

## TALKING ABOUT BULLYING: CLASSROOM DISCUSSION STARTERS

All years: Similarities and differences between the concepts of bullying and fighting/arguing

### *Outline*

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.)

#### **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 T-chart through discussion**

Draw a T-chart on the whiteboard with one column titled 'Bullying' and the other 'Fighting/arguing'. Students brainstorm criteria for each concept — record responses under the appropriate headings.

Students consider any similarities between the responses listed in each column — circle these responses. When students have identified the similarities, have them think about the criteria that have not been circled — these are the differences.

Ask the students to consider and discuss the following questions and give reasons for their responses:

- Are there any differences that we may have overlooked?
- Why are these differences important when we are thinking about bullying?
- How does this help us to understand more 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?
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#### **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.