

Teacher Companion Document

Part I: Accuser vs. Advocate

Advocate vs. Accuser Whiteboard Activity (give to Esther)

Instructions: With a whiteboard and marker (or anything similar), draw two simple columns, one labeled "accuser" and the other labeled "advocate". Ask your students to think of opposing characteristics between the two (i.e. "an accuser attacks, and an advocate defends."), and write those words in their respective columns. If they have trouble, remind them that Satan is actually a title meaning "accuser", and that Jesus is our advocate (1 John 2:1-2). Maybe this will fuel their imagination.

In the end we want to equate gossip with the accuser, and gratitude with the advocate. When you think they have come up with enough parallels, end the activity by writing these two words in parentheses above their corresponding columns and explaining why they are similar.

EXAMPLE:

(Gossip)

(Gratitude)

ACCUSER

ADVOCATE

attack

blame

bend truth

etc.

defend

support

seek truth

etc.

Part II: Reconciliation

Storytime

This is an opportunity for you to share a story with the class, either of a time in your life when you had a conflict conversation which significantly helped a relationship, or a time when you did not deal with conflict well and you wish you would have.

Roleplaying Conflict Scenarios Activity

This activity will help students practice what it might look like to use i-Messages (briefly touched on in the virtual presentation) to pursue actual reconciliation instead of gossiping about an issue. Remind your students that the basics of i-Messaging are:

Observation - telling the person the problem you have observed

Explanation - explaining how it makes you feel

Interpretation - asking the person to interpret what happened for you

The term i-Messaging does not refer to Apple products or to texting, but to the fact that the conversation initiator communicates "I feel ___" language as opposed to attacking the other person with language such as "you are ___" or "you do ___", which can put people on the defensive. An article which goes more in depth about this is found here: <http://www.crinfo.org/coreknowledge/iu-messages>

Instructions: Pick two student volunteers who feel comfortable having a fake conflict conversation in front of the class. Read the scenario to the volunteers in front of the class and then let them try to have the conversation. You have lots of options with this. You can allow the volunteers to ask for guidance if they are stuck. You can ask the volunteers to reflect on how they would feel in real life based on what the other person said. You can stop the conversation and ask the class what they did well and what they could improve on.

After one set of volunteers concludes their conversation, you can ask for more volunteers to come up and try a new scenario. These are examples of scenarios you could give, but you could also come up with your own scenarios to fit the specific needs of your class.

Scenario 1: Roommate Conflict

(read to student #1) Charlie (your roommate) always leaves his dirty dishes in the sink, leaving you to do them when you get sick of seeing a sink full of dirty dishes or when you have no dishes to use because Charlie never cleaned up after himself. You've asked him time and time again to change this habit but he still hasn't changed. You think it's time to sit down and get to the root of the issue, so you are initiating a conversation.

(read to student #2) Chad (your roommate) is always nagging you about the dishes. You've even heard that he's talked about how "dirty" you live behind your back. You're both busy young bachelors - who cares about a little mess?!

Scenario 2: Break-Up Conflict [define subtweeting]

(read to female student) Stacey, three weeks ago, the love of your life dumped you unexpectedly. You think he could have been way more sensitive in how he did it and could have given you another chance to improve the relationship.

(read to male student) Ben, you broke up with Stacey three weeks ago, and how she has acted since then upsets you. She has subtweeted about you, you have heard rumors she has apparently spread exaggerating how unkind you were when you broke up with her, and she has even stopped talking to your sister. You want her behavior to stop because it is disrespectful, so you are initiating a conversation with her.

Scenario 3: Teacher/Student Conflict

(read to student #1) Mrs. Ungermire, Elaine is one of the students in your Cultural History class. You know she has strong opinions on many complex topics, and she is very quick to share. Sometimes, too quick. You've tried purposely ignoring her when her hand is up recently, because she has been starting too much disruption in class.

(read to student #2) Elaine, you've noticed that Mrs. Ungermire, your Cultural History teacher, seems to have fairly strong biases that come out in her lectures. This wouldn't bother you too much, seeing as it is a public school, but you feel like she has been blatantly

alienating your opinions in class because she simply disagrees with you. In your point of view, you've been deliberately mistreated. You are initiating the conversation.

Possible Reflection Questions: This activity will be most helpful for students if they have time to reflect on the experience. Here are some ideas:

- Was this uncomfortable/awkward?
- How many of you have had conversations like this in real life?
- How many of you would be more comfortable having conversations like these through texting or online?
- Could technology be used to promote real-life conflict conversations, or does it always get in the way?
- What did you learn from this?

Part III: Cunningly Good

include quote at top ~ "Why isn't good as cunningly good as evil is cunningly evil?"

We talked about how evil is cunning and creative in its work, and how as Christians, we should be cunningly good. Have students get together with 2-3 other students and scheme about how they can bless people at your school this week. Encourage them to get creative and think about the needs at your school specifically. If you want to, you could plan a time in a week or so to debrief the experience with your students. That way there is some follow-up to encourage students to actually do something.

If they can't think of any winner ideas, here are some suggestions:

- Write positive notes and drop them into lockers
- Buy a classmate (or teacher!) their favorite beverage and set it at their seat before class
- Invite someone who you don't normally eat with to eat at your table
- Sneakily put a sticky note on someone's back that says something like "hug me" or "give me a high five"
- Serve someone who often gets overlooked at your school, such as a custodian or meal service employee
- Write encouraging sticky notes and put them in library books for people to find