Classroom Meetings

What are Classroom Meetings?
Classroom meetings are used in conflict resolution, character education and bullying prevention. They are a way to get your class actively involved in solving issues.

How will they benefit my classroom?
- Decreases discipline issues in classroom
- Covers aspects of language, health, social studies and history curriculum
- Helps create an atmosphere of mutual respect and understanding
- Helps build a sense of belonging
- Empowers students to work together to find solutions
- Creates ownership and pride in class
- Generates excitement and energy

In getting started, your students may need to learn how to:
- Give and accept compliments
- Encourage each other
- Express feelings using “I” messages

Ideas to get you started:
- Prepare students by teach lessons on encouragement and problem solving.
- Practice putting chairs in a circle formation quickly - desks to the outside and chairs into a circle. This allows for eye contact and inclusion.
- As the teacher, model how to conduct meeting e.g. call to order, compliments, old business, new business, “thank you’s”, & conclusion.
- Schedule meetings weekly if possible.
- Once students are comfortable, rotate students as group leaders. You join the meeting as a participant and coach the student chair as needed, for example letting someone know if they are out of order, keeping discussion on topic, and ensuring everyone has a turn to speak. This builds valuable skills for students.
- Teacher coaches, takes minutes, is group member, maintains positive tone, states non-negotiables e.g. no daily parties
- Ensures everyone has chance to share ideas, ask questions; take turns going around circle with option to “pass” Discuss issues and create a solution
- Determine and monitor fair and effective consequences for misbehaviour
- Be accountable for their behaviour in the classroom
- Work together cooperatively
Imagine Newsletter
A School Climate Approach to Bullying Prevention

Students can develop skills in:
- healthy relationships
- personal safety
- respect, understanding and empathy
- listening skills
- expressing/clarifying thoughts, feelings and opinions
- participating in group discussions
- conflict resolution
- organization, leadership
- problem solving, decision making
- brainstorming
- recognizing non-verbal communication cues

Now you're a pro, where else could you go?
What if your class has: 1) developed skills, 2) meetings going smoothly, 3) everyone participating in creating / following classroom expectations and 4) students (and you) are enthusiastic, involved and empowered to do more?

Information for School Staff

How about extending these skills to other areas?

Your class could use their skills to:
- Create committees to plan events and fun activities e.g. winter play day
- Plan a class project - field trip, service to school or community
- Plan a school project - e.g. playground clean up, gathering used books to donate
- Create a campaign e.g. bullying prevention week
- Volunteer - e.g. raise funds / gather materials for a charity, buddy with a "grandparent" at a local nursing home
- Make a class video to show other schools how to conduct a class meeting
- Mentor younger students - reading buddy, playground monitor

Resources Available

The Imagine Manual - see p. 85-94 available at www.region.waterloo.on.ca/bullying

Book - "Class Meetings: Building Leadership, Problem-Solving and Decision-Making Skills in the Respectful Classrooms", by Donna Styles

Video - "Bridgette: The Power of Class Meetings"

Also Check with your Board's Resource Centre for resources on classroom meetings and classroom behaviour management.

For more information, contact Region of Waterloo Public Health 519-883-2003 ext. 5356

www.region.waterloo.on.ca/bullying