced. You'll also look at what tips the person should use to help them through their difficult time.</i>Let's explore my example first. You may want to use it to guide you. The facilitator will read the example and think aloud to arrive at a solution.</td></tr></table>	<p>Bridge (Connect & Engage)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Facilitator: <i>Scholars, what does it mean to be okay with not being okay? Encourage scholars to respond.</i>Facilitator: <i>Today's activity will focus on tips to help us acknowledge our true feelings. Raise your hands if you often keep your feelings to yourself. Have you ever pretended to be okay when you really weren't? I want to inform you that you could be doing even more harm to your wellness by pretending to be okay. Studies have shown that not sharing feelings can lead to high blood pressure, cardiovascular problems, anxiety, and depression. I have three tips for you to keep in mind when you're experiencing those feelings of discomfort. The tips are:</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">1. Allow yourself to feel the emotions; don't ignore them.2. Give yourself grace; try not to be hard on yourself.3. Be honest with yourself AND someone you trust about how you feel.	<p>Boost (Teach)</p>
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**Build (Rehearse
& Build for
Transfer/Close)**

- Scholars will work collaboratively for at least 15 minutes.
- The facilitator will allow groups to share at least one problem and solution example. Other groups should listen and be prepared to provide feedback. (Based on the amount of engagement, this activity might continue across several days.)
- The facilitator can follow up by asking scholars if they feel the tips will be helpful in real-life situations.

Differentiation Station

Suggestions for Remediation

Suggestions for Acceleration

Special Education & English Learner Scaffolds



The facilitator works with scholars and goes through the example with students to ensure they understand the task.

Provide a visual anchor chart of the tips for scholars to reference.

Have scholars reflect on a time when they were not okay and share what tip they would use if they had these same feelings again.

Have scholars create their own problems and share what tip they would use.

Scholars can create additional tips.

Use Google Translate.

Have scholars work in groups.

The facilitator can work alongside scholars.

Activity Reflection:

What are your thoughts on it's okay to not be okay? Do you have a friend or family member that says they are okay, but you don't believe them? How might you help them? What tips do you think will be most helpful for you when you're not feeling okay?

Supplemental Resources: Google Translate; Flipgrid or digital recordings; various graphic organizers in digital form.



Problem Solution Activity Sheet

<p>Problem</p> <p>Brandon is becoming overwhelmed with academics, football, and volunteering at his church.</p>	<p>Solution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lessening his load by taking a step back from something. • Using a planner to organize and manage his time. • Allowing his work to pile up. 	<p>Which tip would apply?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow yourself to feel. • Give yourself grace. • Be honest with yourself and someone you trust.
<p>Problem</p>	<p>Solution</p>	<p>Which tip would apply?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow yourself to feel. • Give yourself grace. • Be honest with yourself and someone you trust.
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<p>Problem</p>	<p>Solution</p>	<p>Which tip would apply?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow yourself to feel. • Give yourself grace. • Be honest with yourself and someone you trust.

Activity Plan

Title: It's Okay Not to Be Okay (Part 2) - Motivation in the Bag

Suggested Time: 45 minutes

Suggested Grade Level(s): 6th–8th

<p>Activity Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide scholars with an opportunity to receive and offer encouragement. <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> paper markers (preferably permanent markers so it doesn't smudge on the plastic bag) plastic bags <p>Vocabulary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> emotions communicate 	<p>Activity Overview: This activity increases scholars' awareness of the impacts of pretending to be okay. By not being honest and avoiding tough conversations, we run the risk of impacting our emotional well-being, which can affect our physical well-being. This is an extension of It's Okay Not to Be Okay (Part 1.)</p>	
	<p>Bridge (Connect & Engage)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The facilitator should refer to the discussion about what it means to be okay with not being okay from the previous activity. Remind scholars of the important points as needed. Facilitator: <i>Today's activity will continue to focus on tips to use when we do not feel okay. Remember that keeping your feelings to yourself does more harm than good to your wellness. Studies have shown that not sharing feelings can lead to high blood pressure, cardiovascular problems, anxiety, and depression. The tips I shared with you last time are:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Allow yourself to feel the emotions; don't ignore them. 2. Give yourself grace; resist the temptation to be hard on yourself. 3. Be honest with yourself AND someone you trust about how you feel.
	<p>Boost (Teach)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each scholar will receive a plastic bag and markers. The facilitator might offer an option to decorate the bags as directions for the activity are being given. Facilitator: <i>We all need encouragement! The purpose of today's activity is to fill our bags with as much positive motivation as possible. Your task is to create motivational slips of encouragement for each of your classmates. If you'd like to put your name on the paper, you can. When you are done writing, give your slips of paper to your classmates to place in their bags. The words of encouragement should help them get through a difficult time when needed. They should serve as a reminder that things will be okay. Resist the temptation to write the same thing on every slip.</i>

Boost (Teach)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The number of scholars in the class will determine how many slips of paper scholars will write on. Example: If there are 25 scholars in a class, each scholar should write 24 motivational slips of paper. This ensures each scholar receives a paper from all their classmates. (Feel free to modify as needed.)
Build (Rehearse & Build for Transfer/Close)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• After everyone has received their motivational slips of paper, allow scholars to read some of the motivating words written by their classmates. (They might choose to read the slips to themselves or aloud.)

Differentiation Station

Suggestions for Remediation

Suggestions for Acceleration

Special Education & English Learner Scaffolds



The facilitator can create slips and have scholars cut and decorate them for their classmates.

Scholars can add a graphic or emojis to their slips.

Have scholars research motivational quotes in their native language.

Create a short motivational video reel.

Use Google Translate.

Scholars can draw uplifting pictures.

The facilitator can print different images for scholars to choose from.

Activity Reflection:

How did you feel when you read a motivational slip from your classmates? Do you think this will help you the next time you aren't feeling okay?

Supplemental Resources: It's Okay to Not be Okay | Erica Davis-Crump | TEDxABQED



December—What Would Ace Do?



These are reflective open-ended questions for activity openers, closers, or check-ins throughout the month. The suggestion is to focus on one question and allow scholars to go as deep as possible with their responses.

Peer Pressure

Depression Vs. Sadness



When do you feel peer pressure is a problem?

Is all peer pressure bad?

What is the toughest part about making your own decisions?

Some people prefer to not be given decision making guidance.

- What do you think?
- Do you prefer to be left alone to make your own mistakes? Is there value in this?

How might the feelings of a depressed person differ from those of a sad person?

Which do you think is depression? Sadness? How do you know?

- If you are upset for a specific reason.
- You have lost interest or find no pleasure in doing things.

