



## Lesson: Sticks & Stones

**Objective:** To design ways to address bullying behaviors

**Grade Level:** Middle School and up

[Based partly on a lesson plan by Teaching Tolerance called **Breaking Down The Walls Of Intolerance**<http://www.tolerance.org/teach/printer.jsp?p=0&ar=970&pi=apg> ]

### Introduction

Explain to students that an estimated 5.7 million young people in the United States have identified themselves as a bully, admit to being bullied, or both. Bullying can be verbal or non-verbal, physical or non-physical. Bullying can be direct, like hitting, teasing, or making threats. It can also be indirect, like rumors, manipulation, isolation and exclusion. A bully might be one person acting out independently, or a clique or group of people picking on someone out of a need to increase their popularity or to seem more cool.

### Procedure

1. Ask students what they think the saying “Sticks and stones can break my bones, but names can really hurt me.” Has anyone heard another version of this saying? Which is truer? Ask students to take a moment to reflect on their experiences. Have they ever had someone say something to them that hurt their feelings. Has someone ever hurt them physically or tried to scare them? Have they ever hurt someone by something they said or did?
2. Teachers might want to provide students with their own personal example of a time they were a victim or a witness to bullying or they hurt someone’s feelings. If students feel comfortable, allow them a few moments to share their experiences aloud.
3. Give each student a light gray paper “stone.” Have students write a behavior that could hurt someone or make them feel bad such as calling someone an ethnic name, or tripping someone. Younger children can draw a picture.
4. Have them wrinkle up the "stone" and then try to smooth it out. Explain that once someone has been hurt, it is never forgotten. You cannot remove the hurt. The wrinkles will always be there.
5. Hang stones on wall to create a wall of intolerance or have students sit in a circle and pile the rocks up in the middle. Ask students to think about ways to prevent these things from happening. Create a class list of ideas.
6. In turn, have each student select someone else’s stone off the wall or from the pile. Read your stone and imagine that this happened to yourself or a friend of yours. What could you do about it? Pair and share your ideas.
7. Follow up lesson will be: **AFFIRMATION JAR**



## AFFIRMATION JAR

### Learning Objective:

To teach students how to use affirmations to enhance a positive classroom climate.

### Procedure:

1. Review with the class the affirmation writing technique. The affirmation statement is:
  - A. Positive
  - B. Personal
  - C. Specific
  - D. In the present tense
2. Brainstorm with the class about what things contribute to a positive classroom climate.
3. Have each student write an affirmation about positive classroom climate.
4. Collect and share each affirmation with the whole class.
5. Place all the affirmations in a gallon jar or container.
6. Once a week for several weeks, have each student draw out an affirmation and read it aloud.
7. Clearly indicate that students can draw an affirmation out of the jar and read to themselves at any time.