

⚡ PREPARE

CONCEPT Conflict is a character's struggle or problem in a text. Conflict is internal when the struggle is something that exists in a character's mind. Conflict is external when the struggle is between a character and another character or an outside force. As students explore how an author develops a character's conflict, they are better

able to comprehend and express ideas about what they read.

VOCABULARY conflict, external conflict, internal conflict

MATERIALS Lesson reproducibles, index cards, posterboard, sticky notes

⚡ INSTRUCT

Distribute one of the included Illustration Prompts and an index card to each student. Then, have students illustrate their scenario on the cards. For individual students or small groups, select a mix of external and internal scenarios.

Display the illustrations and discuss what they have in common. The illustrations show a character who has a problem.

Tell students that each illustration shows a conflict.

Define the term:

- **Conflict** is a character's struggle or problem.

Silently sort the cards into two sets based on the type of conflict: external or internal. Do not yet use those terms.

Then, discuss what the illustrations in each set have in common.

Record student responses to guide the discussion. Student comments might include the following observations:

- One set of cards shows situations in which the character is struggling with thoughts or feelings.
- The other set shows situations in which the character is struggling with another person or thing.

Identify each set of cards as external or internal and define the terms:

- **External conflict** is a character's struggle with an outside force.
- **Internal conflict** is a struggle that exists in a character's mind.

Refer students to the Anchor Chart to reinforce understanding. The specific types of external conflict will be addressed in Conflict: Part B.

PRACTICE

- Provide students with the included set of Conflict Cards. Have them work with a partner to sort the cards into two piles: external conflict and internal conflict. If students finish early, have them generate their own examples using the included Blank Conflict Cards.
- Have students work together to create a poster of external and internal conflict examples. Students should add content to the poster regularly, using small sticky notes to record real-world examples. Discuss examples, elaborating on each conflict as needed.
- Distribute the included Conflict Sentence Prompts. Have student partners cut out and place the sentence strips face down. Then, have them take turns reading the statements aloud and filling in the blanks with personal examples. After a few rounds, ask students to share one of their partner's examples with the class.

ADAPT

SUPPORT

- Use movie trailers to show students examples of internal and external conflict. After students view each trailer, use the definitions of external and internal conflict to discuss what they saw.
- Adapt the Conflict Sentence Strips activity (Practice section) by working together to complete one sentence at a time with multiple personal examples. Use the first example as a model for the ones that follow. Then, repeat this collaborative process with the other sentence starters.

EXTEND

















- Have students use graphic novels or leveled reading material to complete a Scavenger Hunt. They should collect examples of conflict, distinguishing between external and internal conflict. Then, have students discuss their examples with a partner.
- Have students choose a scenario from one of the included Illustration Prompts (Instruct section) and write a short story about it. Remind students that the conflict should be introduced in the exposition (beginning) and resolved in the resolution (end).

CONNECT

- Explore internal and external conflict in the context of social-emotional learning and classroom community building. Have students generate questions that can lead them toward identifying the type of conflict and how it might be resolved. Then, have them work together to answer their own questions.
- To integrate multimedia, have students use an approved search engine to find images of external and internal conflict. Students can create a slideshow to share the images, adding a description of each example of conflict.

ILLUSTRATION PROMPTS

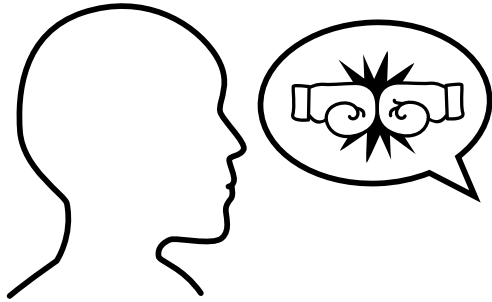


 <p>Draw this character being chased by a bear.</p> <p>1</p>	 <p>Draw this character wondering if he should tell the truth to a friend who got a bad haircut.</p> <p>9</p>
 <p>Draw this character trying to convince himself to exercise when he feels like watching TV.</p> <p>2</p>	 <p>Draw this character marching with Martin Luther King Jr. to protest discrimination.</p> <p>10</p>
 <p>Draw this character arguing with his sister about whose turn it is to take out the trash.</p> <p>3</p>	 <p>Draw this character trying to work up the courage to jump off a high diving board.</p> <p>11</p>
 <p>Draw this character trying to decide what to do with a wallet he found on the sidewalk.</p> <p>4</p>	 <p>Draw this character being followed by a spy.</p> <p>12</p>
 <p>Draw this character stranded in the hot desert without water.</p> <p>5</p>	 <p>Draw this character being told he does not have the right to vote because he is bald.</p> <p>13</p>
 <p>Draw this character trying to convince people to stop throwing trash in the park.</p> <p>6</p>	 <p>Draw this character being attacked by a shark.</p> <p>14</p>
 <p>Draw this character getting a speeding ticket and paying a fine.</p> <p>7</p>	 <p>Draw this character fighting against the boxing world champion.</p> <p>15</p>
 <p>Draw this character being thrown up in the air by a tornado.</p> <p>8</p>	 <p>Draw this character being picked on by a bully.</p> <p>16</p>

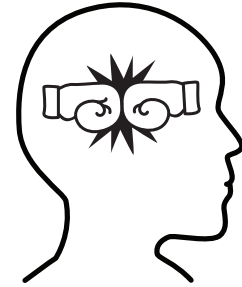
ANCHOR CHART

Conflict

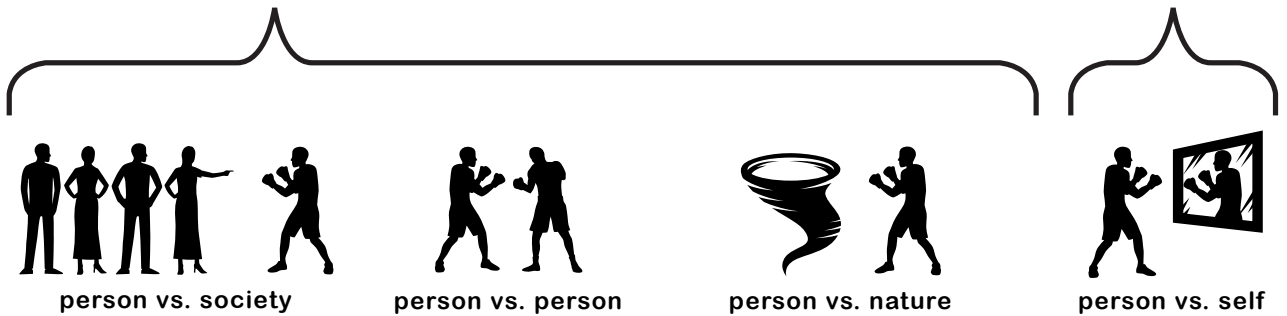
Conflict is a character's struggle or problem.



External conflict is a character's struggle with an outside force.



Internal conflict is a struggle that exists in a character's mind.



Imagine a life without conflict: no tough decisions, no disagreements, nothing to challenge you. It might sound pretty nice ... at first. But not being able to choose between one ice cream flavor or another and not being able to see things differently from someone else and not being able to get stronger by overcoming a challenge would make life really dull.

Stories, too, need conflict—or else they'd be BORING. Lucky for you, no one wants to write a boring book.

CONFLICT CARDS



In *Wonder*, a character needs to decide whether to stick up for his friend or go along with the crowd.

1

In *Pandora's Box*, a character struggles with a choice between her curiosity and her promise to another character.

6

In *The Thief and the King*, a character is arrested for stealing a piece of silk and sent to jail.

2

In *The Diary of Anne Frank*, the main character and her family are forced to go into hiding because they are Jewish.

7

In *After Twenty Years*, a character struggles to decide between loyalty to an old friend or doing the right thing.

3

In *Eleven*, the main character is disappointed because her birthday is not what she expected.

8

In *The Choice*, a wise character saves her village from being destroyed by an army.

4

In *Hatchet*, the main character struggles to survive in the Canadian wilderness.

9

In *The Legend of William Tell*, the main character is challenged by another character.

5

In *The Last Leaf*, a character dies after being outside all night in a cold rainstorm.

10

BLANK CONFLICT CARDS



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CONFLICT SENTENCE PROMPTS



An example of *internal conflict* is when I had to decide between _____ and _____. I resolved this conflict by _____.

An example of *internal conflict* is when I felt guilty because _____. I resolved this conflict by _____.

An example of *internal conflict* is when I was worried about _____. I resolved this conflict by _____.

An example of *internal conflict* is when I had to choose between _____ and _____. I resolved this conflict by _____.

An example of *internal conflict* is when I wondered if I should _____. I resolved this conflict by _____.

An example of *external conflict* is when I disagreed with _____ about _____. I resolved this conflict by _____.

An example of *external conflict* is when I got hurt by _____. I resolved this conflict by _____.

An example of *external conflict* is when I didn't follow a rule about _____. I resolved this conflict by _____.

An example of *external conflict* is when I blamed _____ for _____. I resolved this conflict by _____.

An example of *external conflict* is when _____ ruined my _____. I resolved this conflict by _____.

ANSWER KEY

Illustration Prompts

Internal: 2, 4, 9, 11

External: 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16

Conflict Cards

Internal: 1, 3, 6, 8

External: 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10

PREPARE

CONCEPT Conflict is a character’s struggle or problem in a text. Conflict is internal when the struggle is something that exists in a character’s mind. Internal conflict is also referred to as person vs. self. Conflict is external when the struggle is between a character and another character or an outside force. External conflict includes person vs. person, person vs. nature, and person vs. society. As students explore how

an author develops a character’s conflict, they are better able to comprehend and express ideas about what they read.

VOCABULARY conflict, external conflict, internal conflict

MATERIALS Lesson reproducibles, newspapers or magazines, small sticky notes

INSTRUCT

Invite students to act out the included Conflict Scenarios, one at a time. After each enactment, ask students in the audience to describe what they saw. Record their observations.

Discuss what all four scenarios have in common. (In each case, a person has a problem.)

Define the terms:

- **Conflict** is a character’s struggle or problem.

Explain to students that each scenario represents a specific type of conflict:

- Person vs. society
- Person vs. person
- Person vs. nature
- Person vs. self

Define the terms:

- **External conflict** is a character’s struggle with an outside force, such as society, another person, or nature.
- **Internal conflict** is a struggle that exists in a character’s mind (person vs. self).

Refer students to the Anchor Chart to reinforce understanding.

PRACTICE

- Distribute the included set of Illustration Prompts. Have students illustrate and label each type of conflict: person vs. society, person vs. person, person vs. nature, and person vs. self. Then, have them generate original examples and illustrations in the included Blank Template.
- Conduct a Scavenger Hunt using pictures from newspapers and magazines. Students should collect examples of the four types of conflict introduced in this lesson. Then, create a bulletin board to display and discuss the examples.
- Provide students with short narrative passages, such as the included Conflict Passages. Have students work with a partner to determine the type(s) of conflict described in each. (Each of the included passages introduces two types of conflict. Depending on your students' level of understanding, focus on just one or address both.) Then, have student partners discuss or write a possible ending to the story in which the conflict is resolved.

ADAPT

SUPPORT

- Provide students with the included Conflict Cards. Have them work with a partner to sort the cards by type of conflict. Then, discuss the examples and elaborate on how each serves as an example of a particular type of conflict.
- Discuss the differences between external conflict and internal conflict. Adapt the Scavenger Hunt activity (Practice section) by having students focus on collecting examples of these two categories of conflict. Then, work together to identify the specific type of external conflict represented in the pictures.

EXTEND

- Have students work together to create a poster of the four types of conflict introduced in this lesson. On an ongoing basis, students should record titles of texts or movies on small sticky notes and affix to the poster in one of the four sections. Discuss the examples as they are added.
- Adapt the Scavenger Hunt activity (Practice section) by having students write a short story based on one of the pictures. Remind them to introduce the conflict in the exposition (beginning) and resolve it in the resolution (end).

CONNECT

- In social studies, have students explore historical or current events from the perspective of identifying the conflict as person vs. society, person vs. person, person vs. society, or person vs. nature. This information can help students connect people to events and better remember what they have learned.
- To integrate multimedia, have students work with a partner to create a video of book and movie reviews. Reviews should describe the conflict(s) in each book or movie and identify the type (person vs. society, person vs. person, person vs. nature, or person vs. self).

CONFLICT SCENARIOS

Scenario 1

(2 student actors needed)

HIKER. What a beautiful day for a hike in the mountains! The air is fresh, the sun is shining, the birds are singing, and the bear is growling.... What!? A bear?!

BEAR. Roar! [*chasing HIKER*]

HIKER. [*running away*] Help!

Scenario 2

(2 student actors needed)

TEACHER. Good morning, class. Did anyone watch the news last night? The government passed a new law. From now on, people with blue shirts are not allowed to use chairs. [*points to STUDENT*] I'm sorry, but the law says that you can't sit there. You'll have to give your chair to me.

STUDENT. That's not fair! The government can't take away my chair just because I'm wearing a blue shirt. [*stands up*] I'm going to stand up for my rights and the rights of all people with blue shirts!

Scenario 3

(2 student actors needed)

FRIEND 1. [*in an angry voice*] Hey! I can't believe you said that about me! I thought we were friends!

FRIEND 2. [*looking confused*] We are friends! What did I say?

FRIEND 1. [*getting angrier*] Don't act like you don't know what you said! You're always trying to make everything all about you. You know what? It doesn't matter! Have a great life!

FRIEND 2: Huh?

CONFLICT SCENARIOS (CONTINUED)

Scenario 4

(3 student actors needed)

STUDENT 1. I didn't have time to do my homework last night. I hope our teacher doesn't notice.

TEACHER. Good morning, class. I hope you all had time to do your homework last night because I have a surprise for you—a quiz!

STUDENT 1. Oh no! I can't believe it! I need to get a good grade in this class, or I'll get kicked off the basketball team.

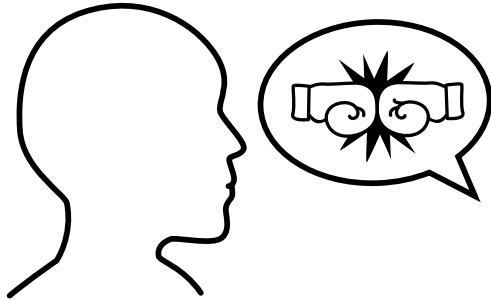
STUDENT 2. I love quizzes!

STUDENT 1. *[talking to himself]* That kid is so annoying. Wait a minute! I can just look at his answers and copy them. That's a perfect solution to my problem. But if I get caught, I'll get in big trouble. But if I fail, I can't play basketball. But cheating is wrong. I don't know what to do!

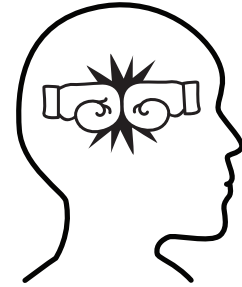
ANCHOR CHART

Conflict

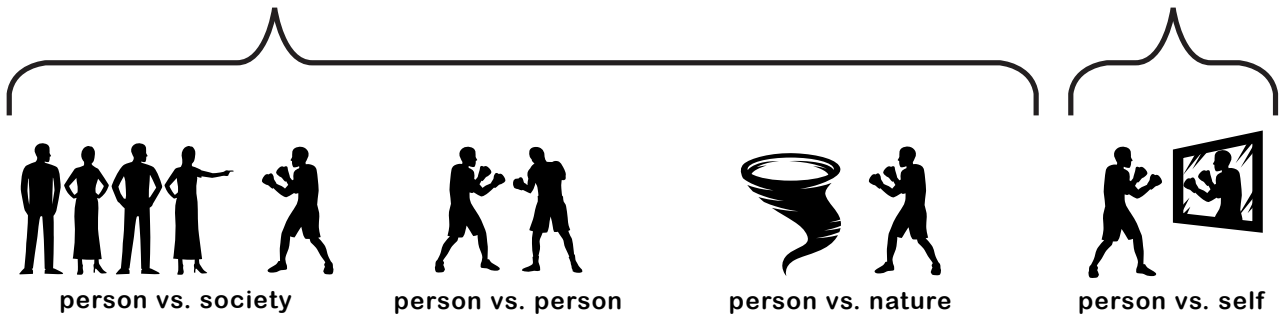
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ILLUSTRATION PROMPTS



Draw this character in a small boat on the ocean during a storm.



Draw this character deciding between donating money or buying something for himself.

PERSON VS. _____

PERSON VS. _____



Draw this character chasing someone who stole his shoes.



Draw this character sitting in the front of the bus with Rosa Parks.

PERSON VS. _____

PERSON VS. _____

BLANK TEMPLATE



PERSON VS. NATURE

PERSON VS. SELF

PERSON VS. PERSON

PERSON VS. SOCIETY

CONFLICT PASSAGES

Passage 1

Julian hated shopping. He hadn't wanted to come to the mall with his mother and younger sister. But his mother insisted because Julian needed new shoes. They'd been in the same store for two hours, and they hadn't even gone to the shoe department yet. Julian's mother and Nelly were trying on dresses. He was sitting on a chair outside the fitting room, waiting for them. It was beyond boring!

Nelly was only six and never went anywhere without Carlotta, her doll. Now Julian was stuck holding Carlotta for safekeeping while he waited.

Without even thinking, Julian began to play with Carlotta. He made the doll jump along the arm of the chair, flip onto the floor, and leap back up. It wasn't a bad way to pass the time. Then, he sensed someone watching him. He quickly hid the doll behind his back. Too late.

Darrel Fitts stared at him with wide eyes. "Playing with your dolly, Julian?" he said. "Is that your little secret?"

"It's my sister's," Julian began to explain. But he realized that was no defense. Darrel—like almost everyone else—saw playing with dolls as something that was just for girls. Julian knew he was doomed. Darrel would turn this discovery into headline news. And everyone in seventh grade would know that Julian was the boy who played with dolls.

"Of course, we could make a deal for my silence on this private matter," said Darrel.

"What? You mean blackmail?" asked Julian.

CONFLICT PASSAGES (CONTINUED)

Passage 2

Sarita opened her eyes. There was nothing but blackness. Had she suddenly become blind? With effort, she lifted her right arm. She brought her hand to her face and stared at it. She could make out shadowy fingers. That was good—it meant she could still see. But the darkness felt thick and threatening. Sarita wondered where all the others were. It was so quiet. She called out weakly: “Help! Help! I’m here.” There was no reply, just the creaks and groans of the rubble around her.

Then Sarita remembered what had happened. There had been an earthquake. She remembered sitting at her desk, leaning down to pick up her pencil when the ground began to shake. And then, nothing.

“Help! Help me!” she cried. Maybe rescuers were already at work above the rubble. They might reach her soon. She needed to keep that hope alive. But why were there no sounds of sirens or human voices? Why was there only deep, dark silence? She was scared.

What if there was another quake? She needed to get to safety. She pulled herself up to sitting. Nothing hurt too much, so she probably had no broken bones, and that was good. She tried to stand, but her head bumped against something hard. She fell to her knees and thought about giving up. Then she shook her head, refusing to let her fear take over. She began crawling, feeling for openings and listening for sounds of other survivors.

CONFLICT CARDS



On a long plane trip, a man is forced to sit next to someone who does not stop talking.

A girl tries to save her younger brother, who is lost in a snowstorm.

1

5

A boy is afraid to try out for the school play, but he rehearses every day and becomes confident enough to do it.

A girl teases a new boy at school because his clothes do not fit and his hair is long.

2

6

A woman writes to the mayor to complain about the amount of litter in the city parks.

A hiker is separated from his group and finds himself surrounded by hungry wolves.

3

7

After a girl steals something from a store, she feels guilty and wonders if she should admit what she did.

A man is paralyzed in an accident and learns that people treat him differently now that he is in a wheelchair.

4

8

ANSWER KEY

Conflict Scenarios

1. *person vs. nature*
2. *person vs. society*
3. *person vs. person*
4. *person vs. self*

Conflict Passages

Passage 1: person vs. person, person vs. society

Passage 2: person vs. nature, person vs. self

Conflict Cards

Person vs. person: 1, 6

Person vs. society: 3, 8

Person vs. nature: 5, 7

Person vs. self: 2, 4