

Category: Social Skills and Life Skills

Advisory Goal: Why is it important to accept people? Why does rejection hurt?

Grade: 11<sup>th</sup> Grade

Opening: Discussion of feelings of acceptance and rejection.

3 minutes

Activity / Topic: Group Dynamics

10 minutes

Closing: Reflection Sheet

7 minutes

Supplies: Group Instruction Sheet - MAKE COPIES AND CUT INTO STRIPS and Reflection Sheet - MAKE COPIES

Grouping: Pairs / Trios - Whole Group

**Rationale:** To help students become more aware of the effects of acceptance and rejection. It is an activity to help the students think about diversity and acceptance.

**Opening:** Discuss what it means to be accepted and rejected as well as the feelings associated with those words.

**Activity / Topic:** Acceptance and Rejection - A group dynamic activity

**Directions:**

1. Divide students into five groups or three groups. (It depends on the number of students). However, if you have students who seem especially withdrawn or isolated, do not put them together in one group.
2. Instruct groups to decide upon a secret password and secret handshake. (2 minutes)
3. Give each group their own instruction card. *\*Included at the end\**
4. Ask each group to discuss the instructions among themselves. (1 minute)
5. Each group should carry out its written instructions without revealing those instructions to anyone from another group. (5-7 minutes)
6. Afterward, everyone should share their hidden rules.

**Debriefing:** Have a discussion in a large group using some of the following prompts:

- If you attempted to join more than one group, compare the two or three experiences.
- Each group had different criteria for inclusion/exclusion. Did you react differently to each group's set of criteria?

- Consider the standards your group enforces for including or excluding new members.
- How would you describe the standards and method?
- Can you justify your group's practice for accepting or rejecting members? Explain.
- Can you think of social groups that behave according to these models in real life?
- Have you experienced a social situation that resembles the dynamics of any one of these groups? What did you do?

**Closing:** After the hidden rules are revealed, have students complete the Reflections Activity Sheet and discuss some of their answers.

HANDOUT

# Acceptance and Rejection Exercise – Group Instructions

## Instructions

Cut out the groups below and distribute to each group.

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### Group One

Due to a lack of space, we can only have four groups. The members of your group must split up and join other groups. You must learn the handshake and password to get in.

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### Group Two

Do not let anyone join your group. Do not tell anyone your secret password or show them your secret handshake no matter what!

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### Group Three

Allow anyone to join your group who wants to join. However, do not let them join right away. Ask them questions about why they want to join and why they should be allowed in. After a few minutes, accept them into your group and share your secret password and handshake.

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### Group Four

Vote on everyone who wants to join your group. If your last name starts with A-M, you should always vote YES on every person who is trying to join. If your last name starts with N-Z, you should always vote NO on every person who is trying to join.

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### Group Five

Warmly welcome anyone who wants to be in your group. Make everyone feel accepted and appreciated. Share your handshake and password with them immediately. Make sure they know how glad you are they chose to join your group!

# Reflection Activity

Think about the questions below and write about your experiences in conducting this exercise.

1. This activity caused me to think about...
2. When I was left out of a group, I felt...
3. When I was forced to exclude others from my group, I felt...
4. This exercise reminded me of a real-life moment when ...