

## TALKING ABOUT BULLYING: CLASSROOM DISCUSSION STARTERS

### All years: Making distinctions between bullying and arguing

This discussion starter supports teachers to scaffold a collaborative discussion with students as a whole class or in small groups. The discussion requires about 20 minutes. It can be used as a stand-alone discussion or to conclude one of the other classroom discussion topics if time permits. (Refer to [How to use](#) for more information.)

#### *Outline*

##### **1. Present the definition of bullying**

Share the definition of bullying with your students. Explain that this is how bullying is generally defined by society; however, in order to fully understand bullying, we need to unpack the ideas.

##### **2. Create a Venn diagram through discussion**

Draw a Venn diagram on the board with two intersecting circles — label one circle 'Bullying' and the other 'Arguing'. Students brainstorm similarities between the concepts — list these in the intersection of the diagram. Students brainstorm differences — list these in the outer areas of the circles.

Students consider the completed Venn diagram and then complete the following statements:

- Bullying and arguing can appear to be similar because ...
- Bullying and arguing are distinct because ...

Ask the students to consider the responses on the Venn diagram and discuss the following questions, giving reasons for their responses:

- How does this help us to understand more about bullying?
- Why is it sometimes possible to confuse arguing with bullying?
- Why are these distinctions important when we are thinking about bullying?

As appropriate and necessary, use any of these additional questions to explore the students' answers:

- Why do you think that? (justification)
- Can anyone build on that idea?
- Does anyone have an alternative suggestion/different possibility?
- Can you clarify that?
- Could there be another way to think about this?
- What might someone say if they disagreed with this?
- What might follow from this?

##### **3. Reflect on thinking and learning**

At the conclusion of the activity, take five minutes to reflect on the learning:

- How did we work as a community of learners?
- What new thinking and learning has taken place for our class community today?
- How can we apply this new thinking and learning to our relationships with peers at school and beyond.