

Team Problems Solving “The Gift”

Activity

The students are seated in a tight circle, without books, backpacks etc. No distractions.

No student should sit alone and no cliques together. The wrapped gift is placed in the center of the circle after students are settled. Teacher asks: ***What does this tight circle mean?*** (unity, cooperation, etc.)

Teacher may then move on to the gift: ***“The gift is our problem today. We have one gift to present to one student in this class. The gift is for any student, boy or girl. We have a problem to solve.”*** (Step #1)

- Distribute the attached student handout on creative team problem solving. Teacher may state: ***“I will only answer questions if they relate to the problem statement.”*** (Step #2)
- Students and teacher will identify and review the problem solving steps verbally. Students may discuss among themselves where to go next. (Step #3)
- When students are ready to brainstorm their ideas, teacher will record them on overhead, paper, board, etc. (Step #4)
- After brainstorming, each student will independently make their decision, based on the ideas collected and posted by the teacher. Go around the circle and allow each student to share with the rest of the group. (Step #5)
- Come to consensus. No voting allowed! (Step #6)
- Have the student selected by the group through consensus come into the circle and open the package. (Step #7)

Objectives

- Build on existing knowledge of problem solving.
- Understand the advantage of solving a problem according to steps.
- Work together cooperatively to solve a problem.
- Practice team building.

Materials

Find an inexpensive gift item which would be valued by any HS student and wrap it attractively. It will be the main prop for this lesson.

Run student copies or make an overhead of the student handout SW G “Creative Team Problem Solving” attached to this lesson. Be ready to record student ideas during the brainstorming session.

Vocabulary

- Consensus
- Simple majority
- Evaluate
- Implement

Summary

Evaluate and de-brief with students. (Step #8) Teacher may ask:

- ✓ ***How did you feel about the process?***
- ✓ ***How did you feel about the decision?***
- ✓ ***How is consensus better for team building than a simple majority vote?***

Notes for Teachers

All students will participate by sitting in a tight circle of chairs for this activity. Re-arrange your classroom, if necessary.

Reflection

Teacher may ask:
Can you think of another situation in school or at home that would have had a better outcome using this process of team problem solving?

Home Connection

Ask your parents to practice the team problem solving model at home on the next problem that arises to see how it might work with family members. Hang a handout on the fridge as a reminder.