

# Session 3

# Navigating Disagreement



## Key learning

Pupils learn that approaching disagreements with patience, empathy, and respect builds stronger friendships and communities.

## Before the session

### You will need:

- Slides for this session
- Scenario cards or printed examples for empathy role-play activities
- Chairs or open space for paired role-plays

### Notes

# Story

## Be Curious (Community)

### Creating psychological safety

Before starting this activity, take a moment to establish a sense of psychological safety in the classroom.

Remind pupils that disagreements are a normal part of life and that everyone's thoughts and feelings are valid. Encourage a tone of respect, empathy, and active listening. This helps pupils feel safe sharing honestly, knowing they won't be judged or interrupted. Emphasise that the goal is not to decide who is right or wrong, but to understand why disagreements happen and how we can respond well.

Invite pupils to suggest how they want to engage with each other.

### Discussion

#### Ask:

- Why do we disagree?

Start by asking pupils to share common areas of disagreement.

When thinking about these examples invite pupils to spend a few quiet minutes thinking about why people might disagree. They are welcome to jot down or draw their ideas. You could prompt them with ideas such as:

- Different opinions or beliefs
- Wanting different things
- Misunderstandings or not listening to each other
- Different experiences

Record key reasons on the board to create a class mind map.

Ask pupils to think about a time when they disagreed with someone. It could be a friend or a sibling.

- What was the disagreement about? How did it make them feel?

**i** **Note:** Please give a prompt for the type of disagreement, so that pupils reflect on a simple disagreement rather than something difficult or upsetting. This maintains a safe place for pupils to reflect and share their stories.

On a scale of 1-10 (one being small, 10 being big) think about a simple disagreement you've had this week that you'd consider a 1-3 on the scale.

**For example:**

A simple disagreement you've had with someone such as a disagreement about what to watch on TV, what game to play, which sport team is better.

Model with an example.

- How did you resolve the disagreement?



## Song

**Play the song *This is the Day* (The *Difference* Song) to help pupils recentre themselves, recall the importance of the *Difference* habits and come back together as a group.**

### Share a scenario with pupils:

#### Group project disagreement

You and your classmates are working on a group project about animals. Everyone has different ideas about which animal to focus on. One friend wants to do a presentation about lions, another wants to do one on dolphins, and you think a project on elephants would be great. The disagreement is starting to get a bit heated.

- How can you listen to everyone's ideas without interrupting?
- What questions could you ask to understand why your friend feels passionate about their choice?
- How could you compromise?

Encourage pupils to consider the *Difference* habits:

- **Be Curious:** What might we not yet understand about the other person's feelings or perspective?
- **Be Present:** How can we show we are really listening and caring?
- **Reimagine:** What could a better outcome look like for everyone involved?

Present a range of scenarios to pupils in groups (see Appendix).

In small groups, pupils explore each scenario and discuss or role-play how to respond with empathy and respect, leaning into the *Difference* habits by being curious about others' perspectives, being present by really listening, and reimagining how the situation could be resolved in a fair and kind way. Together, they create a thoughtful plan for resolving the conflict/scenario.

# Sanctuary

## Reimagine (Power)

### Notes



### Bible passage

**"My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires."**

*James 1:19-20 (NIV)*

This passage encourages pupils to approach disagreements with patience, listening carefully before speaking, and showing respect for others' perspectives. It highlights the importance of empathy in conflict resolution and the idea that disagreements, when handled with respect and care, can lead to growth and understanding.

### Discuss:

- Why is it important to listen to others?
- Do we always have to agree?
- How can we respectfully disagree with someone?



## Reflection

**You may want to read this reflection aloud to your pupils.**

Disagreements are normal, especially in a new environment like secondary school. How we handle them matters. By approaching conflicts with empathy, we can better understand each other and strengthen friendships. Listening, respecting others' feelings, and treating everyone with kindness, even when we disagree, helps our relationships grow. Practising skills of empathy and active listening doesn't mean we need to agree, rather these skills help us share our opinions respectfully with greater understanding.

In secondary school, practicing empathy creates a supportive, respectful community where everyone feels heard and valued. This is the foundation of strong friendships and a positive school environment.



## Prayer

Dear God,

Thank you for the gift of friendship. Help us navigate disagreements with empathy and respect. Guide us to listen, understand, and approach conflicts with kindness.

Remind us that disagreements can strengthen friendships when we respond with patience. Teach us to be slow to anger, quick to listen, and always treat others with love.

Help us to build a community where everyone feels valued and supported.

Amen.

## End of session 3