



# Classifying Conflict

**IN THIS ACTIVITY,** the participants will demonstrate an understanding of the causes of conflict and identify types of conflicts.

TIME REQUIRED: 30 MINUTES | INTENDED FOR GRADES 6-8



language arts



social studies

## MATERIALS NEEDED

- » Butcher paper and markers
- » Small index cards, four to six for each participant
- » Pens or pencils, one for each participant
- » Visit [worldvision.org/lp/acsi-teacher-resources](http://worldvision.org/lp/acsi-teacher-resources) for a video you can show to support this lesson. (optional)

## Activity Steps

1

**INVITE THE PARTICIPANTS** to brainstorm the definition of the term *conflict*. Note their responses on a sheet of butcher paper.

2

**DISTRIBUTE A PEN OR PENCIL** and four to six index cards to each participant. Then invite the participants to write one example of a conflict on each index card. The situations they cite can be based on personal experience, on their knowledge of conflicts at school, at home, in the community, or involving their own or another country.

3

**ASK THE PARTICIPANTS** to form small groups of six and share their responses with one another. Allow time for sharing and then ask them to group conflicts that have elements in common. They can give each cluster or category of conflicts a name.

4

**INVITE THE SMALL GROUPS** to again form a large group. Invite each group to discuss the categories they developed and provide an example for each one.

5

**WRITE THE WORDS** *Things*, *Feelings*, and *Ideas* on a sheet of butcher paper. Explain to the participants that these words represent categories for classifying conflicts. Using the following definitions, explain the terms:

- » Conflicts over *Things* occur when two or more people or parties want the same object, material, or resource and there is not enough to go around.
- » Conflicts over *Feelings* happen because of people's needs for friendship, love, self-respect, power, status, attention, or admiration. Every person has some of these needs; sometimes groups of people or countries have these needs as well. Conflict can arise when feelings are hurt, denied, or not considered.
- » Conflicts over *Ideas* relate to the beliefs and values that a person, a group of people, or even a country feels are most important and fundamental. They often come from religious beliefs, cultural traditions, and political systems. They may also be very personal.

6

**ASK THE PARTICIPANTS** to reclassify their index cards according to the categories you have just noted on the butcher paper. Note that some conflicts will appear to fit into two or even all three categories. Some may not seem to fit into any category.

7

**USE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS** to engage the participants in a large-group discussion:

- » How did this system of classifying conflicts compare with the one you developed in your group?
- » Which system would be most useful in helping you find a solution to a conflict? Why?

8

**INVITE THE PARTICIPANTS** to try other ways of classifying their conflicts such as “easy to resolve/difficult to resolve,” “violent/nonviolent,” “important/not important,” and “between people/between groups/between nations.”

9

**CONCLUDE BY INVITING** the participants to join you in prayer. Pray for peace throughout the world. Pray in particular for countries and regions that are currently experiencing conflict or war. Pray for the victims of conflict. Pray that all hearts may come to understand the need for peace in the world.

(This activity was adapted from Susan Fountain. *Education for Development: A Teacher's Resource for Global Learning*; London, England: Hodder and Stoughton Publishing, 1995. © 1995 by Hodder and Stoughton Publishing. All rights reserved. Used with permission.)