

Enraged2Engaged

AWK-WORDS

A Game About Appropriate and
Inappropriate Social Interactions



*Did you
actually
just say
that....?!?*

*Social
interactions
can be
awkward...*

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Sara Simpson

Overview

Students know how to respond as long as others interact with them in normative and predictable ways. It's when people don't follow the rules that things get awkward that teens don't know how to respond. Getting adolescents to role play social situations a challenge, but it's the best way to practice social interactions. This game will provide a structured, challenging, game-style format for encouraging social role play of difficult social interactions.

Kansas SECD Standard(s) Addressed:

Social Development

II. Interpersonal Skills

A. Demonstrate communication and social skills to interact effectively.

Grades 6-8

1. Determine when and how to respond to the needs of others.
2. Monitor how facial expressions, body language, and tone impact interactions.
3. Respond to feedback.
4. Analyze social situations and appropriate responses to those situations.
5. Understand group dynamics and respond appropriately.
6. Appraise and demonstrate professionalism and proper etiquette.

Grades 9-12

1. Evaluate how societal and cultural norms and mores affect personal interactions.
2. Create positive group dynamics.
3. Present oneself professionally and exhibit proper etiquette.

Estimated Cost

- No cost (if you have access to cardstock via your school supply room)
- Less than \$5 if you must purchase cardstock

Preparation Time

Approximately 10 minutes to print and cut out one set of the playing cards. Plan for longer if your group will require multiple sets of the playing cards.

Materials

- Two colors of cardstock, two sheets of each color (print the people cards and phrase cards single-sided on different colors of cardstock). Prepare the cards by printing them and cutting them apart.
- Scissors (for preparing the cards)
- Scratch paper and pencil (for keeping score)
- Baggies (recommended, for storing finished card decks)

Discussion Questions

What are some of the different levels of relationships (stranger, acquaintance, casual friend, close friend, romantic partner, etc.)? What are some appropriate topics to discuss in each type of relationship? What do you do when someone engages with you in a way that isn't appropriate for your level of relationship with that person? What are some signs that you've initiated a conversation that doesn't "fit" the person you're talking to (they fidget, pull away, look offended, look confused, etc.)?

Directions for Play

1. Gather the group at a conference table or sit in a circle on the floor. An ideal group size is 4-6 players. If you have a larger group, consider breaking them into smaller groups and printing multiple sets of playing cards.
2. Determine how long you'd like the game to last. 30 minutes worked well with my group.
3. Determine if there will be one designated reader for the entire game (in which case the designated reader does not play the game) or if players will take turns being the designated reader (in which case everyone in the group is a player).
4. Lay all the cards from both decks facedown on the table. Mix them together and spread them out on the table.
5. The person to the left of the designated reader goes first. Play will proceed clockwise around the table.
6. The designated reader draws one card of each color (a people card and a phrase card) and reads them aloud to the player whose turn it is.
7. The player must identify whether the phrase is appropriate for the person and why this is the case. If the player responds correctly, he/she is awarded one point.
8. Next, the designated reader will say the phrase drawn as though he/she is the person drawn (ex. "Does this shirt look good on me?" as though he/she is your eight-year-old cousin.)
9. The player should respond to the designated reader in a manner that is fitting and appropriate for the phrase and person. If the phrase and person "fit" together, this is easy! If the person and phrase do NOT fit, it's much more challenging...but we all know that people don't always say the right things in the real world! If the role play is successful and the player responds appropriately, he/she is awarded a second point. If the majority of the group agrees with the player's response, the player is awarded a point. If the majority of the group disagrees with the player's response, the player is not awarded a point, and the reader will ask another student to explain why they do not believe that the community member would have reacted in this way.
10. At the end of the turn, both cards should be returned face-down onto the table and the cards should be remixed. Players are likely to draw the same people or phrase card more than once; this is desirable, since this opens the group to discussions about the same phrase being appropriate with one person but not another.
11. Game play proceeds around the table until the game time has ended.
12. The player with the greatest number of points at the end of the game is the winner.

Post-Activity Discussion Questions

Did you encounter any combinations that made you especially uncomfortable? How did you choose to respond to those interactions? What are some strategies for dealing with uncomfortable interactions with others?

Extension Options

1. Use the cards as a matching game. Have students match the people with the most appropriate social phrase from the other deck. Discuss how there are, in some cases, multiple appropriate choices.
2. Use the blank cards included to have students create “expander packs” for the game, then play the game again.

Your English teacher	Your 8-year-old cousin
The kid who sits behind you in Science	Your 80-year-old grandma
Your parent	A coworker who is the same age as you
Your friend's parent	Your hairdresser
Your brother or sister	Your closest friend

<p>A coworker who is the same age as your parents</p>	<p>Your coach</p>
<p>Your boyfriend/girlfriend</p>	<p>Someone who used to be a close friend but from whom you've drifted apart</p>
<p>A classmate you've known since the third grade that you don't hang out with outside of school</p>	<p>Your ex-boyfriend or ex-girlfriend</p>
<p>Your PE teacher</p>	<p>Your youth group leader</p>
<p>A friend of your mom's</p>	<p>A substitute teacher</p>

<p>“I love your jacket!”</p>	<p>“I love you.”</p>
<p>“I hate you. You suck.”</p>	<p>“I’ve had the worst day ever. Can we just hang out and watch a movie tonight?”</p>
<p>“Your perfume smells like dead fish. GROSS!”</p>	<p>“We just moved here. What are some good places to go to dinner around here?”</p>
<p>“Do you think this outfit is cute on me?”</p>	<p>“You’ve got dandruff. Let me suggest a couple of good shampoos for it.”</p>
<p>“This job sucks.”</p>	<p>“It really hurts my feelings when you blow me off.”</p>

<p>“There’s this guy/girl I really like, and I think he/she likes me back because he/she is always sending me Snaps.”</p>	<p>“I’m not sure that shirt looks the best on you.”</p>
<p>“Can you help me clean this up? My back is killing me.”</p>	<p>“You’re not giving it your best effort. You need to step it up.”</p>
<p>“You look really nice today. I like that shirt on you.”</p>	<p>“I never actually liked you.”</p>
<p>“Mrs. Jones was a great PE teacher. Playing pickleball in her class was so fun.”</p>	<p>“Have you ever watched <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>? I love that show.”</p>
<p>“What should we go do this weekend?”</p>	<p>“It really gets on my nerves when you chew with your mouth open.”</p>

Optional blank cards for student-created options
