

5.6 My conflict thermometer

Goal

The students find out to which kinds of conflict situations they react personally and sensitively. In comparison with the others, they become aware that conflicts are experienced and perceived subjectively. It is not a matter of right or wrong, but how a person experiences something.

4th–9th grade

30–45 minutes



Materials:
small cards with temperature indications (0°, 50°, 100°), situations to read out loud (see below).

Procedure:

- The instructor explains the issues (see above) and places three temperature cards in form of a thermometer on the floor. 100° centigrade signifies that it is a “hot” conflict, whereas 50° C would indicate a probable conflictive situation which is not yet that significant. 0°C symbolizes that the respective situation is not experienced as a conflict.
- The instructor then reads to the class the cards with descriptions of different conflict situations. The students then move to the position of the thermometer that corresponds to their subjective assessment of the magnitude of the conflict. They justify in short statements why they chose their position. In keeping with the objective of presenting one’s individual perspectives and how each person experiences conflict, the statements should remain uncommented.
- After that, the term “conflict” is discussed and clarified. If possible, a common definition should be worked out and documented in writing by the class.

Supplement: situations for reading out loud and temperature cards.

A student trips a fellow student in the schoolyard.	A male student insults a female student as a slut.	
A student threatens to beat up another student if he does not give him his jacket.	A friend owes you money.	
A female student ranks her friends on a list of her favorite friends.	A female student says to a fellow male student “you stink”.	
A female student takes the cell phone of her table neighbor and plays with it during the break without asking.	A student throws another student to the floor to prevent him from beating up a younger classmate.	
You would like to play a game. Your friend would rather read a book, however.	Two students discuss a female teacher.	