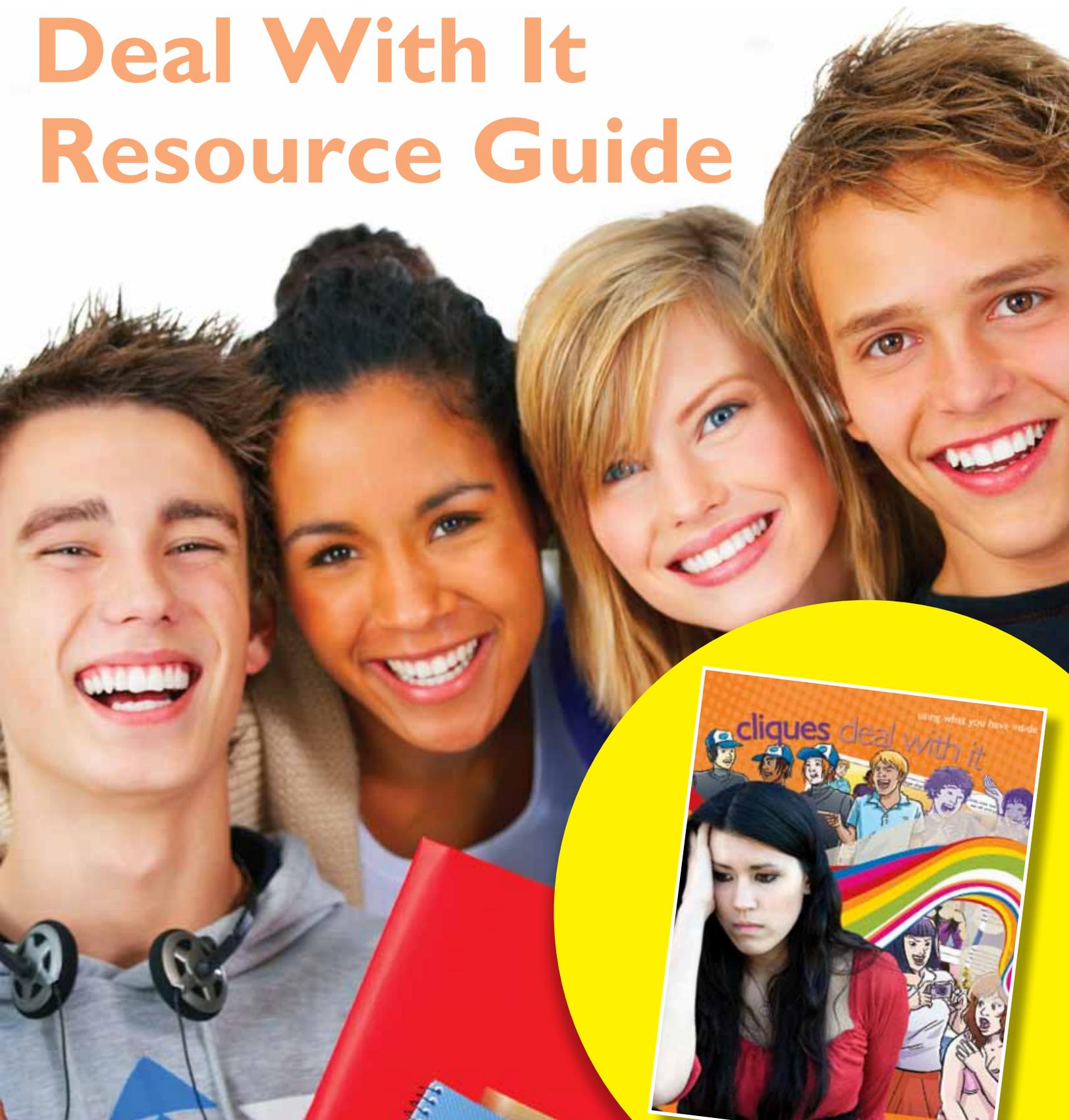


Cliques: Deal With It Resource Guide



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How to Use this Guide

This guide offers a number of informative and enjoyable discussion questions and teaching activities that allow for in-depth coverage of the causes of conflict from several angles.

Guide Map

This guide begins on page 3 with an introduction to the issue covered in the Deal With It book. Please be sure to read the **Before You Begin** section, which provides suggestions to help you consider the specific needs and interests of your class. It also outlines any particular scenarios presented in the Deal With It book that may be sensitive to some students.

The pages that follow correspond with the sections of the Deal With It book.

These sections are:

- A **101** section that introduces readers to a subject (See page 4 of this guide)
- An **Instigator** section that focuses on the person who instigates the conflict (See page 6 of this guide)
- A **Target** section that focuses on the person who feels victimized in the conflict (See page 8 of this guide)
- A **Witness** section with tips for those caught in between (See page 10 of this guide)

For each of these sections, you will find:

Highlights that briefly capture the main points from the Deal With It book, which you will want to review with students.

Discussion Questions that are designed to introduce students to the topics and encourage them to think critically about the topics at hand.

Teaching Activities that correspond to page numbers in the Deal With It book, and are designated as activities for Individuals (I), Pairs (P), or Groups (G).

About the Series

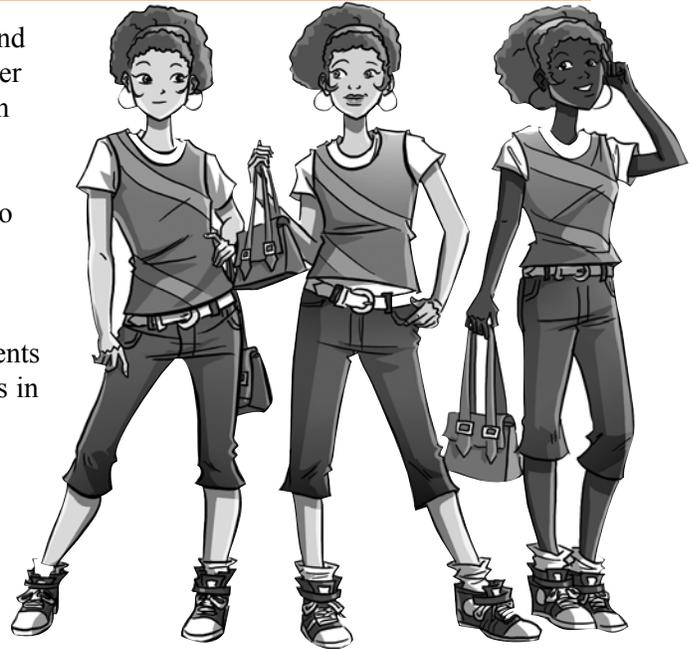
The **Deal With It** series is a set of 32-page books that empower **kids ages 9–12** to resolve conflict in their lives. Information is presented in an interactive and graphic style to engage readers and help spark discussion of issues. The information in this **Resource Guide** is intended to help educators plan lessons around conflict resolution using the **Deal With It** books.



Cliques: Deal with it using what you have inside

Most of us feel the need to be acknowledged and accepted by different groups around us, however this positive interest can become negative when a group takes the form of a clique. Negative consequences arise when cliques demand that their members give up friendships and values to maintain the acceptance of the clique, or when members fear being rejected if they speak out about their beliefs. ***Cliques: Deal with it using what you have inside*** was created to give students suggestions on how to handle diverse situations in which their peers may challenge their values.

In this resource guide, teachers are given valuable discussion topics and activities to help students as they read ***Cliques***. In order to get the most out of your class discussions and activities, it is important to create an open atmosphere and a positive classroom community. Friendships, positive relationships, and positive activities help build kids' self-esteem. The need to belong to a group can often cause kids to say or do things that are hurtful to themselves or others. Students will be able to build an atmosphere of support and understanding if we encourage them to openly voice their questions and concerns about friendship and to talk about how they can deal with the pressures cliques create. It is within this context that rich discussions can unfold and help students identify their values and strengths. In turn, this confidence in their own beliefs will empower them to make conscious, responsible decisions, find the friends that are right for them, and overcome the negative social pressures cliques exert.



Before You Begin

Here are some tips and suggestions to help you plan your cliques unit:

- Gather as much material as you can about cliques, including ***Cliques: Deal with it using what you have inside***. (See More Help on page 32 of ***Cliques*** for a listing of materials.)
- Decide on the scope of your study, depending on the grade level you teach and the needs of your students.
- Display books for children on this topic. In addition, prepare a bulletin board for posters, pictures, and, as the theme develops, your students' work.
- Decide on the amount of time that you plan to spend on this theme.
- Note that cliques affect students from elementary school through to high school, and even adults. ***Cliques: Deal with it using what you have inside*** includes a variety of sensitive issues and situations (e.g., cyberbullying, race relations, sexual insults, etc.) that are important to address, but may not be appropriate for all grade levels. It is important that teachers preview the book to select material and content that is appropriate for their students' maturity level.

Cliques 101

Highlights

- Cliques occur when groups of people spend a lot of time together thinking the same way or doing the same things. Cliques exert negative influences because they exclude others or demand people act in certain ways if they want to belong to the clique.
- Cliques can come from a variety of places, including:
 - ☛ special interest groups — sports, music, theatre, “smart” kids
 - ☛ racial groups
 - ☛ in-crowd
 - ☛ neighbourhoods
- Cliques can exert different forms of pressure:
 - ☛ name-calling
 - ☛ ostracism
 - ☛ put-downs
 - ☛ cyberbullying
 - ☛ physical harassment
 - ☛ spreading rumours

Discussion Questions

- Are you a member of an ethnic or racial group, a sports team, club or social group? Does belonging to this group make you feel special or better than others? Why or why not?
- Can being a member of a group boost your self-esteem and give you confidence to do things you wouldn't have thought of or had the courage to do as an individual?
- Name a time when you felt that a group had become a clique. What event triggered that feeling in you? Was it a positive or negative event? What did you do?
- Have you ever felt pressured to dress or act in a certain way to gain the approval of a clique? What happened? How did it make you feel?
- Has belonging to a clique become more important than staying on good terms with your friends and family? How did you rationalize your actions to your friends and family, and to yourself?
- Have you ever done anything that went against your set of values or was illegal, just to keep the approval of a clique? Do you know someone who has? What did you do?
- Have you ever been abandoned by a friend who wanted to join a clique? Did you ever abandon a friend so that you could join a clique?
- Did you ever fall out of favour with a clique and try to regain past friendships? Did it work? What did you learn?
- Do you think you need to belong to a clique to survive in school? Why or why not?
- Have cliques ever caused tension or problems at school or in your personal life? Where did you fit in to this conflict? What did you do?

Teaching Activities

I = Individual P = Pair G = Group

Section	Subject Area	Activities
pp. 2-3	Language Arts (G)	Make a T-chart, labelling the columns “Positive” and “Negative.” Have students work in small groups to fill in the chart with examples of how groups may be positive and negative. Have students compare and discuss other groups’ charts as class.
pp. 4-5	The Arts (drama) (G)	In groups of 3-4, have students make a tableau to show an example of a clique at work (e.g., a clique pressuring a student to “prove” he/she is worthy of belonging, announcing what he/she must do to gain membership). After 8 seconds, have students slowly transform into a new tableau showing a positive example of someone standing up to this behaviour (e.g., a member of the clique refusing to go along with it).
pp. 6-7	The Arts (I)	Have students choose the scenario that they relate to the most and continue the comic to depict a positive outcome.
pp. 6-7	Language Arts (I)	Ask students to write a journal entry or a letter to one of the characters, giving them strategies to use when a clique exerts pressure.
pp. 8-9	Language Arts (G)	Have students choose a question from the quiz. Use a Think-Pair-Share strategy to discuss various responses and ideas on how to how to make belonging to a group positive and inclusive.
pp. 10-11	Language Arts (I)	Using the template of a kid writing to a counsellor, have students write a poem or song about a student who gives up a friend/boyfriend/girlfriend to join a clique. The counsellor can offer advice in poem or song. The end should result in a positive conclusion.
pp. 10-11	Media Literacy (I/G)	Encourage students to think about how to make the dynamics of clique mentality work in a positive way. To start, have students cut out pictures from magazines that depict different types of cliques — the fashionable crowd, the sports jocks — as well as the “ordinary” kids. Have them talk about whether being “in” is just a perception or a reality. Students can work in groups to discuss what they see in the images they have collected.
pp. 12-13	The Arts (drama) (G)	In small groups, students should role-play myth-busting scenarios (e.g., the notion of “in-crowd” and “popularity”, loyalty to a racial or ethnic group and other examples from the book). Students can create “sound tableaux” in which they improvise but instead of speaking they use only sound to express their feelings. Encourage groups to present their skits to the class.

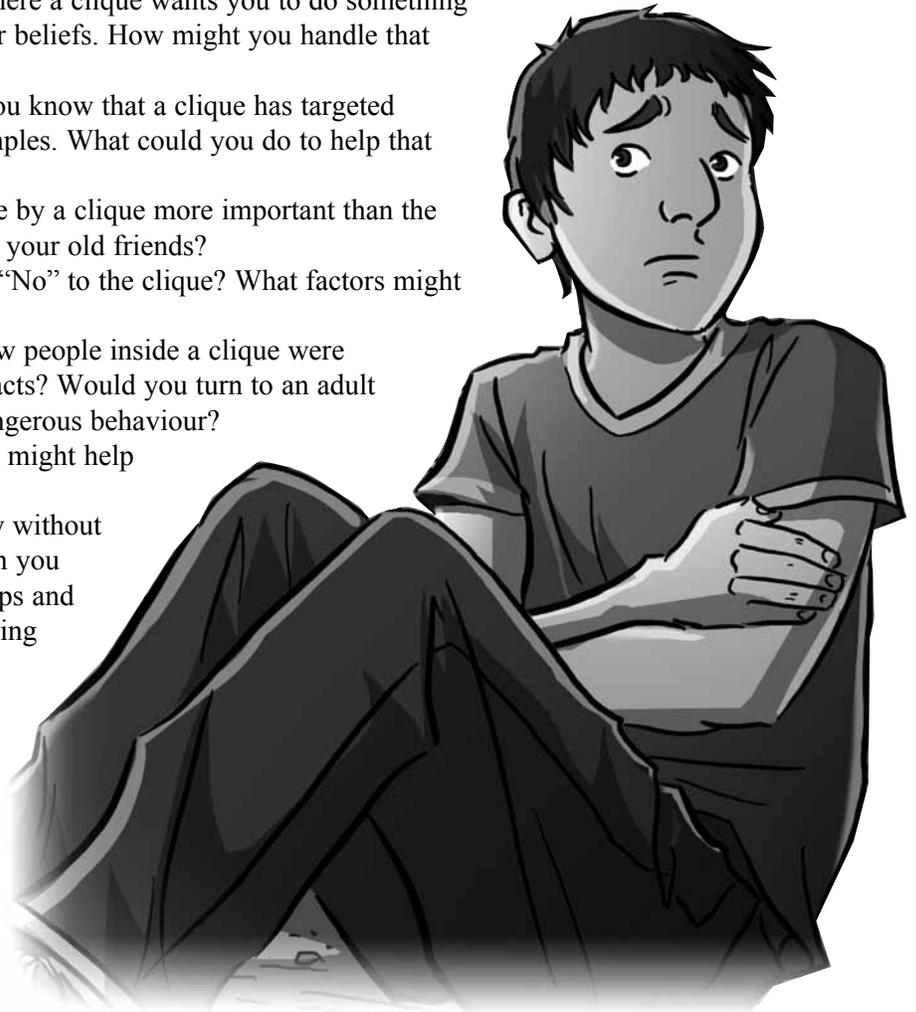
The Outsider

Highlights

- The Outsider is the person who is excluded from a clique. He or she might want to join the clique or might be the victim of their cruelty.
- If you feel you are being excluded or bullied by a clique, you can:
 - think about the values that are important to you
 - talk to long-time friends or other kids whose opinions you respect
 - talk to people in the clique about the effect of the clique's pressures or actions
 - get involved with other people and activities
 - talk to an adult who might offer advice or assistance

Discussion Questions

- Do you feel you are a “loser” if you don't belong to the “right” crowd? Why or why not?
- How important to you is being accepted by a group or clique? What are you willing to give up just to be part of the in-crowd?
- What are some examples of pressure or controls by a clique?
- Why do you think people might give in to the pressure of a clique? What might be some consequences of giving in to these pressures? Give some examples.
- Imagine being in a situation where a clique wants you to do something that goes against your values or beliefs. How might you handle that pressure?
- Imagine a situation in which you know that a clique has targeted someone else. Give some examples. What could you do to help that person?
- Would you consider acceptance by a clique more important than the disapproval of your family and your old friends?
- What might happen if you say “No” to the clique? What factors might affect your decisions?
- What would you do if you knew people inside a clique were committing harmful or illegal acts? Would you turn to an adult to help stop the negative or dangerous behaviour?
Brainstorm a list of people that might help you.
- Do you think you can be happy without belonging to a clique? How can you make your life full of friendships and social activities without belonging to a clique?



Teaching Activities

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P = Pair

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Section	Subject Area	Activities
pp. 14–15	Mathematics (G)	<p>Ask students to survey their classmates to find out their feelings about and experiences with cliques. Have them write 8–10 survey questions, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you ever felt pressured by a clique? • Would your life be happier if you were a member of a clique? • What would you do to impress a clique you wanted to join? • Have students display the results in a graph or chart and discuss their findings with the class.
pp. 15	Language Arts (I)	<p>Have students write original letters to “Dear Dr. Shrink-Wrapped” from the perspective of someone who is the victim of an organized campaign by a clique. Have students do a blind exchange of letters and write back as Dr. Shrink-Wrapped about how to solve his/her problem.</p>
pp. 16–17	The Arts (drama) (G)	<p>Have students work in groups of 3–4 to brainstorm a list of scenarios in which they deal with the pressures of a clique (e.g., ridicule, a malicious website, physical threats). Encourage them to review the scenarios presented in the quiz to help them get started. Have students select one scenario and discuss a positive solution to the problem. If possible, have students create a 20-second clay animation recording to show to the class.</p>
pp. 18–19	Language Arts (I/G)	<p>Place posters around the room with the following sentence starters:</p> <p>I believe in... I don’t believe in... My friends are... My friends are not... Belonging to a group means... Belonging to a group does not mean... I say “yes” when... I say “no” when... When I’m pressured, I feel... When I feel pressured, I can talk to...</p> <p>Allow 5–10 min for students to write a response to each sentence starter. Afterwards, review the responses with the class to discuss the words, messages and feelings that students have given.</p>

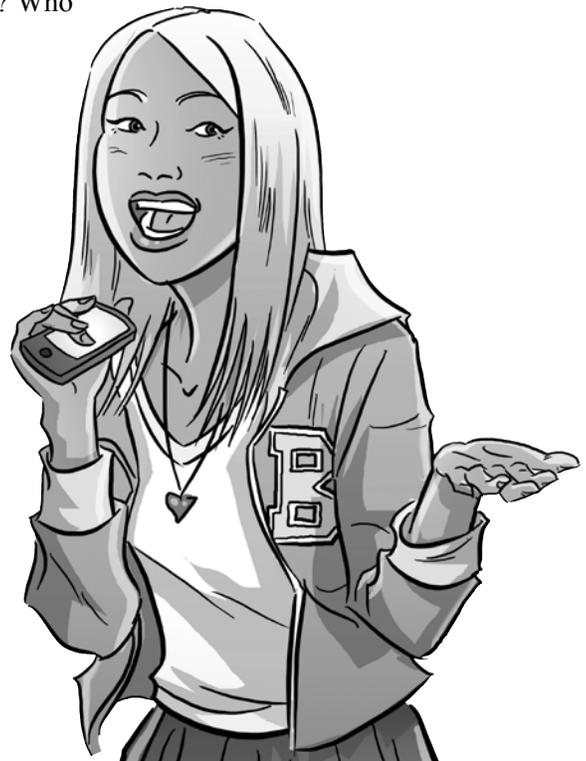
The Insider

Highlights

- The Insider is the person who has “made it” into the clique. The Insider either fears being kicked out of the clique or tries to control how others act. Sometimes an Insider disagrees with the behaviour or actions of the clique but is afraid of saying so for fear of being excluded by people he or she thinks are friends.
- How can you avoid being controlled by a clique?
- Think about the consequences of a clique’s negative attitudes or actions. Think about how you would feel if a clique shunned you because you weren’t “popular” or compliant to its demands.
- Voice your ideas and concerns to the clique. Don’t be intimidated by the threat of excommunication. Be yourself.
- Don’t get involved with negative activities, such as name-calling, tagging, vandalism, or cyberbullying.
- Reflect on the groups you belong to and whether or not they treat people in a positive way.
- Take responsibility for the past. Be honest with people who have been hurt by your clique.
- Renew old friendships.
- Volunteer for work that interests you or join a new club and make new friends.

Discussion Questions

- Have you ever felt the need to change your attitude or do something you don’t want to do just to gain the approval of a clique? How did it make you feel?
- What are some possible consequences of conforming just to belong to a clique?
- Would you give up old friends just to gain a clique’s acceptance?
- Imagine being in a situation where a clique decides to target an “outsider” in a negative way. How could you prevent it? Who can you talk to?
- Do you spread rumours or gossip about old friends or “outsiders” to maintain the clique’s acceptance? Would you want to be the target of rumours or gossip?
- Think about a time when you were intimidated or excluded by a clique. How did you feel? Now that you belong, do you enjoy treating others that way?
- Do you feel that only “losers” don’t belong to a clique? What’s a “winner”? Why?
- What impact can your membership in a clique have on your family life? What if your family disapproves of your clique and its actions?
- What impact can belonging to a clique have on your school life? What’s more important to you, “belonging” now or your long-term goals? How can you have both close friendships and your independence? Does being part of a clique make you more popular or happy? Why?
- How can you keep friendships within a group healthy so it won’t become a clique?



Teaching Activities

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Section	Subject Area	Activities
pp. 20–21	Visual Arts (I/G)	Ask students to choose a “Do” and a “Don’t” from the book. Have them use pictures and words to create a poster that contrasts the “Do” with the “Don’t.” Display and discuss the posters with the class.
pp. 20–21	Media Literacy/ Visual Arts (I/G)	Have students collect images of group/clique/gang behaviour. Display each image and have students indicate which attitude it shows and why they think so. Ask them if they think the image shows someone pressuring or being pressured or included and how it makes them feel. After you have reviewed all of the images, follow up with a discussion about what students might do when they catch themselves displaying the same attitudes.
pp. 22–23	Goal Setting (I/G)	Have students work through the quiz. When they are finished, ask them to look at the statements that they identified as true. Have them think about how they might deal with the insecurities they feel and the negative consequences of trying to “belong.” Encourage them to write out ideas that might help them and discuss them as a group. Teachers can revisit these issues and conference with students to discuss their progress throughout the year.
pp. 24–25	Media Literacy (I)	Invite a former gang member to class. Students can interview the individual about the consequences of gang activity on society and the effects of membership on the gang and the members who want to get out.

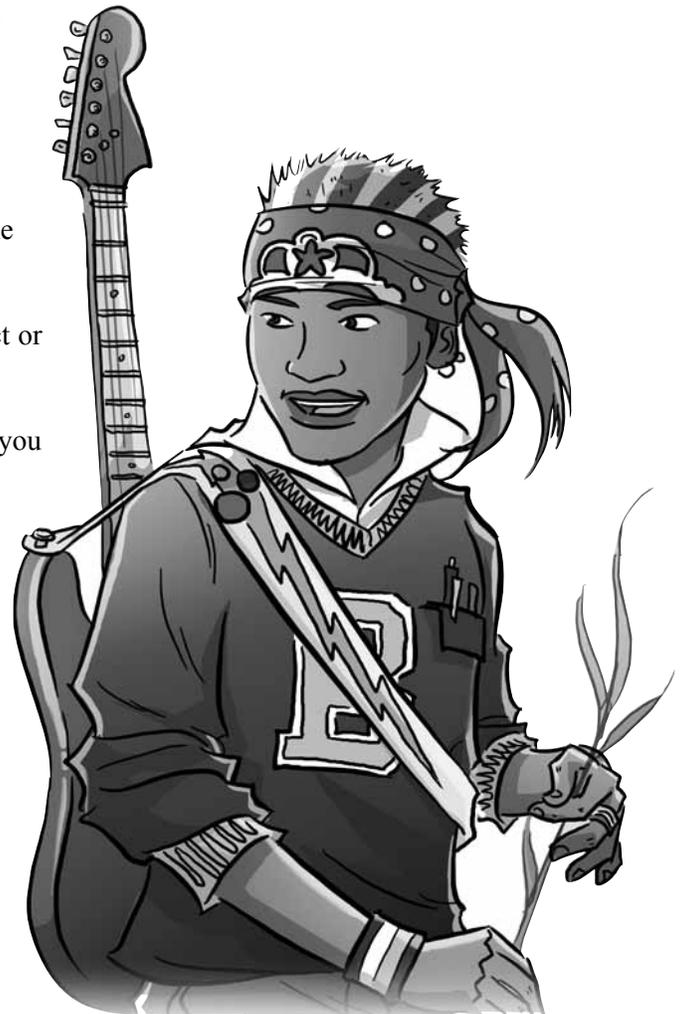
The Witness

Highlights

- The Witness is the person who sees someone else trying to please a clique or who sees someone being victimized by a clique. The Witness might feel that he or she is not part of the problem, but there may be opportunities to positively influence the situation.
- If you feel someone is being pressured to join a clique or being victimized by a clique, you can:
 - ☛ talk to him/her about the issue and let him/her know he/she could make better choices
 - ☛ let him/her know that you are there to be his/her friend and should not tolerate being victimized
 - ☛ encourage him/her to talk to a trusted adult about what to do

Discussion Questions

- Have you ever seen someone acting out of character or doing the wrong thing just to impress a clique or gang? How were you involved? What did you do?
- What would you be willing to stand up for? Would you seek out a friendship with someone to keep him or her from being targeted by a clique?
- How could you redirect friends you care about from getting in too far with cliques or gangs?
- If one of your friends were committing illegal activities would you report them to his/her parents, the principal or the police?
- Do you think *witness* and *bystander* mean the same thing? How are they the same or different? Explain your answer.
- Would you help a friend cover up for something wrong or illegal he/she has done and regrets? What's the best thing to do to help him/her?
- Have you ever witnessed a clique targeting someone else? What was the situation? How were you involved?
- Would you risk being targeted by a clique to protect or defend another person the clique is victimizing?
- Imagine a friend who shows the stress of being victimized by a clique. How can you help? Should you talk to an adult if you fear the stress is too great?



Teaching Activities

☞ Individual P = Pair G = Group

Section	Subject Area	Activities
pp.26–27	Media Literacy (I/G)	Have students select one of the “Do’s” listed on pp. 27. Ask them to think about how they might encourage other people their age to adapt that strategy to help a friend. Have them create a storyboard for a TV advertisement to promote that strategy. Share the advertisements with the class.
pp. 27	Language Arts (G)	Have students work in small groups to make a board game based on the “Do’s” and “Don’ts” presented on pp. 27. When a player throws the dice he or she can only advance by providing an acceptable answer to a real-life problem posed by cards in the middle of the board. Encourage students to share and play their board games with the class.
pp. 28–31	The Arts (drama) (G)	Have students work in groups of 4 to create a skit showing what might happen if a witness chooses not to get involved when he/she sees a friend being targeted by a clique. Then have students create an alternate ending to their skit showing what might happen in the same situation when a witness gets involved in a positive way. Encourage students to present their skits to the class
pp. 28–31	Research and Inquiry (G)	Have students relate issues of poverty/race/class to the development/presence/success of gangs in society. As a class, brainstorm about the causes of gangs and how children/teens can be diverted from gang life. Students can develop major research projects or papers that trace this development at different times in society.
pp. 28–31	Language Arts (G)	Have students write personal journals or poems about how each of them perceives his/her positive contribution to school/friendships/society, and how positive friendships can help them achieve more of his/her positive goals.

Additional Resources

- <http://kidshealth.org/kid/feeling/friend/cliq.html>: How Cliques Make Kids Feel Left Out
- http://kidshealth.org/teen/your_mind/problems/cliq.html: Coping with Cliques
- www.massgeneral.org/children/adolescenthealth/articles/aa_cliq.asp

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