

## Gossip and Rumors

Grade level: 4-5

ASCA Standards:

PS: A1:6 Distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate behavior

PS: A1:7 Recognize personal boundaries, rights and privacy needs PS:

A1:8 understand the need for self-control and how to practice it PS: B1:1

Use a decision making and problem solving model

PS: B1:2 Understand consequences of decisions and choices Materials:

Trouble Talk by Trudy Ludwig

Rumor/Gossip cards (8)

True/Good/Useful handout

Kindness handout

Explain to students that we will first play a game. During this game, 8 students will be given a “story” card. The remaining students have the task of going to each of these students and finding out their stories. After all students have had a chance to find out all the stories, have students try to recall the stories and write them on the board. You will find that like the game of telephone, there will be mistakes in the stories and names. Have students with the cards point out errors on the board.

Ask students what are some other words for these stories: Rumors and Gossip. Have students share definitions of rumors and gossip. Looking back on our game, and our recall of the stories, what do you notice might happen with rumors and gossip (the stories get changed).

Rumors and gossip are issues that I deal with often as a counselor. How do you think rumors/gossip create problems here at school? (Feelings are hurt, trust issues, reputations, etc).

Today I will be teaching you how to use good judgment when deciding if you should tell something you hear. Handout good/true/useful handout. Whenever you find out information about another person, these are the three questions you should ask yourself

before you tell the story to someone else. You have to be able to answer YES to ALL THREE questions before its okay to spread the story.

1. Is it true? Before you spread any information, you should be 100% sure that it is true... 2. Is it good? With the examples on the board, were most of these stories “good” news? No. What would be an example of something about someone that would be good news? (Won a championship, new baby brother, etc).

3. Is it useful? What do you think “useful” means? (Information you can use or need). With our examples on the board, were any of these useful information that we needed to know? (No)

Let me give you an example from another student of a story that you could spread on. Let’s say that they are building a new park down the street. We will say that this story is true. Let’s ask ourselves the other two questions: Is that good news? Yes, we would love to have a new park! Is it useful information? Yes! We could go play there, meet up with friends, etc. So this is a story that we would spread on.

Let’s try another example. The story is that Tony’s clothes smell bad. Let’s go through the three questions. Is it true? Yeah, maybe you smelled him. Is that good information? No, he would never want people talking about that. Is it useful/do we need to know that information? No, we have no use for that information.

Now we are going to read a book about rumors and gossip. When stories come up in the book, we will ask ourselves these three questions to decide if they should be spread on.

Read book and stop periodically to ask the three questions.

Next, I am going to put you into groups of 2. Together I would like for you guys to come up with three ways that we could stop trouble talk at MCES. Give time to work in groups and then write ideas on the board. Encourage the students to use these ideas to stop rumors at our school.

Leave students with final thoughts about Kindness. Kindness handout.

## Rumor Cards for Game

<p><b>... hit his mother last night. Right on the face.</b></p>	<p><b>.... was kicked out of McDonalds because he was farting!</b></p>
<p><b>Did you see ..... in the washroom? She was taking some pills. Many.</b></p>	<p><b>Did you know that ..... has a pet snake and feeds it mice every day!</b></p>
<p><b>Guess what I found out! ..... is actually adopted. Yes, his parents ....</b></p>	<p><b>The police visited ..... last night because .....</b></p>
<p><b>... didn't come to class because .....</b></p>	<p><b>... used to .....</b></p>

## Rumor Cards for Game

<p><b>... saw ... at the mall and he was picking his nose.</b></p>	<p><b>.... couldn't catch a football if his life depended on it. I don't want him on my team!</b></p>
<p><b>Did you see what .... is wearing today? Her sister wore the same outfit on Monday.</b></p>	<p><b>.... talks about planets all the time and pretends he is in space at recess. He is so weird!</b></p>
<p><b>Have you seen how ... walks? He looks so weird!</b></p>	<p><b>... was called to the office. I heard it was because he cheated on the math test.</b></p>
<p><b>... told ... not to be friends with .... because she smells bad.</b></p>	<p><b>... told ... that her parents are getting a divorce.</b></p>

Before you tell something to someone,  
ask yourself:

Is it True?

Is it Something Good?

Is it Useful Information?

Before you tell something to someone,  
ask yourself:

Is it True?

Is it Something Good?

Is it Useful Information?



Kindness sometimes  
means NOT doing  
something.

Not making a comment.

Not noticing a flaw.

Not assuming the worst about  
someone.

-Heather McMillan