

GOOD VERSUS EVIL: EXPLORING POPULAR CHILDREN'S ANIMATION

Primary Division (Grade JK-1) Unit

INTRODUCTION

The worlds of young children often are full of imaginary and animated friends, villains, and role models. Comics, animated TV programs, and movies are the sources of many messages about behaviours, relationships, and values, messages that are viewed and accepted by young children. The purpose of this unit is to examine some of these messages, so that the values are identified, questioned where necessary, and replaced when appropriate. The focus of the lessons in this unit is on Violence. Children's programming often suggests that violence is inevitable, the only possible outcome or resolution of conflict. It also implies that violence is acceptable if a hero uses it, or if it is the source of laughter for the audience. Sustained and repeated exposure to such images can contribute to children being desensitized to violence, and to accepting more subtle forms of violence as normal.

In the following series of lessons, students will begin by identifying the characteristics of "good" and "bad", as shown in animated texts. They will be encouraged to think about the validity of these characterizations, and to make connections to their own behaviours. The first three lessons in this unit focus on this idea, and are appropriate for JK, K, and Grade 1 classes.

The final three lessons of this unit move to more sophisticated concepts, ones that focus more directly on the portrayal of violence in media texts. In these lessons, students will think about what actions could be called violent, and will begin to recognise the more subtle forms that violence can take. They also will explore their acceptance of violence in certain situations, and be led to consider more acceptable alternatives. These lessons will be challenging for the younger children, and perhaps would be more appropriate for Grade 1 classes.

Teachers should review all lessons, links, and resources provided below to ensure the content is still available and accessible online.

UNIT OVERVIEW

The purpose of this unit is to encourage students to look at how stereotypes are promoted by the media in the way “good” characters and “bad” characters are portrayed.

- Lesson 1: The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly
- Lesson 2: Who’s Afraid of the Big Bad Pig?
- Lesson 3: Girls Just Wanna Have Fun
- Lesson 4: Sticks and Stones May Break My Bones... and Can, Too!
- Lesson 5: When is it Good to be Bad?
- Lesson 6: Wap, Bam, Zowie!

Lesson 1: The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly

This first lesson is designed to get the students thinking about good and bad characters in the animated texts they know. They will develop vocabulary to describe these characters. Students also will explore the conventions used to create heroes and villains, and consider whether any characters they know move beyond these stereotypes.

Lesson 2: Who’s Afraid of the Big Bad Pig?

In this lesson, the students will be asked to examine the stereotypes that appear in some of their favourite stories. Authors and illustrators often choose particular animals for their works because the readers have been taught to expect certain kinds of behaviour from these creatures. After a discussion about why all snakes aren’t bad, or all wolves aren’t mean, the students will be asked to rewrite some stories to reflect a different kind of personality for some of the main characters. The purpose of this exercise is to demonstrate that stereotypes can and should be challenged.

Lesson 3: Girls Just Wanna Have Fun

This lesson is designed to extend the thinking of Lesson 2. The stereotypes of “good” and “bad” girls will be examined, using popular animated characters. Students will be asked to identify the conventions used to show a girl’s personality, and will discuss why these stereotypes could be misleading or unfair. They will finish by designing a more realistic animated character, trying to avoid the stereotypes. An extension activity for this lesson suggests that the process be repeated to examine the stereotypes of boys in media.

Lesson 4: Sticks and Stones May Break My Bones... and Can, Too!

In this lesson, students will watch brief clips of popular animated TV shows, and will identify the actions that appear to be violent. Because students often are unaware of the more subtle forms of violence, they will be encouraged to consider how the victim in each clip would feel. They will rank the forms of violence from least to most serious, and support their decisions. This lesson is intended to activate and build students’ knowledge about a broader range of violence, and how it is packaged for them in the texts they view.

Lesson 5: When is it Good to be Bad?

In this lesson, students will continue their exploration of the conventions used to present good and bad characters, but will add the idea of feelings to their study. After determining how a person would feel in the situation viewed, the students will be asked to share their opinions as to whether or not they consider the sample of violence to be acceptable (okay) or unacceptable (not okay). This is designed to challenge the beliefs that violence is acceptable if it is funny, or if a good person uses it.

Lesson 6: Wap, Bam, Zowie!

In this lesson, the students will examine the comic convention of implying violence instead of showing it. They will read comics containing either word art or spaces between the panels to replace violent acts, and will discuss the effects on the reader/viewer of these missing details. Also, students will be asked to consider the feelings of the characters in the missing panels, and to suggest alternative, non-violent solutions to the situations.

For additional lessons on these topics, visit www.media-awareness.net
and click on the “For Teachers” section.

LESSON 1: THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE UGLY

40 minutes

CURRICULUM EXPECTATIONS

- Kindergarten: LANGUAGE AND LITERACIES – CHILDREN ARE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATORS
 - Demonstrate a beginning understanding and critical awareness of media texts by beginning to respond critically to animated works.
- Grade 1: MEDIA LITERACY – UNDERSTANDING MEDIA TEXTS
 - 1.2 – Identify overt and implied messages in simple media texts.
 - 1.3 – Express personal thoughts and feelings about some simple media works and explain their responses.

KEY CONCEPTS AND QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Media construct versions of reality using their own “language” to position readers/viewers in certain ways.
- Who are the good guys in the texts we read or view? Who are the bad guys? How do we know?

INTRODUCTION/OVERVIEW

In this first lesson, students will examine conventions and stereotypes used in the creation of animated characters. They will view a variety of images (e.g. animation stills, comics, illustrations), and attempt to develop a rich vocabulary of words to describe the emotions and reactions of heroes and villains. They will have the opportunity to share their thinking behind their decisions for sorting characters as either good or bad. They also will be encouraged to think about whether anyone can be all good or all bad.

TEACHING/LEARNING STRATEGIES

TERMS – Write the terms “Good” and “Bad” on chart paper. Model for students a think aloud about who are the “good” and “bad” characters in a favourite film, story, television program, or other form of media. For example: *One of my favourite comics when I was growing up was Batman. Batman was a good guy who was always battling evil forces. The bad guys, like the Joker, were always doing really bad things, like robbing a bank or trying to control the minds of others in Gotham. Batman was always doing good things, like saving people in danger, and capturing the Joker and putting him in jail. In every Batman comic, there was always a “good guy” and a “bad guy.”*

Ask students to turn to an elbow partner to talk about and describe the “good” and “bad” characters from a favourite film, story, television program, or other form of media.

During the following activities, you may wish to use **Assessment Checklist (1.1 REF)** to collect information about how the students perform during the discussions.

Invite students to contribute words that describe their “good” and “bad” characters.



CONVENTIONS – Explain that when authors or artists create characters for their media texts, they rely on codes and conventions to help their readers understand the characters and the story. To create “good” or “bad” characters, authors or artists often use the convention of a stereotype. The lists of descriptors in the chart above, and likely in your class’s chart, express stereotypes associated with “good” and “bad.” Discuss whether or not all heroes have all the character traits listed in the chart.

Place two hula hoops on the floor, and label one *Good* and the other *Bad*. Provide each student with an image of a character from a popular narrative text (photocopies from Google images, or use pictures from **Sample Images of Characters 1.2 REF**). Have students sort the images as either good or bad by placing the image inside the correct hula hoop. Allow students also to create an in-between group (e.g. both good and bad, or neither good nor bad), and place these in a separate pile on the floor. As students place their images into a pile, ask them to explain their decision. Encourage students to refer to the lists in order to use a broader vocabulary when providing a rationale. If new descriptors are offered, add these to the lists.

DRAMATIZATION – Write on word cards the descriptors from the chart list. Initially, you may wish to keep the good and the bad descriptors in different piles, simplifying the task. Place these cards face down on a table. Tell the class that they are going to play a game. One person will choose a card, silently read the word, and then act out the word for the class. The other students will attempt to name the descriptor. Remind the students to refer to the vocabulary lists for ideas.

SMALL GROUPS – Select three words cards from either the good or the bad list. Model for students your creation of a character based on those three words. Describe the character in detail. You might say, “*My character is bad. She is mean, steals money, and always frowns.*”

- **OPTION #1:** Divide the class into small groups, and instruct the students to create characters based on three descriptors found on the word cards, as you did in the modelling exercise. Tell them to describe, in as much detail as possible, exactly what this character would be like. Have students draw or write about their character, or act out scenes involving their character.
- **OPTION #2:** Handout **Face Template (1.3 REF)** and allow them to use this to create their character. Using this template, ask students to draw the face of a “good” character or a “bad” character. They can work individually or in pairs on this task.

ACTIVISM

Ask students to draw a picture of their perfect hero. Tell them to try to show what this person is like, using colours, facial expressions, gestures, or props to provide hints for the viewer. Underneath the picture, instruct them to write three words that describe this hero. You may wish to model this activity with a picture you have drawn, or a picture you have printed from a book or internet source. When everyone is done, display the pictures on the bulletin board, and allow students to ask questions about each other’s hero. Ask the artist to point out the conventions they have used in their creations.

ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- Assessment Checklist (1.1 REF) – Observe students as they sort and classify images. Listen to the rationale they share for their decisions.
- Face Template (1.3 REF)

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE LESSONS / HOMEWORK / EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Once students understand and have created a stereotypical character, you may want to mix the “good” and “bad” piles to encourage students to develop characters with greater depth. If you do this, ask the students which kind of character is more realistic (the stereotype or the in-depth character). They should be able to see that the second character is more real, so ask them why so many heroes and villains are stereotypes.

Review the idea of a convention or stereotype, and remind the students what this means with heroes and villains. Refer to the chart they made of descriptors of heroes and villains. Tell the students that when they watch their favourite TV show tonight, you want them to think about the hero and/or the villain, and what words would describe this character. When they come to class next day, ask for volunteers to describe their character, and to tell what discoveries they made. Did the characters fit neatly into the categories of hero or villain? Be sure to ask them to explain why or why not. How many found characters that had both good and bad traits?

CROSS CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS

- Mathematics (sorting and classifying; probability)
- Dramatic Arts
- Visual Arts

MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

- Chart paper and marker
- Two hula hoops
- Blank cards to create word cards
- Assessment Checklist (1.1 REF)
- Photocopied images of popular animated heroes and villains (e.g. superheroes, characters from animated television programs, characters from films, picture book characters); you will need at least one per student in the class.
- Images may be obtained from:
 - Sample Character Images (1.2 REF)
 - Illustrations from picture books
 - Comic book frames
 - Google image stills

IMPORTANT TERMINOLOGY / BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

- **Code:** a rule that must be followed, such as not showing detailed or graphic violence
- **Convention:** the usual or accepted way of doing something, like a hero wearing a white hat; a stereotype
- **Stereotype:** a flat or one-dimensional character, easily recognized because of the use of expected or typical characteristics
- **Overt:** face value; obvious or observable; clearly stated
- **Implied:** hinted or suggested; between-the-lines ideas; not obvious

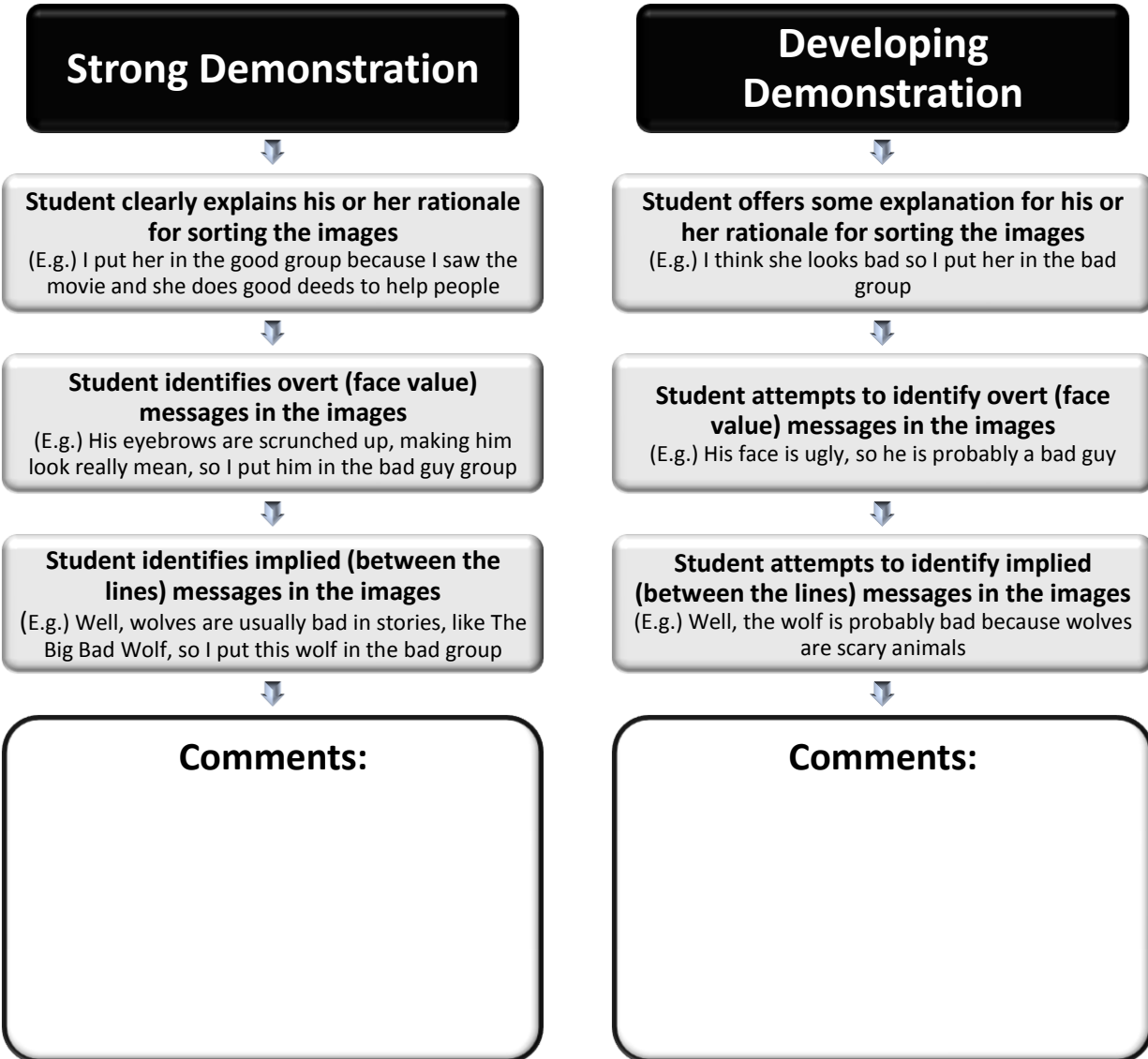
- Many animated characters are stereotypical, simple creations. They are recognized immediately because they follow conventional patterns, and they allow young children to identify good and bad choices. The descriptors of these characters are straight-forward, making them easy topics for discussion. Some characters that the children watch may be a bit more complex. These characters will demonstrate both good and bad character traits, and will be more realistic. Because young children like to identify with or emulate their heroes, it would be good to discuss whether or not a person can be just good, or just bad.

ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

Student: _____

Date: _____

TASK: SORTING IMAGES OF “GOOD GUYS” AND “BAD GUYS”



NEXT STEPS:

SAMPLE IMAGES OF CHARACTERS



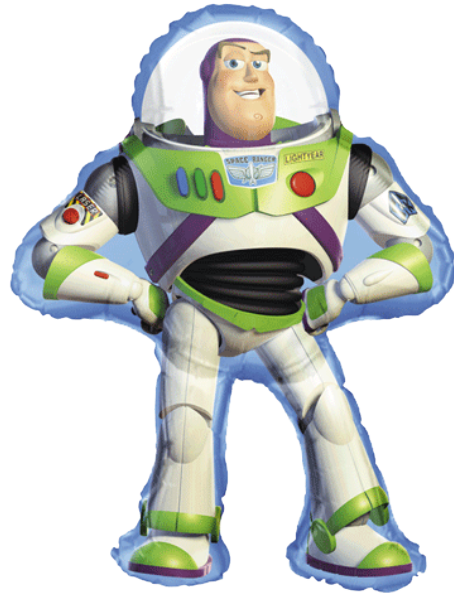
Dora the Explorer from *Dora*



Swiper the Fox from *Dora*



Evil Doctor Porkchop from *Toy Story*



Buzz Lightyear from *Toy Story*



Diego from *Dora*



Rumpel from *Shrek Forever After*



Shrek from *Shrek*



Syndrome from *The Incredibles*

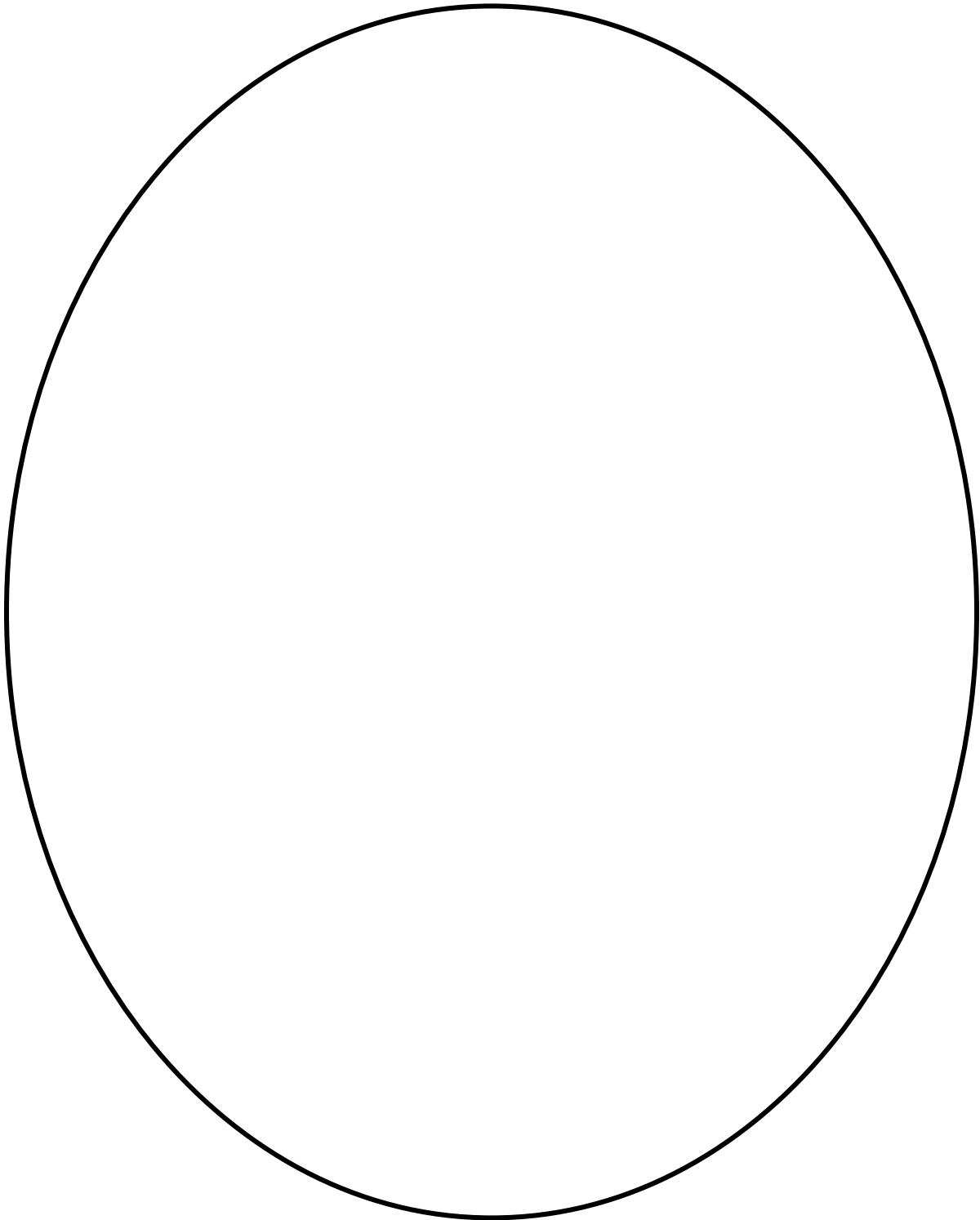


Evil Blue-Eyed Tornado



Happy Golden Sun

FACE TEMPLATE



LESSON 2: WHO'S AFRAID OF THE BIG BAD PIG?

40 minutes

CURRICULUM EXPECTATIONS

- Kindergarten: LANGUAGE AND LITERACIES – CHILDREN ARE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATORS
 - Demonstrate a beginning understanding and critical awareness of media texts by beginning to respond critically to animated works.
- Grade 1: MEDIA LITERACY – UNDERSTANDING MEDIA TEXTS
 - 1.2 – Identify overt and implied messages in simple media texts.
 - 2.2 – Identify, initially with support and direction, the conventions and techniques used in some familiar media forms.
 - 3.1 – Produce simple media works.

KEY CONCEPTS AND QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Media construct versions of reality using codes and conventions to convey particular messages.
- Why are some animals so frequently used to represent the bad guy or good guy?
- How do authors and artists convey good and bad characteristics in these animals?
- How might we challenge these traditional ideas of good and bad?

INTRODUCTION/OVERVIEW

Children's stories often use animals to represent humans. The choices that authors and artists make about which animals will represent their characters are very deliberate, and are intended to convey particular personality traits and characteristics. There is no coincidence that wolves are frequently big and bad, or that snakes are usually sly and conniving. These techniques rely upon and reinforce stereotypes. Students need to explore these stereotypes in order to appreciate that stereotypes can be challenged, and that neither animals nor people fall into either/or categories such as good or bad. In this lesson, students will respond to the images of characters by sharing thoughts about their personalities, based on what they see. They then will challenge these stereotypes.

TEACHING /LEARNING STRATEGIES

ACTIVITY CARDS – Make copies of the images found on **Go Fish Activity Cards (2.1 H)**, and add any images you have found in your own research. Make two copies of each image for each pair of students. These will serve as playing cards. You may wish to mount these images on construction paper or cardboard, to make them more like playing cards.

Give one set of image cards to each pair of students, and tell them that they are going to play "Go Fish" with the image cards. Outline the following rules for the class:

- Place all the cards face down, between them on the desk.
- Each person will take five cards into his or her hands.
- The remainder of the cards will be placed in a deck, faced down, in the middle of the desk between the players.

- Each player is looking for pairs of matching cards. When they find a pair, they will place these on the table in front of themselves. The object of the game is to be the first person to have no unmatched cards left in their hands.
- Each player will take a turn searching for a matching pair. Unlike the usual request in Go Fish, in this game, the student must describe the image, not name it (e.g. “Do you have a character with mean yellow eyes?”). (The teacher may need to remind students of this rule while they are playing.)
- If the other player has the requested card, they must hand it over, and the asker can put the pair of cards on the table. The asker now may request another card, and continue putting pairs on the table until the other player cannot provide the matching card. If the other player does not have the requested card, they say, Go Fish, and the asker must add a card to their hand from the deck. The turn now moves to the other player.
- The game continues until the deck runs out or one person has no cards left in their hands. The first out or the person with the most pairs is the winner.

CHARACTER SORT – Once students have completed their game, tell them to look closely at the pictures on their cards. Together, each pair of students will decide what conclusions they might draw about each of the characters; they should ask themselves and each other the following questions:

- What kind of character is this?
- How might she treat other people?
- Would you want him as a friend?

As they examine each card and answer the questions about it, students will sort the characters into groups or piles. Tell the class that they can determine the names or reasons for these groups, and you will ask them to explain when they are finished.

The teacher should circulate around the pairs, and listen in on the students’ conversations as they make decisions about the characters. Offer assistance or encouragement where necessary.

When the sorting and discussions are completed, ask the students to share with each other what categories they used to sort the cards. Discuss some of the different methods that were chosen. Be sure to ask what made the students think that a particular card should be in each category.

CONVENTIONS AND STEREOTYPES – When everyone has shared some ideas, draw attention to several categories that were used in the sorting that are stereotypes or conventions of animated characters. For example, point out that the snake was seen as bad or evil. Ask the students if snakes really are bad or evil. While a few who are frightened of snakes may wish to say snakes are bad, there will be other students who like snakes and are not afraid of them, and they will say that snakes are good. If possible, show this pattern with one or two other categories that were used.

CLASS JOURNAL RESPONSE – Ask students to think about how the artist helps the reader/viewer decide whether an animal character is bad or good, mean or kind, scary or sweet. Ask them why the use of stereotypes of some of these animals is not a good thing. Using the shared writing strategy, record students’ responses in a class journal response.

RECREATE – Ask students to think about how they might change a character to make it the opposite kind of individual (e.g. How might the big, bad wolf become the little, kind wolf?).

- **OPTION #1:** Read a story to the whole class that uses conventional or stereotypic animal characters, like *Little Red Riding Hood*, *The Three Little Pigs*, or *Chicken Little*. Tell the class they will now choose one of the characters they wish to change. Using the **Recreating a Character – T Chart (2.2 H)**, list all the characteristics associated with their chosen animal on one side of the T chart. Then, have the class generate some characteristics that are opposite to their usual personality and write the responses on the other side of the T chart. This activity could also be done in small groups.
- **OPTION #2:** Have students choose a story that uses conventional or stereotypic animal characters, like *Little Red Riding Hood*, *The Three Little Pigs*, or *Chicken Little*. Tell them that their task is to draw or dramatize a scene from their popular story, in which the characters take on the opposite personality to their usual one. They will create a new story showcasing the new personality traits of the changed characters. If they are drawing, they could work individually or in pairs. If they are dramatizing, they will work in groups with the correct number of actors for their tale. When everyone is ready, ask each group to share their new story with the class. Be sure to follow up with a discussion about how the story changed when the personality traits were reversed.

ACTIVISM

If the students are comfortable doing so, they could share their new stories or dramatizations with another class, or with a larger group in an assembly.

Using an interactive or shared writing strategy, students could create apology notes from popular bad characters. For what might they apologize? To whom might they apologize? How might they explain their behaviour? What promises might they make?

ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- Teachers can write anecdotal notes to reflect the degree to which students support their decisions. Teachers should consider whether the child has supported his or her decision effectively (i.e. is the decision rooted in fact, has the child given an example).
- Concept attainment can be assessed in the rewritten stories or dramatizations.
- Recreating a Character – T Chart (2.2 H)

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE LESSONS / HOMEWORK / EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Students could create “*Before and After*” posters showing the transformations of popular characters from their bad selves to their good selves. Students could include testimonials from the characters, in which they share their previous transgressions and profess their new goals. These posters then can be posted around the school to share with others.

Using an interactive or shared writing strategy, or a dramatization, a wolf or snake (or other stereotypically bad character) could complain about the “bad rap” he experiences because people don’t really understand him. He should outline what people think about him, and then say what he really is like.

Students could be asked to find other examples of stories or movies that have characters who might benefit from a rewrite that shows their true nature, rather than the usually accepted personality.

CROSS CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS

- Visual Arts
- Dramatic Arts
- Character Education
- Language Arts

MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

- Go Fish Activity Cards (2.1 H) – one set (of two copies per image) for each pair of students in the class
 - Images of popular animal characters from your own research may be used to supplement or replace the images on the handout. Ensure that your images represent both those animals that fall into, and challenge stereotypes.
 - You may wish to mount these images on construction paper or cardboard, to make them more like playing cards.
- Recreating a Character – T Chart (2.2 H)
- Chart paper and marker for class journal response
- Paper and markers for students to create stories
- Books such as *Little Red Riding Hood*, *The Three Little Pigs*, or *Chicken Little*

TERMINOLOGY/BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

- **Stereotype:** a flat or one-dimensional character easily recognized because of the use of expected or typical characteristics; typically, this kind of character has only one or two personality traits, and almost always behaves in a prescribed manner.

2.1 H

GO FISH ACTIVITY CARDS



RECREATING A CHARACTER – T CHART

CHARACTER'S TYPICAL PERSONALITY	CHARACTER'S NEW PERSONALITY

LESSON 3: GIRLS JUST WANNA HAVE FUN

40 minutes

CURRICULUM EXPECTATIONS

- Kindergarten: LANGUAGE AND LITERACIES – CHILDREN ARE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATORS
 - Demonstrate a beginning understanding and critical awareness of media texts by beginning to respond critically to animated works.
- Grade 1: MEDIA LITERACY – UNDERSTANDING MEDIA TEXTS
 - 1.2 – Identify overt and implied messages in simple media texts.
 - 2.2 – Identify, initially with support and direction, the conventions and techniques used in some familiar media forms.
 - 3.1 – Produce simple media works.

KEY CONCEPTS AND QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Media construct versions of reality using codes and conventions to convey particular messages.
- Audiences negotiate their own meaning, which may differ from the creator’s intended meaning.
- How are girl heroes portrayed in popular media texts?
- How are girl villains portrayed in popular media texts?
- What messages do we get from how girls are portrayed?

INTRODUCTION / OVERVIEW

In the previous lesson, the students identified characteristics that were associated with different animals. They then explored why this might not be an accurate depiction of this animal. Now they are being asked to make the same kinds of observations and to draw the same kinds of conclusions about characteristics associated with girls. They will look at how the media portrays “good” girls and “bad” girls in children’s animation, and how stereotypes are supported through the presentation of girl heroes and girl villains. They also will be asked to consider what messages are associated with girls in animation.

TEACHING / LEARNING STRATEGIES

REVIEW – Review some of the heroes and villains that have been part of the conversations from previous lessons. Explain to students that the focus for today’s lesson will be on girl heroes and villains.

BRAINSTORM – Have students turn to an elbow partner to brainstorm the names of girl heroes and villains from popular media texts. When they are ready, ask them to share with the rest of the class the names they have remembered. As they say the names, the teacher will write the names of the characters on sticky notes.

When the sticky notes are ready, the teacher will read aloud the name on each sticky note, and then tell the students to talk briefly with a partner about what they know about that character, to determine whether she is good or bad. Sort the sticky notes into three separate categories on the board: Good Girls, Bad Girls, or Undecided.

VISUAL IMAGES – Share with students some visual images (e.g. from Google Images) of good and bad girls. See **Images of Good Girls and Bad Girls (3.1 H)** for some examples to use, and add your own samples. Ask the students to sort these images into the same three categories used in the brainstorming activity.

Look at the sorted lists, and ask students what they notice about the characters on each list. You may want to ask:

- Looking at these pictures, what does a good character look like?
- Looking at these pictures, what does a bad character look like?
- How are the good characters similar to the bad characters?
- How are the good characters different from the bad characters?
- What do you notice about how they are dressed?
- Which of the characters are alone, and which are with friends or others?
- Why are we undecided about the characters in the third pile? What information do we need to place them in one of the other piles?
- What messages about girls are we getting from these pictures?

Explain to students that authors and artists use certain conventions to help their audiences understand and connect with their characters and stories. Remind them of the discussion where they talked about animal characters, and how certain animals frequently were associated with certain behaviours. Remind them also that they realized that this was not always true or fair to the animal. Tell them that authors and artists often rely on common ideas or stereotypes to share their message about girls, too. For example, girl characters usually are part of a group. The good girls usually are dressed very fashionably. The bad girls often dress in a bit more flashy and trendy fashion. Looking at the pictures and names in each of the lists on the board, what other conventions are used to show good and bad girls?

Ask students:

- Do you know anyone who is ALWAYS good or ALWAYS bad? Why not?
- With this in mind, how might we create a character that is more realistic?

DESIGNING – Tell the students to pretend that they are part of a production company that will be designing a new animated character for girls. Students could work alone or with a partner on this assignment. Students should brainstorm who their character is, what she will look like, how she will act, and what she might say. Instruct them to design a character by drawing her, or they could use www.BitStripsforSchools.com. Encourage students to not worry about the quality of their artwork, but rather to focus on the ideas they develop about their character. Tell them to try to make her realistic, as well as interesting. Hand out paper and markers to each student.

SMALL GROUPS – When everyone has finished, divide the class into small groups of three or four students. Explain that they will be using a presentation method called *Save the Last Word for Me*. This means that each student in the group will say something about the character being shown, such as something they are thinking, based on what they see, before the creator of the character provides an explanation of what they meant. Ask the students to share their characters, one at a time, with their group members. Tell the students that when they are finished, you will be interested to hear whether what they saw and said before the creator spoke was what the creator expected. This strategy helps to

reinforce the concept that audiences negotiate their own meaning, which may be different from the creator's intended message. Ask for examples of the results of the conversations.

ACTIVISM

Tell the students to consider what the alternative personality of a character might be like. For example, how might a good Bratz girl behave? What might she look like, or sound like? Dramatize, or write about, a scene in which a popular bad girl acts like a good girl. Dramatize, or write about, how her bad girl friends are feeling, or what they think about her change in behaviour.

Use a shared writing process to write a letter to the artist who draws one of the characters discussed in class. Explain to this person why the conventions or stereotypes he uses for this character are unfair to girls, and suggest how his character could be made into a more well-rounded person.

ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- Anecdotal notes about participation in discussions – how well were ideas supported?
- Animated character designs – is concept attainment demonstrated?

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE LESSONS / HOMEWORK / EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Repeat this same lesson, but focus on bad boys and good boys. After, compare how the experiences were similar or different. Why? (for sample images, see **Images of Good Boys and Bad Boys – 3.2 H**)

Watch a TV show that we did not discuss in class, and decide if the girls in it are realistic, or if they follow the same kinds of conventions and stereotypes that we saw in the animated characters discussed in class. Report your findings back to the class.

Sometimes we want to wear clothes or things that our parents don't think that we should. Keeping in mind what we said about conventions and stereotypes, identify one thing your parents would not want you to wear, and suggest why they would feel this way.

Talk about one time when you thought people were judging you by your appearance rather than getting to know who you really were. Tell what happened, how it made you feel, and what (if anything) could be done differently in the future, to avoid this kind of misunderstanding.

CROSS CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS

- Character education
- Visual Arts
- Dramatic Arts

MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

- Images of Good Girls and Bad Girls (3.1 H)
- Images of animated girl heroes and villains
- Paper and markers for illustrations
- Images of Good Boys and Bad Boys (3.2 H)

TERMINOLOGY / BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

- The concept of **stereotypes** will be more difficult to grasp when examining girls rather than animated animals. This is because many of the stereotypes are embraced by young girls, especially the characteristics that they see as attractive or leading to popularity. This topic will have to be handled gently and with great tact if it is to be successful in demonstrating the problems of stereotyping.
- While it may be tempting to combine this lesson with the suggested extension about boys, it would be better to address each of the topics separately. If combined, the tendency will be for girls to look at girls, and boys to look at boys. If stereotypes are to be recognized and avoided, it will take the efforts of everyone, not just the efforts of the individuals involved. Boys need to rethink how they sometimes judge girls, just as girls need to rethink how they sometimes judge boys. For this reason, it is important that the whole class be involved in the steps designed to identify and discuss the conventions and stereotypes of both girls and boys.

IMAGES OF GOOD GIRL AND BAD GIRLS



Powerpuff Girls



Bratz



My Scene Girls



Polly Pockets



Witch



Princess



Evil Queen from *Snow White*



Devil Girl



Princess from *Princess and the Frog*

IMAGES OF GOOD BOYS AND BAD BOYS



Saturday



Beast Boy



Scooby Doo



Spongebob Squarepants



Phineas and Ferb



Jonny Quest



Kick Buttowski

LESSON 4: STICKS AND STONES MAY BREAK MY BONES... AND CAN TOO!

40 minutes

CURRICULUM EXPECTATIONS

- Kindergarten: LANGUAGE AND LITERACIES – CHILDREN ARE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATORS
 - Demonstrate a beginning understanding and critical awareness of media texts by beginning to respond critically to animated works.
- Grade 1: MEDIA LITERACY – UNDERSTANDING MEDIA TEXTS
 - 1.2 – Identify overt and implied messages in simple media texts.
 - 1.3 – Express personal thoughts and feelings about some simple media works and explain their responses.

KEY CONCEPTS AND QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Media construct versions of reality using their own “language” to position readers/viewers in certain ways.
- What is meant by the term “violence”? What does violence look like or sound like in the media texts you read or view?

INTRODUCTION/OVERVIEW

In this lesson, students will begin to consider the different kinds of violence that they see in popular animated texts. There are many forms of violence, ranging in severity from subtle exclusions to physical attacks. While students have been taught to recognise physical violence, they often are unaware of the more subtle forms of violence. This lesson is intended to activate and build students’ knowledge about a broader range of violence, and to examine how it is packaged for them in the texts they view.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

VIDEO – Tell the students that they are going to watch a small part of a TV program, and that afterwards, they will be asked to talk about what they saw. Play a brief clip from a popular animated television program (e.g. *Batman*, *Brave and the Bold*, *Powerpuff Girls*, *Johnny Test*, *Clone Wars*). Information for the links provided in the **Links/Resources** section.

After the first viewing, tell the students to turn to an elbow partner, and to talk about what they saw. Some suggestions of topics to discuss are:

- What did you see as you were viewing that clip?
- Describe the sounds and images you saw.
- How did they make you feel?

TRIPLE T CHART – Invite students to share their thinking with the rest of the class. As they do, record the key ideas in a triple T-Chart that you have prepared, under the titles **Actions**, **Sounds**, **Feelings**.

REPEAT – Repeat the process of showing and discussing, using various clips from different programs. Try to find clips that represent various forms of violence, including teasing, exclusion, threats, and physical violence. It is important especially to include the more subtle forms of violence in these clips.

Once the chart has been developed, model for students your reflection on one of the clips that appears on the chart. A sample reflection could be: *I saw _____ (main character) push his friend; that seemed a bit mean. I noticed that every time something was going to happen, the music got louder. I noticed that when there was someone getting hurt, many of you felt like saying ouch. I wonder how the character might have felt.*

THINK, PAIR, SHARE – First ask students to think about their reflection to themselves for a minute. Next, ask the students to talk with their elbow partner about their reflections. Then, ask for volunteers to share their reflections on the other clips outlined on the chart. Encourage them to respond to all three categories, as you did in your modelled reflection.

Once reflections have been shared, ask which clip showed the most serious example of violence. Discuss the various ideas that arise and the reasons for them. Do not go over all the examples on the list, as this will impact the next activity. Just ask for the most serious example.

ACTIONS – Examine the “Actions” column on the T Chart. Explain to the class that each of the actions that they described in the Actions column involves some kind of violence. You may need to review these examples to identify what is violent in each, as young children frequently see only the overt actions and miss more subtle forms of violence.

CONTINUUM – Record each action from this column on an individual word card (or simply cut apart the actions column on the T Chart and use these pieces of paper as the cards). Then, invite students to create a continuum of violence from least to most serious.

- **OPTION #1: CLASS CONTINUUM** – Instruct one student to stand up and hold a word card so that everyone can see it. Then ask a second student to pick up a word card and stand beside the first person, showing whether the new action is more or less serious by standing on the left (more) or right (less) side. The third student may stand on the left, the right, or between the first two students. Repeat the process until all the actions have been placed in the correct order. Be sure to continually engage the class in a discussion to support or change the ranking decision. For example, you might ask:
 - Why might _____ be more serious than _____?
 - How might someone else feel about this ranking decision?
 - Do words hurt more than actions? Do actions hurt more than words?
- **OPTION #2: SMALL GROUP CONTINUUM** – You might have students work in small groups to rank the actions. If you choose to do this, the actions will have to be written on a series of cards, one per group, so that everyone has the information they need to organize the continuum. They will place the cards in a line on the desks, and discuss reasons with the other group members. When everyone has finished, you could engage students in a whole-class discussion of the similarities and differences in the rankings.

REFLECTION / JOURNAL – Consolidate the lesson by having the students reflect on the final ranking. Using a shared writing strategy, write a class journal entry in which the class explains why they feel that some actions are less serious than others, and why some actions are more serious than others.

ACTIVISM

Using an interactive or shared writing strategy, students can write letters to the producers of animated television programs to express their concern about the representations of violence in the programs they view. They may discuss alternative, less serious, and less violent options for the characters in the programs.

ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- Teachers can write anecdotal notes to reflect the degree to which students support their decisions. Teachers should consider whether the child has supported his or her decision effectively (i.e. is the decision rooted in fact, has the child given an example). The aim of this assessment is to determine whether the child can offer sound support, or whether they require further direction.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE LESSONS/HOMEWORK/EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Name and make a list of the different kinds of violence that were seen in the clips of animated programs. Then ask the students to give an example of where they have seen this kind of violence on the playground. Before they give examples, remind them of the no-name rule: they must not use someone's name when telling their story. After each example, ask for suggestions about how this situation could be avoided, or what to do if they see it happening.

Challenge students to find an animated program that contains no violence. To accomplish this, they will have to watch very carefully for any action that could be called violent. If they find an example, encourage them to tell the rest of the class about the program, with a few details of what happened in it. If they cannot find an example of a totally non-violent program, discuss why this is hard to find.

CROSS CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS

- Character education
- Health

MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

- Brief clips from several popular animated television programs (e.g. Batman, Brave and the Bold, Powder Puff Girls, Johnny Test, Clone Wars)
- Information in Links/Resources
- Data Projector, SMARTboard, or DVD player and TV, to show clips
- Chart paper, with a Triple T Chart using the headings Actions, Sounds, Feelings; markers
- Cards for recording details from the T Chart activity

TERMINOLOGY/BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

- While most students have little difficulty identifying overt violent acts, they often struggle to recognise implied or more subtle forms of violence. Hitting, pushing, or physically hurting another person clearly is unacceptable, and reminders of this are important. Teasing, bullying, exclusion, and threats also are unacceptable, and these kinds of violence should be addressed in

discussions. Naming unacceptable activities helps students recognise them when they occur. This is one way to try to balance the negative messages that students may receive in many TV programs.

LINKS/RESOURCES

- YouTube – clips from various television episodes
 - Powerpuff Girls:
www.youtube.com/results?search_query=powerpuff+girls+episode&aq=f
 - Johnny Test:
www.youtube.com/results?search_query=johnny+test+episode&aq=f

LESSON 5: WHEN IS IT GOOD TO BE BAD?

40 minutes

CURRICULUM EXPECTATIONS

- Kindergarten: LANGUAGE AND LITERACIES – CHILDREN ARE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATORS
 - Demonstrate a beginning understanding and critical awareness of media texts by beginning to respond critically to animated works.
- Grade 1: MEDIA LITERACY – UNDERSTANDING MEDIA TEXTS
 - 1.2 – Identify overt and implied messages in simple media texts.
 - 1.3 – Express personal thoughts and feelings about some simple media works and explain their responses.
 - 2.2 – Identify, initially with support and direction, the conventions and techniques used in some familiar media forms.
 - 3.1 – Create simple media works.

KEY CONCEPTS AND QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Media construct versions of reality using their own “language” to position readers/viewers in certain ways.
- When does violence seem “okay”? What are the conditions contributing the notion that some violence is “okay”?

INTRODUCTION/OVERVIEW

Students will analyse further the conventions used by authors and artists to convey the ideas of goodness and badness in their works. Students will view still and moving images of popular heroes and villains, and will explore the feelings that these characters might experience in the situations seen. Students also will be asked to share their opinions as to whether or not they consider the sample of violence to be acceptable (okay) or unacceptable (not okay).

TEACHING/LEARNING STRATEGIES

REVIEW – Review the vocabulary words from the Good and Bad chart from Lesson One.

FREEZE FRAME – Show students a still image or a moving image clip of an aggressive interaction between two characters (e.g. Boy destroying toys from *Toy Story*, Lucy pulling football away from *Charlie Brown*, Kevin tricking intruders in *Home Alone*). See **Character Aggression (5.1 H)** handout.

Freeze a frame of the moving image, by pausing the action on a scene that shows aggression, or hold up the still image picture. Invite students to use words from the vocabulary chart to describe the characters in the images.

Ask how they know who is the good person and who is the bad person. (Go first to students who have not seen the movie or watched the TV show, as they must use more conventional clues to identify good and bad characters.) You may want to invite students to stand up and give voice to one of the characters, in which they express feelings or thoughts that the character might be experiencing at the time the

picture shows. Again, ask for the clues in the picture that suggest these feelings. Answers should include facial expressions, clothing, gestures, or actions. If necessary, point these out to the students.

Continue to show several more images, and repeat the process of inviting students to describe and give voice to the images.

FACES – When they are comfortable with identifying good and bad people in the pictures, tell the students that you now are going to show a few more pictures, and this time they will do something different. Now they will decide if what is happening is a good thing or a bad thing.

Provide students with **Faces (5.2 H)**, a picture with a happy face and a mad face, and tell them to fold the paper in half so that only one face shows at a time. (If you wish, instead of the faces, you could have students use the thumbs up (okay) or thumbs down (not okay) strategy to respond.)

Tell the class: As you are viewing these images, I want you to consider whether you feel that what happens, the action, is okay or not okay. Be sure to think about why you feel this way.

After each clip, ask the students to hold up the picture that shows their reaction (or their thumb up or down). When everyone has voted, invite students to turn to an elbow partner to share their choice, and to explain why they made this choice.

After each clip, invite one or two students to summarize their partner conversations for the whole group.

REFLECTION – After you have shown several clips, the teacher will offer observations about the students' reactions to the violent actions. If everyone sees violence as wrong, you can applaud their insight. If violence seems to be acceptable if the good person is doing it, you may wish to discuss other things the good person could have done, and need to point out gently that violence is never good. You also may wish to raise the question of the appropriateness of violence being shown as funny. Ask: How would you feel if you were _____ (the victim)?" As a class, define what is "okay" (e.g. acceptable, not a problem, just having fun). Is violence ever "okay"?

ACTIVISM

Paste the still images used in the previous activity (or new ones) onto large sheets of paper. Organise the students to work in partners, and give each pair one of the pictures on the large paper, and a marker. Students will print on the large paper, below the picture, words to describe each of the characters in the image. (Instruct them to use the word chart from Lesson 1 if needed.) Students can use different colour markers and/or draw lines to connect the description words with the specific characters in the image. At the bottom of the page, students will write whether or not they feel that the act depicted in the image is okay or not okay. They may write the words, or draw a smiley or shocked face, like the ones used in the activity above. Remind them to use the definition of "okay" that they created as a class. Have each partnership present their work, and explain their thinking. If partners disagree, they each may share their own thinking. Help students make the connection between their feelings towards the characters and their thoughts on the acceptance of the violence (e.g. So, because the coyote is tricky, mean, and a bully, you think that it is okay that in the end, the roadrunner dropped the anvil on the coyote's head; or So, because Cinderella is such a kind and helpful person, you feel that it was very unfair of her stepsisters to tease her the way that they did). It is important that youth understand that violence is not okay just because a "good" guy uses it, or because it seems funny. This idea may require a number of discussions

to make it clear to the students, as you will be challenging a deeply ingrained stereotype. These posters could be hung in the classroom, or on a hall bulletin board to share with other students.

ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- Teachers can create a checklist of things to listen-in for when students are talking about their thinking. Items may include:
 - the student’s ability to support thinking with evidence from other texts or experiences
 - identification of appropriate words to describe images
 - ability to grasp and to demonstrate the concept of the inappropriateness of violence

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE LESSONS / HOMEWORK / EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Students can use various digital programs (e.g. www.BitTripsforSchools.com) to create a variety of characters and online avatars. Students can experiment with giving their characters various facial expressions, body language positions, and types of clothing. Students can share their characters, either online or by printing them. Their classmates then can discuss the assumptions they make about the character, based on the codes and conventions used (e.g. dark eyes, frown, darker clothing).

Now that the students recognise that certain patterns are followed by the creators of animated characters, ask them to think of or find an example of a character who does not follow the usual patterns. After they have shared their ideas about this character, and why s/he does not fit the pattern, ask why the creator might have made the choices that we see. What is the point or purpose of surprising us?

CROSS CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS

- Character education
- Health
- Visual Art

MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

- Animated images (still and/or video) depicting a wide range of violence (e.g. teasing, name-calling, physical aggression, physical contact). Some examples include:
 - Clip from *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*, where cartoon student punches cartoon Greg Heffley for owning a diary (see trailer at www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fp4zRQ-M_Ws)
 - Clip from *Aliens in the Attic*, where the children control the body of the sister’s boyfriend to make him bump into things and hit himself (see trailer at www.youtube.com/watch?v=JGrrqFx3i-0)
 - Clip from Disney’s *Peter Pan*, where the mermaids tease Wendy (www.youtube.com/watch?v=YnFABHlw-U8)
 - *Peanuts* comic strip, in which Lucy pulls the football away from Charlie Brown (see image at http://c0389161.cdn.cloudfiles.rackspacecloud.com/dyn/strip_strip/238445.full.gif)
 - Images from *Where the Wild Things Are*, where the wild things threaten to “eat up” Max if he leaves (see image at <http://graphics8.nytimes.com/images/2008/09/10/books/sendak-3-650.jpg>)
- If using moving images: Data Projector, SMARTboard, or DVD player and TV

- Aggressive Characters (5.1 H)
- Faces (5.2 H)
- Large pieces of paper, with still images of scenes of violence pasted on top (one for each pair of students in the class): you may use the still images from above, or use new examples
- Markers
- Information listed in Links/Resources section

TERMINOLOGY/BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

- In this lesson, students will be asked to define the word “okay” when dealing with violence. It is likely that they will suggest that violence is okay when it is funny, or when the good person uses it to stop bad people. If possible, it would be good to challenge these expectations and beliefs. For example, ask how the victim of the violence might have felt, or how the students would feel if they were in the funny situation. If the actions would not seem funny to the receiver, is the violence really funny? Also, explore other options that the good person might have used to stop the bad person, and thus to avoid violence. Point out to the students that we see violence so often, and in so many different forms, that sometimes we don’t stop to think about what really is happening. We really want the students to understand that violence is not funny or acceptable, regardless of the situation or perpetrator.

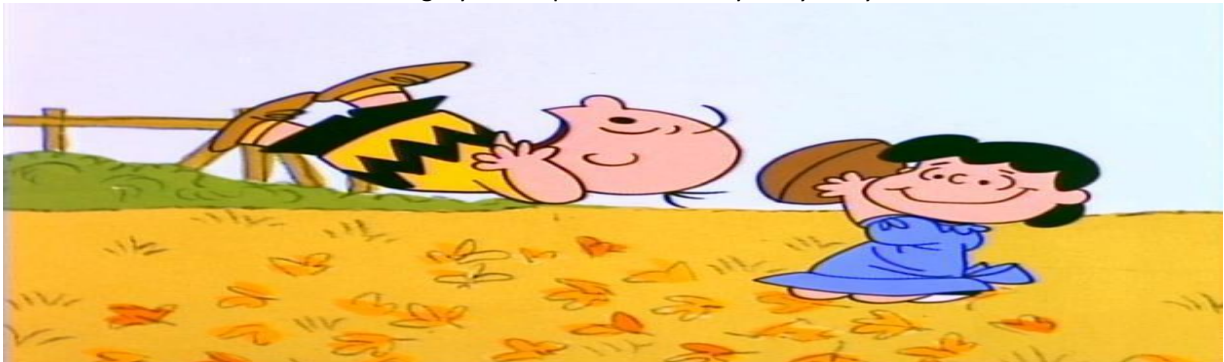
LINKS/RESOURCES

- YouTube – clips from movies or television shows
 - *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fp4zRQ-M_Ws
 - *Aliens in the Attic*: www.youtube.com/watch?v=JGrrqFx3i-0
 - *Peter Pan* – mermaids: www.youtube.com/watch?v=YnFABHlw-U8
- *Peanuts* comic strip where Lucy taking the football away from Charlie Brown: http://c0389161.cdn.cloudfiles.rackspacecloud.com/dyn/str_strip/238445.full.gif
- *Where the Wild Things Are* image of Max being threatened to be eaten: <http://graphics8.nytimes.com/images/2008/09/10/books/sendak-3-650.jpg>

AGGRESSIVE CHARACTERS



Buzz Lightyear is upset with Woody – *Toy Story*



Lucy stealing football from Charlie Brown – *Charlie Brown*



Snow White and Old Lady – *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*

FACES



LESSON 6: WAP, BAM, ZOWIE!

40 minutes

CURRICULUM EXPECTATIONS

- Kindergarten: LANGUAGE AND LITERACIES – CHILDREN ARE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATORS
 - Demonstrate a beginning understanding and critical awareness of media texts by beginning to respond critically to animated works.
- Grade 1: MEDIA LITERACY – UNDERSTANDING MEDIA TEXTS
 - 1.2 – Identify overt and implied messages in simple media texts.
 - 1.3 – Express personal thoughts and feelings about some simple media works and explain their responses.
 - 3.1 – Create simple media works.

KEY CONCEPTS AND QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Media construct versions of reality using codes and conventions to convey particular messages.
- How do authors and artists represent violence in comics?
- How might these techniques influence how the audience feels about the action?

INTRODUCTION/OVERVIEW

In media texts designed for young children, violence sometimes is represented through the use of word art and shapes (e.g. Zowie, contained within a pointed star). Sometimes the act of violence is absent altogether, and the reader/viewer is left to infer the actions, based on the threat of violence in the previous frame and consequence of the violence in the next frame. (The space in between such frames is called the **inferential gutter**.) The use of such conventions can contribute to students being desensitized to violence, or accepting it, because they do not actually see the violence take place. In this lesson, students will consider what actions are replaced by the word art and shapes, and attempt to connect feelings, attitudes, and thoughts to those actions. Students then will create an alternative frame that expresses a non-violent solution.

TEACHING/LEARNING STRATEGIES

COMICS – Share with students an example of a comic strip or comic book in which violence is replaced by words and shapes, or is absent altogether but implied. For examples, please see the handout, **What Does This Mean? (6.1 H)**.

After reading the words on the page or looking at the pictures, ask:

- What is happening in this comic?
- How do you know?

Point out the word art or inferential gutter in the example (it is not necessary to use the term, only to point to the item), and ask what is happening there. When students provide details, ask them how they know this.

Next, focus the students' attention on considering how the characters in the comic must be feeling (encourage students to refer to the vocabulary list developed in Lesson One). Consider all characters in the panels before and after the violence is implied.

Read through several more examples (see **What Does This Mean – 6.1 H**) of comics with implied violence, and repeat the exercise of asking for details and feelings, as in the first example.

FILLING IN DETAILS – Choose one of the comics that you have discussed together, and tell the class that they are going to fill in a few missing details. Ask for enough volunteers to fill all the roles shown in the comic chosen, and assign a role to each of the volunteers.

Instruct the students to create a tableau to represent the frame after the violence has taken place; use the comic to place people in the correct spots. Have them hold their positions. Then, one at a time, tap each student in the tableau on the shoulder, and ask them to tell the audience how they are feeling, or what they are thinking. Remind them that they are speaking as the character in the comic.

Encourage realistic responses, ones that recognise pain, fear, and regret, as well as satisfaction or relief. When everyone has identified feelings, ask for ideas about why these ideas were not included in the comic.

Invite students to brainstorm an alternative solution to the problem. You might ask:

- How might the characters have dealt with this situation differently?

If time permits, a second tableau could be created, one showing the panel before the implied violence. This time the students will act out the alternative solution that they suggested, and reveal what they might be feeling in this situation. If you do this, compare the feelings generated in the two tableaux. The emotions in the second scene should be more positive.

FILL IN THE BLANK – For the next activity, the teacher will model what is expected. Choose a comic with word art or an inferential gutter, and read it to the class. Then tell the students that you want to “fill in the blank” by creating the missing scene, but that you want to show a non-violent solution to the situation. On a large piece of chart paper, draw a panel or frame for your cartoon. Then sketch in the characters in appropriate poses, and word bubbles to show what is being said. Don't worry about the quality of the drawing; your focus is on offering a realistic alternative to the situation. You could ask the students to make suggestions about what could or should be in the drawing. Discuss with them other possible solutions.

ACTIVISM

Have students create their own “missing frames” for other comics that you have read and viewed. Divide the class into pairs or small groups, and make available to each group an example of a comic or a scene with word art or an inferential gutter. Give each small group a piece of chart paper and a marker. (As an alternative, you may want to explore such digital programs such as *Comic Life* or *BitStripsforSchools*, to allow students to create comics on the computer – see information under *Links/Resources*.) Instruct the students to sketch out the “missing frame,” the frame that replaces the words and shapes or the inferential gutter in the comic they were given. Tell them that in this frame, they must sketch the characters solving the problem without violence. They should not worry about the quality of their

artwork. The aim here is to consider realistic alternatives to violence (e.g. yelling for help, assistance from bystanders, pleas for understanding).

Students then can share their revised comics in the style of a class art gallery.

ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- Students can tour the art gallery to read and view the comics created by their classmates. Students can offer peer feedback regarding the messages communicated by the comics.
- Students also may self-assess their contributions to a collaborative project.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE LESSONS / HOMEWORK / EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Students could further develop their comics into posters advertising non-violent ways to solve problems and conflicts. These posters might be posted around the school, or included in school newsletters and other communications.

CROSS-CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS

- Visual Arts
- Character Education
- Social Studies

MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

- What Does This Mean (5.1 H)
 - Teachers could also use their own samples of comic strips in which acts of aggression are implied (e.g. viewer sees before and after the act) or replaced (e.g. word art like Bam, Whack, or Pow)
 - Samples might be found in superhero comic books, graphic novels, YouTube clips of old television shows, Google Image searches). You will need several samples for the class activities, and a number more for the Activism projects.
- Chart paper and markers
- Information listed under Links/Resources

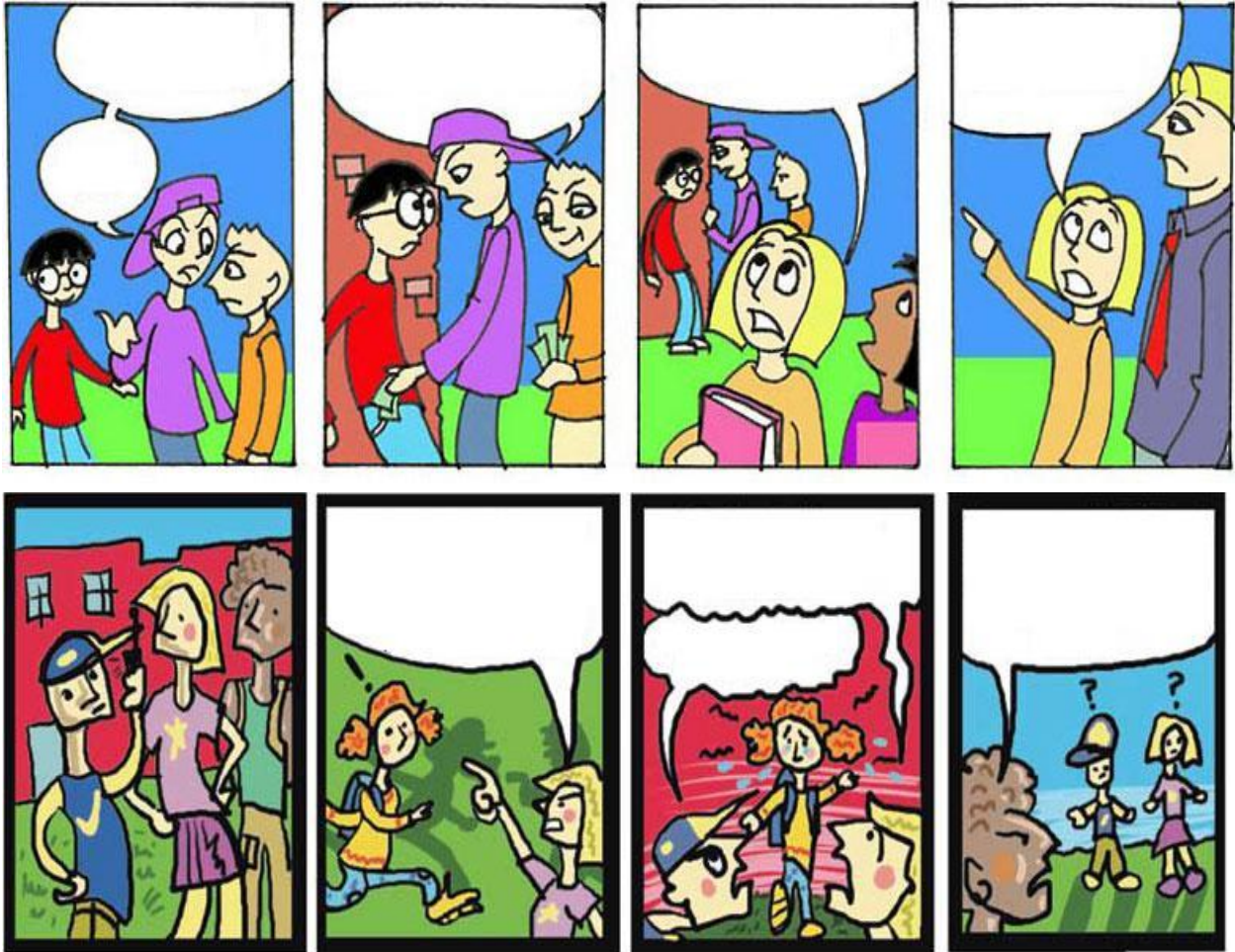
TERMINOLOGY/BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

- **Inferred Violence:** aggressive acts that are suggested rather than shown; created when the details leading up to the aggressive act are shown, as well as the details after the aggressive act, but the actual act is left to the imagination of the viewer/reader
- **Inferential Gutter:** the space between panels or cells in a comic or graphic novel; this space is designed to force the viewer/reader to guess or imagine what happened between the two panels
- **Word Art:** shapes like stars, circles, jagged edges, or lines, with words printed in/on them; used to replace actual details of violent acts in comics and graphic novels

LINKS/RESOURCES

- Champions Against Bullying – comic strips #1 and #2
www.championsagainstbullying.com/facesofbullying.html
- Bricabrats – comic strip #3
www.bricabrats.com
- ComicLife – create comics, picture albums, etc.
www.comiclif.com
- Education Software – Teaching with Comics – Bitstrips for Schools
www.bitstripsforschools.com

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?



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