



Lesson Time: 20–30 minutes

Peer Pressure

Objectives & Outcomes

Lesson Objectives: Students will discuss types of peer pressure and role-play appropriate responses to negative peer pressure situations.

Lesson Outcomes: *Students will be able to...*

- give examples of positive, neutral, and negative peer pressure situations.
- demonstrate appropriate responses to negative peer pressure situations.

Subject Area Connection: Language Arts, Drama

Background

Peer pressure is not a clear-cut issue. There are three types of peer pressure: positive, neutral, and negative. Within these categories, peer pressure can range from subtle to blatant. By learning to recognize peer pressure in its many forms, students will be better prepared and know when and how to take a stand against it.

This lesson explores positive, neutral, and negative peer pressure scenarios and offers students practical suggestions for resisting negative peer pressure. Students will be given the opportunity to rehearse resisting negative peer pressure and gain confidence in standing up for their values. Students will be empowered to remain true to their principles by resisting negative peer pressure.

“Students will be **empowered** to remain **true** to their **principles** by **resisting negative peer pressure.**”

Getting Ready

Teacher Preparation: To prepare for this lesson, write: *What’s important to you?* across the top of one half of the board, reserving the other half to be used later in the lesson.

Materials Required:

- chalkboard or whiteboard
- chalk or marker
- pencils
- paper

Introduction and Modeling

Ask students to answer the question (What’s important to you?) that you wrote on the board. Take a few minutes and record as many answers as you can. (Answers may include things like my family, getting good grades, getting into a good college, etc.) Prompt students to think about values such as treating other people with respect, taking good care of your health, caring for the environment, etc. Read over the answers you recorded. Then ask students to tell you what they would say or do if someone told them to turn their backs on all the things you have listed.

Key Vocabulary

peer pressure: someone your own age pushing you to make a particular choice.

courage: the strength to face difficult situations.

principle: a value or code of conduct.

Procedure

1. Students answers will vary, but most will conclude that they would object to the person's demand. Tell students that they give in to this demand every time they succumb to negative peer pressure.
2. Write *PEER PRESSURE* across the top of the other half of the board. Underneath, divide the space into three parts marked *positive, neutral, and negative*.
3. Explain the definition of *peer pressure* as given in the *Key Vocabulary* section. Ask students to give examples of positive, neutral, and negative peer pressure and record a few in each section on the board. Remind students that negative peer pressure can be anything that goes against their values or principles.
4. If students are having trouble coming up with examples, prompt them with these ideas.
 - Positive: "Let's all study together so we can get a good grade!"
 - Neutral: "Let's wear our new hats to school tomorrow."
 - Negative: "Let's go to the movies instead of studying for the test."
5. Ask students to share any personal experiences they've had with peer pressure.
6. Now that students have explored what negative peer pressure looks like, discuss ways to resist it. Ask students for ideas. Answers will vary but may include: saying no, walking away, changing the subject, suggesting an alternative, talking to an adult, etc.
7. Divide students into small groups. Have each group role-play a negative (but classroom-appropriate) peer pressure scenario (of their own invention or from the examples given by the class), including the best ways to resist the peer pressure.

Discussion Questions

- Have you ever lost a friend because you resisted doing what he or she wanted you to do? If so, how did that make you feel?
- Can you think of a circumstance in which positive peer pressure helped you succeed?
- If you witnessed someone having a difficult time resisting peer pressure, what could you do to help?
- What is the connection between peer pressure and bullying?
- How could you use positive peer pressure to stop someone's bullying conduct?

Evaluation

Students should be able to give at least one example of each type of peer pressure (positive, neutral, and negative). Students' role-play scenarios should demonstrate an understanding of what negative peer pressure looks like and how to resist it.

Tips for Tailoring this Lesson

For Higher Grade Levels

- Have groups rehearse their skits and then perform them in front of another class or the whole school.
- As a follow-up, ask students to work in groups to create lesson plans aimed at a younger grade level that explain the types of peer pressure and the best ways to resist negative peer pressure. If possible, have your students teach their lessons.

For Lower Grade Levels

- Assign a peer pressure scenario to each group. Encourage students to write out their script before acting out their role-play.
- Ask students to create posters about the best ways to resist peer pressure.

Alignment to Standards and Frameworks

Common Core State Standards: College & Career Readiness

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Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening

CCRA.SL.1 Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Anchor Standards for Language

CCRA.L.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

Social and Emotional Core Competencies

Social and Emotional Core Competencies: the five interrelated sets of cognitive, affective and behavioral competencies associated with social and emotional learning as identified by CASEL. Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning www.casel.org

Self-awareness

Students are asked to identify their priorities, values, and codes of conduct.

Social Awareness

Students are asked to explain what the three types of peer pressure—positive, neutral, and negative—look like and where to look for them.

Relationship Skills

Students are asked to rehearse appropriate responses to negative peer pressure situations.

Responsible Decision Making

Students are asked to identify negative peer pressure situations and explain the best ways to respond.