



These activities will reinforce the violence prevention and conflict resolution messages in *On stopping the violence*. Many of them are experiential, aimed at helping students work together to better understand issues related to violence prevention and conflict resolution, and to build skills needed for success in school and in life. You can also use these activities to help students meet core curriculum standards (civics, science, etc.)—listed in parentheses after each activity. In addition, these activities can help address other standards, such as the National Health Education Standards.

Visit our Web site at <http://www.teachersguides.com> for more information about these standards—and for additional activities, information and links to other useful sites. To access our site, use the password TeachPeace.

Pages 4-5—Editorial on media violence

Explain to students that many observers hold the media responsible for contributing to violence in our society. Ask students to write a letter to the editor of a local paper (or school paper, if applicable) expressing their opinion about the role of violence in the media. Students should be free to defend violent content or to argue for its limitation. However, all letters should strive to make a coherent and convincing argument.

Encourage students to submit their letters to local papers for publication. (Help students find the names and addresses, if necessary.) Suggest that students watch the papers in the days following publication of their letters, to see any reaction their opinions have generated. (*language arts, civics*)

Page 5—Media “body count”

Using the activity at the bottom of page 5 of *On stopping the violence*, have students total all the violent episodes and incidents viewed by different class members during the week. Students should then use this data to estimate the number of violent episodes they might be exposed to over the course of a year. Have students discuss their reactions to the prevalence of violence in the media. (*technology/media, math*)

Page 6—Violence in other countries

Have students work individually or in teams to compare violence and crime statistics in the United States with those in another industrialized nation (examples include Canada, Japan, the United Kingdom, Germany or France). Crime statistics and information are available on the Internet. Information may also be available from a library. Students can ask a reference librarian for help, if necessary.

Ask students to make comparisons between the United States and their country of choice for such factors as:

- rates for murder and other violent crime
- rates of incarceration
- gun ownership laws and restrictions.

Have students present their findings to the class. Discuss student reactions. (*math, social studies, foreign languages*)

Page 6—Local crime watch

Have the class monitor the police report or local news section in your local newspaper for 2 weeks. Students should note the number of incidents reported to the police involving conflict or violence. At the end of the 2 weeks, ask the class to discuss their findings. Ask students whether they are surprised by the number of incidents that take place in their community. Help students recognize that violence and crime often have their roots in unresolved conflict. (*civics, social studies*)

Page 7—Eyes on the prize

Have students research the life of a recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize. Ask students to consider these questions as they research their subjects:

- What obstacles to peace did the person face?
- How did the person deal with conflict?
- What personal sacrifices did the individual have to make?

Students can present reports in writing or orally. Following the reports, discuss how seeking peace requires commitment and change. (*social studies*)

On **stopping the violence**

Teacher's/Leader's Guide continued

Page 8—Great debates

Help students learn about point of view by holding classroom debates. Divide the class into groups of 4, then divide each group into 2 teams of 2 each. Select a topic for the debates. (Ideas include gun control or the death penalty, but students can select their own topics, too.)

For each group of 4, have 1 team research and argue the “for” position and 1 team research and argue the “against” position.

Have each team present its arguments. Then, instruct teams to “switch sides”—so that the “for” team has to research and argue the “against” position, and vice versa.

When the debates are over, discuss what students learned from having to see both sides of the issue. (*social studies, civics*)

Pages 9-12—Peace posters

Have students create posters that will help to educate others about the 4 steps of conflict resolution. The posters can use illustrations and words to communicate the key steps and concepts involved in the process. (*arts*)

Page 15—Body language game

To help students understand the power of body language—and their own ability to communicate without words—have students play a game of charades.

Divide the class into 2 teams. (You may organize multiple games with smaller teams, if you wish.) Have each team write the titles of 5 books or movies on separate slips of paper. Each team should then select one player to “act out” a title for the remaining team members. That player must then get (from the opposing team) a slip of paper with a title on it. Using only his or her body language, the player must help his or her teammates figure out the title within 3 minutes.

Repeat the above steps, alternating teams. Allow different members of each team to try acting out the titles. (*arts, social studies*)

Page 17—Exploring violence

As you discuss conflict and violence, you may encounter students who argue that being aggressive or even violent can bring positive results. For example, some students may argue that fighting is necessary to earn respect and to prevent others from attacking them.

Ask students to write essays exploring their feelings about fighting and violence. Encourage them to honestly examine any benefits they think violent behavior brings—and the costs they suffer or risks they expose themselves to.

Invite students to share their essays with the class. Discuss the essays together. Help make sure students accurately portray the many risks associated with violent behavior. (*language arts*)

Page 18—Anger trigger role play

Invite students to share some of the issues they’ve identified as triggers for their anger. (Tell students not to mention individuals’ names.) Write a master list on the board. Make note of any issues that come up frequently.

Then, have students break into pairs and role-play encountering anger triggers—and responding to them calmly. Remind students that ignoring problems is not an effective way to resolve conflict. Suggest that students use the 4-step process described on pages 9-12 in **On stopping the violence**. (*arts, social studies, life skills*)

Page 19—Anger discussion

Invite the school counselor to visit class and discuss anger and anger management. Ask him or her to discuss healthy and unhealthy uses of anger. Suggest that he or she help students identify the names of other emotions they can use to describe their feelings when they are in conflict. Encourage students to ask questions. (*life skills, health*)

Page 21—Passing peace along

Remind students that changing the way we handle conflict will require change beyond the classroom. Encourage students to connect with others in their community and around the world who are interested in issues of violence prevention and conflict resolution by searching the Internet. Students may find some ideas by searching under the terms *nonviolence* and *conflict resolution*. (*civics*)

