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# HOW SHOULD SCHOOLS PREVENT BULLYING?

Word Generation - Unit 2.12

## Focus Words

amending | equity | constitutes | resolve | legislate



## WEEKLY PASSAGE

Kendra started at a new school in the seventh grade. During her first week, a group of girls started teasing her. They told her she was fat, ugly, and retarded. Then more kids joined in. Now she gets called names every day. People push her in the hallways. They steal her backpack and throw it in the trash. Kendra wants help, but she is embarrassed to tell her parents or her teachers. She feels like everything is her fault.

Bullying is a big problem in schools today. Both boys and girls can be bullies or victims. Punching, teasing, and spreading rumors all **constitute** bullying. About half of all kids say they have been bullied at some point during their time in school. Many kids who are bullied have low self-esteem. Some try to avoid school. Some even think about killing themselves.

It is important for schools to promote **equity** among all students. No one should be treated like they are less than anyone else. Therefore, many people believe that schools should pass rules to **legislate** an end to bullying.

Some people think schools should teach victims to **resolve** the problem themselves. Victims of bullies should make sure they are always with a friend. They should ignore the bullies and walk away. Or they should learn to firmly tell the bullies to stop.

Some schools try to solve the problem by focusing on the bullies. They send them to special classes to help them manage their anger. They teach them to solve conflicts with words.

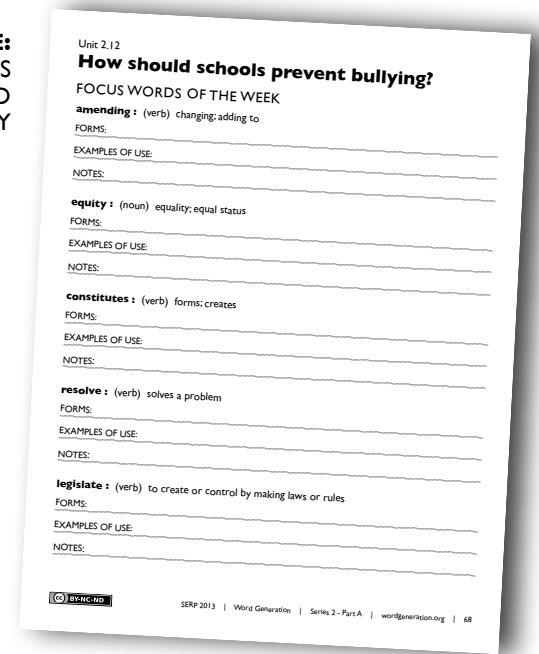
Other schools depend on teachers and administrators to solve the problem. They make sure adults carefully supervise the hallways and the cafeteria, where most bullying happens. Many schools have chosen to **amend** their rules to make it clear that bullying will not be tolerated.

Is bullying a problem at your school? How do you think this problem should be solved?

### TEACHER - Discussion Questions

- ▶ Do you think your school promotes equity between students?
- ▶ What kind of behavior constitutes bullying?
- ▶ How could your school amend its rules to keep bullying from happening?
- ▶ How can parents and teachers help victims of bullying resolve the problem?
- ▶ Can a school legislate equity between students? Or do students themselves need to resolve the problem?

**PLEASE NOTE:**  
THE STUDENT VERSION OF THIS  
PAGE IS FORMATTED  
DIFFERENTLY



## Unit 2.12

### WORD CHART FOR TEACHERS

This chart is not in the student book. It is a resource for teachers to support students in the use of the focus words each week. Students are provided one page in each unit immediately following the weekly passage with a basic definition printed and space for taking notes.

Word	Meaning	Forms			Related Words
		Inflectional	Basic Word Classes	Prefixes/Suffixes	
amending	(v.) - changing; adding to	amend amends amended		amendment	mend
equity	(n.) - equality; equal status			inequity equitable inequitable	equate equation equal equator
constitutes	(v.) - forms; creates	constitute constituting constituted		constitution constitutive reconstitute	constituency constituents restitution
resolve	(v.) - solves a problem	resolves resolving resolved		unresolved resolution resolvable	resolute solution solve dissolve dissolution
legislate	(v.) - to create or control by making laws or rules	legislates legislating legislated		legislation legislator	legal legalize

# How should schools prevent bullying?



## PROBLEM OF THE WEEK

Some bullying experts say that to stop bullies, we must **amend** the way we think about bullying. Bullying affects everyone. School communities should be based on **equity** and respect. How can this be true if some students torment others? **Legislating** anti-bullying rules is only a start. One expert named Dan Olweus says that to stop bullies, entire school communities must **resolve** to end bullying. He says that onlookers who watch victims get bullied **constitute** part of the problem.

**Option 1:** Last week at Victory Middle School, there were 11 bullying incidents in 11 different classrooms. Say that for each incident, there are at least 5 onlookers. Which of the following is true?

- A) There were a minimum of 55 onlookers.
- B) There were at least 35 onlookers.
- C) There were a minimum of 20 onlookers.
- D) There were a maximum of 50 onlookers.

**Option 2:** The National Center for Education Statistics reported that in 2007, 32% of students aged 12-18 reported being bullied in the past year. If this is still true today, and three students are chosen at random, what are the chances that at least one of them has been bullied in the past year?

**Answer:** about 69%

(Teacher's Note: The chances that none of the three students were bullied is  $.68 \times .68 \times .68 \approx .314$ , so that chances that at least one was bullied is  $1 - .314$ , or .686)

**Discussion Question:** When bullying makes the news, people react angrily. Principals **resolve** to establish **equity** among students. Teachers **amend** classroom rules. Government bodies debate anti-bullying **legislation**. But bullying is not a problem that flares up occasionally. Statistics show that bullying is widespread. In 2007, 32% of students in the U.S. aged 12 – 18 reported being bullied at school in the past year. For 21%, the bullying **consisted** of teasing. For other students, the bullying involved tripping, shoving, being spat on, or other cruel behavior.

Do these statistics sound right to you? If 32% of students are bullied, then what percent of a school community is likely to be involved in bullying, either as bullies, victims, or onlookers? Fifty percent? Seventy percent? One hundred percent? Explain your estimate.

National Center for Education Statistics. (2009). *Indicators of school crime and safety: 2009*. Retrieved on July 21, 2010 from <http://nces.ed.gov/programs/crimeindicators/crimeindicators2009/key.asp>

## How should schools prevent bullying?

### THINKING SCIENTIFICALLY

In 2010, President Obama made a speech about bullying to support the “It Gets Better” project, which was founded to bring attention to bullying, and to young people who had committed suicide because they were gay or were thought to be gay. In his speech, the President said:

*“We’ve got to dispel the myth that bullying is just a normal rite of passage – that it’s some inevitable part of growing up. It’s not. We have an obligation to ensure that our schools are safe for all of our kids.”*

Although parents, teachers, and especially young people agree with the President, bullying is still a difficult issue to **resolve**. Most teens know what **constitutes** bullying, but they still engage in it or feel powerless to stop it. Some people believe laws should be **amended** to make bullying a crime. Others are concerned that harsh **legislation** just creates more rules instead of teaching teens how to treat each other respectfully. They worry about **equitable** treatment for children who have been bullied as well as appropriate consequences for children who have bullied.



- The students in Mr. Seemy’s class wants to find out how common bullying is at Franklin Middle School. They have identified four types of bullying: verbal, physical, social, and cyberbullying. They are going to ask their classmates how often the types of bullying happen that their school.

Type of bullying	Description	Approximately how often do you see this type of bullying in your school?
<b>Verbal</b>	Insults, name calling, derogatory remarks, teasing.	
<b>Physical</b>	Pushing, shoving, tripping, spitting, or hitting. May also include stealing or hiding belongings.	
<b>Social</b>	Excluding or isolating from play, activities, or events.	
<b>Cyber</b>	Hurtful texts, emails, posting embarrassing pictures or starting rumors on social networking sites. May also include fake websites or profiles.	

- Do a quick survey with your class to find out approximately how often the students in your class notice the different types of bullying in your school.

What other types of questions could you ask to find out about bullying at your school? What else would you like to know?

- According to the data you collected, what type of bullying is most common at your school? Least common?

Teachers are to manage this activity in a way they feel is appropriate given their specific time constraints.

# How should schools prevent bullying?



## DEBATING THE ISSUE

### Get ready...

Pick one of these positions (or create your own).

**A** Victims of bullying should take responsibility for resolving the problem. They should ignore bullies or learn to stand up to them.

**B** Bullies should be held responsible for resolving the problem. They should go to special classes to help them manage their anger.

**C** Schools should legislate equity between students. They should make strong rules against bullying and punish people who break them.

**D** Administrators and teachers should resolve the problem. They should supervise the school carefully and get involved in conflicts between students.

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#### TEACHER

Whatever debate format you use in your class, ask students to use academically productive talk in arguing their positions. In particular, students should provide reasons and evidence to back up their assertions. It may be helpful to read these sample positions to illustrate some possibilities, but students should also be encouraged to take their own positions on the issue at hand.

### Get set...

Be ready to provide evidence to back up your position during your class discussion or debate. Jot down a few quick notes:

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# GO!

Be a strong participant by using phrases like these.

*You make a good point, but have you considered...*

*I believe that...*

*I agree with you, but...*

*Can you show me evidence in the text that...*



## Focus Words

**TEACHER**

Put the writing prompt on the overhead projector (or the board) so that everyone can see it. Remind students to refer to the word lists in their Word Generation notebooks as needed.

## Unit 2.12

### Source References:

» [www.bullying.org](http://www.bullying.org)