

Relationships and Communication

Relationships are built on our understandings of values and beliefs (family, community, cultural community, school). They impact our behaviours and actions. This lesson explores the idea of friendship as part of relationships and offers opportunities to extend into other units of study.



Setting the Course:

- What is friendship or relationships? In a large group or in small groups, brainstorm qualities of relationships (or use friendships). Another layer may be to ask how one builds relationships. Use a T-chart to define qualities of relationships (including negative qualities). Or use a Y-chart to collect your information (eg. what do you see, hear, feel).
- Review this list with the lens of an online community (examples might include *Webkinz*, *Club Penguin*, *HandiPoints*, *MineCraft*...). Is the list of qualities different for the online world? Are there other factors to consider? Add this to your chart (in another colour if desired).

Possible:

- Read a picture book on building relationships (eg. *The Very Best of Friends*, *Recess Queen*, *Mean Jean*, *Best Friends*, *Owen*, *Me and Mr. Mah*...)
- Pull out the qualities and add to the chart above. Include phrases that would support positive relationships and phrases that might be considered negative.



Activity (build a recipe pie):

- Create a recipe that encompasses everything that a relationship needs, including online relationships. This can be done as a large group, small collaborative groups or individually.
- Completed product (chart, or use a paper plate, create a TV broadcast or commercial) to communicate to a wider audience. This should include all the elements of a real recipe (from ingredients to process of building/maintaining the relationships, what to do if your recipe runs into difficulty). It can be as simple or elaborate as you wish.



Culminating communication:

You will need a large ball of yarn or string for this.

- In a circle, one individual tosses a ball of yarn/string to another in the circle stating a positive quality about relationships/friendships or what is important about relationships or how this might be communicated. The person catching the ball, tosses to another and also states a positive. Continue until you have the students connected in the web.
- Have one person pull the string. Most everyone connected in the web will feel that tug in various strengths.

- “When we are face-to-face, it is easy to notice any physical cues of individuals when we say something. If we say something funny, they may laugh or smile. What happens when we say something that is negative or received as negative? In face-to-face instances, only a small group will hear it (like the strong tug of the string). In the online world, what happens to this communication? What challenges might happen in this world?” [The online world amplifies all communication (positive and negative); it is easier to be misunderstood. Communications shared out in the e-world cannot be pulled back. It has a life of its own and others can share it with their networks. You lose control.]

*Note: This lesson has many options to extend beyond and include other activities like “Pink Shirt Day”, “Me to We”, awareness of self and others.

Connections to New BC curriculum:

- *Big Ideas:*
 - Story help us to learn about ourselves, family and community.
 - Exploring and sharing multiple perspectives extends our thinking.
- *Curricular Competencies:*
 - Use personal experience and knowledge to connect to story and make meaning
 - Recognize how language constructs personal, social, and cultural identity

Parent Connection:

Ask parents to join in and have discussions with their family.
What do we as a family value? How do we show these values?