

Unit 4D: Stuck in the Middle



Vocabulary:

Communicate - Using words, sounds, signs, or behaviors to send and receive information.

Teacher's Notes:

How To Begin and End Each Lesson

Begin With a Breath Brake

Instruct students to stand at attention, repeat the hand motions and the mantra, **Power Peace Purpose**, and end with a bow. Ask students to take several breaths to clear their minds and prepare to watch the video.

Teacher Statement:



The Breath Brake helps us clear our minds, relax and focus. Focused breathing stops the flow of stress chemicals from the brain. You can close your eyes if you want to. Follow along:

- ★ *Breathe in through your nose, slowly and deeply. Think of each breath as a wave as it gently raises, holds, and then slowly lowers your body.*
- ★ *Hold it for three seconds.*
- ★ *Breathe out slowly and steadily from your mouth while you feel your body gently relax.*
- ★ *Breathe in and visualize that you are breathing in a powerful light.*
- ★ *Breathe out and imagine you are blowing out any darkness.*
- ★ *Breathe in, hold for 3 seconds, then breathe out. Repeat as needed.*

*Remember when you breathe, you are helping others who need your light. **Power Peace Purpose.***

There are thousands of children around the world who spend a lot of time in the hospital. Sometimes, they feel very lonely. When you join the Heroes Circle, it makes them feel better. When you do your power breathing you are also teaching your family and friends around you. You are an amazing teacher and a good friend!

End with Power Peace Purpose:

Recite and review the Power Peace Purpose mantra with students at the end of each day's lesson. Then, the students bow.



The Breath Brake helps you restore your power, brings you to a place of peace, and enables you to understand your purpose.

Unit 4D: Stuck in the Middle

Day 1: WATCH



Focus: Social Awareness

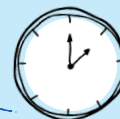
Students will watch a video about being stuck in the middle between arguing friends.

Learning Objectives: In this lesson, students will:

- Observe a video about being stuck in the middle between arguing friends.
- Identify the importance of open and honest communication, even under difficult circumstances.
- Practice the Breath Brake and repeat the **Power Peace Purpose** mantra.

Time Requirement:

15 minutes



Materials Needed:

Video - HeroesCircle.org/SupportMaterials4

Lesson Process:

1 Begin with a Breath Brake:

Begin with the mantra **Power Peace Purpose**. Then, students bow. Lead students through a Breath Brake.

2 Introduce key concepts:



Today we will watch a video about being stuck in the middle between arguing friends.

Pay attention to how the characters feel in that situation and what makes it stressful.

3 Show the video:

Show Video – HeroesCircle.org/SupportMaterials4

4 Talk about key concepts:

Use the following talking points to discuss as a class, in small groups, or student pairs.

- How did the character in the video feel about being stuck in the middle?
Responses may include:
 - She felt sad, confused, uncomfortable, upset, angry, annoyed, and frustrated.
- What often causes arguments between people? Responses may include:
 - Differences of opinion, different points of view, not agreeing on something.
 - Misunderstandings, miscommunications, not hearing each other.
- Why does being a powerful martial artist make it easier not to fight with others?
Responses may include:
 - I understand how to control my emotions with the help of a Breath Brake.
- When your feelings lead to a stress response, what should you do?
 - Take a moment away from the situation.
 - Take a Breath Brake to calm down, so you can think clearly.

5 End with Power Peace Purpose mantra:

Power Peace Purpose. Then, students bow.

Day 2: THINK



Focus: Responsible Decision Making

Students will be encouraged to think and talk about being stuck in the middle between arguing friends.

Time Requirement:

15 minutes



Materials Needed: N/A

Learning Objectives: In this lesson, students will:

- Identify the feelings and thoughts about being stuck in the middle that make it stressful.
- Describe how you can help solve the argument by communicating effectively.
- Practice the Breath Brake and repeat the **Power Peace Purpose** mantra.

Lesson Process:

1

Begin with a Breath Brake:

Begin with the mantra **Power Peace Purpose**. Then, students bow. Lead students through a Breath Brake.

2

Review key concepts:



Think about the video that we watched. We learned that it is common for friends to disagree and have arguments, but it certainly is not fun being stuck in the middle between two friends who are not getting along. What feelings might someone have if he or she is stuck in the middle? How does communication help with arguments?.

Ask students to share what they remember or learned from this week's video.

3

Think about key concepts:



Today we will talk more about the important role of the person who is stuck in the middle of an argument between friends. We will look at the feelings and thoughts of the person stuck in the middle, think about why this situation is stressful, and how that person can use his or her power to help solve an argument with effective communication.

4

Talk about key concepts:

Use the following talking points to encourage discussion as a class, in small groups, or partner pairs:

- How do feelings interfere with a person's ability to communicate effectively? Give an example. Responses may include:
 - When you feel angry or upset, you can't think straight, may respond negatively, and it can be difficult to effectively express your feelings.
- If you are stuck in the middle of an argument, how can a Breath Brake help? Responses may include:
 - Taking a Breath Brake calms your mind, so you can think clearly about what to do.
 - A Breath Brake clears your mind, so you can find the right words to express yourself.
- If you are stuck in the middle and decide to take sides, how could that affect the situation?
 - One friend might not feel heard or understood and could become more upset.
 - One friend might feel left out or picked on and may not feel ready to solve the problem.



5

End with Power Peace Purpose:

Power Peace Purpose. Then, students bow.

Unit 4D: Stuck in the Middle

Day 3: DISCUSS

Focus: Relationship Skills

Students will discuss being stuck in the middle between arguing friends.

Learning Objectives: In this lesson, students will:

- Practice how to express your feelings about being stuck in the middle of arguing with friends.
- Identify how you can guide your friends in solving an argument.
- Practice the Breath Brake and repeat the **Power Peace Purpose mantra**.

Time Requirement:
15 minutes



Materials Needed: N/A

Lesson Process:

1 Begin with a Breath Brake:

Begin with the mantra **Power Peace Purpose**. Students bow. Lead students through a Breath Brake.

2 Review key concepts:



Remember in the video we saw, when you are stuck in the middle, one friend might try to influence your thinking, so you take their side against the other friend. What were some of the important messages we learned about responding to being stuck in the middle?

Ask students to describe what they remember from the video.

3 Discuss key concepts:



Today we will talk about how the friend in the middle can help the arguing friends. It's common for friends to have disagreements because we all have our thoughts and beliefs. Friends do not always agree, but they should be able to talk to each other. Communication is so important!

When your friends are having a disagreement, they may not realize that being in the middle of their disagreement makes you feel uncomfortable, sad, or stressed. They only see the situation from their point of view. Then tell them how you feel. Sharing your feelings can relieve some of your stress

Use the following talking points to encourage discussion as a class, in small groups, or in pairs:

- **If you are stuck in the middle of arguing friends what can you say that might be helpful?**

Responses may include:

- You can ask them to clarify what happened or why they're arguing.
- You could tell them that they should talk about the issue with each other.

- **Which communication skill is more important, listening or speaking? Explain your answer.**

Responses may include:

- Neither one is more important. Listening and speaking are equally important communication skills. A speaker must send a clear message that the listener hears. The listener must understand the speaker's message. Communicating effectively requires both skills.

- **Why is it stressful to be stuck in the middle of friends arguing? Responses may include:**

- It's stressful because your friends might try to get you to take sides.
- It's stressful because you'd rather be having fun instead of managing their argument.
- It's stressful because you care about your friends and want them to get along and be happy.

When you are stuck in the middle, it's best to stay neutral and listen. Giving your opinions or taking sides will not help. Give each friend an opportunity to speak and express their feelings. Each friend needs to be heard by the other. Listening is an essential part of communication.

If the discussion escalates, remind your friends how helpful it can be to take a Breath Brake. Communication is not effective if people are angry. If calming down isn't working, seeking help from an adult may be needed.

4 End with Power Peace Purpose:

Power Peace Purpose. Students bow.

Day 4: APPLY

Focus: Self-Management

Students will work independently to apply the concepts from the video to a self-reflective activity about being stuck in the middle between arguing friends.

Learning Objectives: In this lesson, students will:

- Describe a personal experience of being stuck in the middle between arguing friends.
- Analyze a scenario about being stuck in the middle and helping friends through an argument.
- Practice the Breath Brake and repeat the **Power Peace Purpose** mantra.

Time Requirement:

15 minutes



Materials Needed:

ACTIVITY SHEET - 4D:
STUCK IN THE MIDDLE

Lesson Process:

1 Begin with a Breath Brake:

Begin with the mantra **Power Peace Purpose**. Students bow. Lead students through a Breath Brake.

2 Review key concepts:



Yesterday we talked about how being stuck in the middle feels and how it impacts relationships. We learned about a few ways we can intervene to help arguing friends.

3 Personalize key concepts:



Today think about a personal experience where you were stuck in the middle of friends arguing. Let's talk a little bit about your experience. Then you can use those ideas and what you learned this week to answer the questions on the activity sheet about three friends

Use the following talking points to encourage discussion as a class, in small groups, or in pairs:



- Have you ever been stuck in the middle between friends arguing? Responses will vary.
- How did you feel about being stuck in the middle? Responses will vary.
- Did you help resolve the argument between friends? How? What did you say or do? Responses will vary.

4 Apply key concepts:

Distribute the ACTIVITY SHEET - 4D: STUCK IN THE MIDDLE.

Ask students to work independently to complete the activity sheet.

5 End with Power Peace Purpose:

Power Peace Purpose. Then, students bow.

Activity Sheet - 4D: STUCK IN THE MIDDLE

Name _____ Date _____

Directions: Read each part of the scenario, then answer the questions.

Background: *Lea, Megan, and Tamia live in the same neighborhood and have been friends since they met on the first day of kindergarten. They are always together.*

Part 1 (Monday morning):

Tamia and Megan were hanging out before the morning bell. When Lea arrived at school, she noticed they were playing a game on the playground. When she walked over to join, the girls ignored her. When Lea asked about the game, Tamia said, “We played it this weekend at my house when we had a sleepover.” Lea had not been included in the sleepover.

1. How did Lea feel? _____

Part 2 (Monday morning during the snack break in class)

Lea had some homemade cookies and invited Megan to share. Tamia wanted a cookie, so she moved closer and asked for one. Lea snubbed her, said, “no,” and continued making recess plans with Megan, just the two of them. Megan senses something is going on between Lea and Tamia, but she doesn’t know what or why. Megan is stuck in the middle.

2. How did Megan feel? _____

Part 3 (Monday lunch recess)

Megan and Lea were on the playground, deciding what to do. Lea suggested they play tag, just the two of them. Megan asked if they should invite Tamia to play. Lea said, “No, just us. Tamia’s getting on my nerves lately.”

3. What should Megan say or do? _____

Activity Sheet - 4D: STUCK IN THE MIDDLE

Part 4 (Monday walking home from school)

Megan and Tamia walked down the sidewalk, and Lea ran to catch up with them. She grabbed Megan's arm and said, "C'mon, Megan, let's run home!" Megan shrugged her shoulders at Tamia and ran home with Lea.

4. How did Tamia feel? _____

Megan was stuck in the middle. What will happen next?

Write **Part 5 of STUCK IN THE MIDDLE**. Describe how the friends could fix this uncomfortable situation.

(**Remember the Breath Brake and what you learned about open and honest communication.)

Part 5 (Monday after school, outside Megan's house)

Lined writing area with 25 horizontal lines.

Day 5: SHARE



Focus: Self-Awareness

Students will share their learning about being stuck in the middle between arguing friends.

Learning Objectives: In this lesson, students will:

- Share positive communication strategies that could help solve an argument between friends.
- Identify the effectiveness of the Breath Brake when you are stuck in the middle.
- Practice the Breath Brake and repeat the **Power Peace Purpose** mantra.

Time Requirement:

15 minutes



Materials Needed:
ACTIVITY SHEET - 4D:
STUCK IN THE MIDDLE

Lesson Process:

1 Begin with a Breath Brake:

Begin with the mantra **Power Peace Purpose**. Students bow. Lead students through a Breath Brake.

2 Review key concepts:



We've been learning about how it feels to be stuck in the middle between friends who are arguing. Yesterday you talked about your experience of being stuck in the middle, and we analyzed an example about three friends who were stuck in an argument.

3 Share the learning:



Today you will share your Part 5, which should show how the friends resolved the argument.

Ask students to reflect on their activity sheet, ACTIVITY SHEET 4D: STUCK IN THE MIDDLE.

Ask a few students to share their learning with the class by reading their Part 5 conclusion.

Use the following talking points to encourage discussion as a class, in small groups, or in student pairs.



- Describe a personal experience you had with being stuck in the middle. How did you feel? Responses will vary.
- What did you say or do to help manage the situation? Did it work? Responses will vary.
- What would you do if you were in Megan's situation? Would you have done anything differently? Responses will vary.

4 Summarize key concepts:



This week we learned how important it is to communicate with friends even when things may be difficult. Calm and clear communication is the best way to solve arguments. As we move forward as martial artists, let's use the Breath Brake to find calm and clarity when situations with friends may be confusing. Then let's use the power of communication to solve conflicts effectively.

5 End with Power Peace Purpose:

Power Peace Purpose. Then, students bow.