

Kings and Queens of Recess

Time needed: 60 minutes

Recommended Level: Grades PK-4

Categories: Bystanders, Empowering, Helping victims

Common Core Standard(s): Reading Literature, Writing responses to literature, writing to convey information

Purpose: A writing exercise is used to help students establish what kind of friend they want to be when they are playing with friends.

DISCUSSION:

This is an activity inspired by *The Recess Queen* (Scholastic, ISBN# 043920637), a story by Alexis O'Neill and Laura Huliska-Beith. If this book is not in your personal or school library, any fictional book about recess bullies could be used.

Begin by asking students:

- What do you like to do at recess?
- Do you like to play by yourself or play with others?
- What do you do if your friend/friends want to play something else than what you had in mind?
- How does it make you feel when you play alone?
- What can you do if you want to play with other kids but no one invites you?

ACTIVITY:

Read *The Recess Queen* aloud to the students. Ask the students, "Why did Mean Jean act that way?" "How did it make the other students feel?" Ask the students to share, without using names, about a time that they felt bullied during recess. Next discuss how Katie Sue reacted to the bully. "Katie Sue used a strategy to stand up to the bully - she told the bully to stop, started doing something else, and asked others to join her. Why do you think this was a good thing to do?" Finally, discuss ways that they can be a good friend during recess.

Next have students write their ideas into playground commitments or promises. Each student can title his or her paper, 'The King of Recess' or 'The Queen of Recess'. Each student may write a paragraph or write an 'I can' statements, stating how he or she will be a good friend, practice leadership skills, and identify and diffuse bullying situations during recess and playtime with friends and classmates.

FOLLOW-UP:

Ask students to share their writing. After students have a few days of recess, ask if anyone has practiced their 'King of Recess' or 'Queen of Recess' commitments. Have they had the chance to identify any of their classmates practicing their plan and ideas? Share reflections with the class.



Helping Everyone with Anti-Bullying,
Respect & Tolerance