

# John Greer Cool Tools

## Introduction:

Cool Tools are mini-lessons designed to teach social skills and are aligned to John Greer's PBIS Behavior Expectations. They are designed to be educational, fun, and interactive. Teaching Cool Tools helps us comply with Illinois Social-Emotional Learning Standards. Homeroom teachers teach Cool Tools on Friday morning during Homeroom Period and teachers may choose to spend additional time on these lessons. Parents are welcome to request copies of any of these Cool Tools.

## 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Cool Tools by Series Topic:

- 1 Assemblies** – addresses appropriate types of behavior at different types of assemblies (AUGUST)
  - Informational Assembly
  - Award's Assembly
  - Performance Assembly
  - Sport's Assembly
- 2 Respecting Substitute Teachers** – uses a handout titled *6 Steps for Substitute Success* (SEPTEMBER)
- 3 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Respect** – a 4 part series (AUGUST & NOVEMBER)
  - Respect 1 – Students take a *Respect Yourself Quiz* that contains 10 different scenarios. The class discusses how the student is/isn't respecting self, what could have been done differently, etc...
  - Respect 2 – 10 short stories are read and students discuss whether the character's action(s) were respectful.
  - Respect 3 – Student teams compile a list of ways that students can respect others at school, seeing who can come up with the most unique ways. A master list is compiled.
  - Respect 4 – Each student completes 2 index cards. Index card 1 – "I wish others would show me respect by..." Index card 2 – "I should treat others better by..." The teacher reads student responses and guides the discussion with such questions as "What are classmates trying to say?" "How do we feel when we don't get respect?" "What are some things we can do to improve?"
- 4 Using the Sort-It-Out-Box** – (SEPTEMBER) - This box, located at the entrance to the cafeteria, gives students an opportunity to privately share concerns and to receive appropriate assistance. These concerns can be about home, school, and/or relationships. It is not for tattling or for reporting emergencies. This lesson uses a quiz as a starting point for discussion on the types of concerns that should be placed in the Sort-It-Out Box.
- 5 STAR Decisions** – a 3 part series that teaches a decision model "**Stop, Think, Act, Review**" (SEPTEMBER)
  - STAR Decisions 1 – Teachers and students use a story and a *STAR Chart* graphic organizer to dissect and discuss a poor decision made by a student using this model of decision making.
  - STAR Decisions 2 – Gives 9 situations and requires students to find a peaceful solution to a common school problem. In each scenario, the student has stopped and is thinking about a proper response before acting.

- STAR Decisions 3 – Students are placed in groups to complete their own *STAR Chart* graphic organizer based on a story. Each group presents their scenario explaining when the student should have stopped, what the student should have thought, and how the student should have acted, etc...

**6 Academic STAR – Students Taking Academic Responsibility** by writing a letter home explaining their Quarter 1 Report Card. (OCTOBER)

**7 Honesty** – a 3 part series (DECEMBER)

- Honesty 1 – Students develop a classroom definition of “Honesty”. This is done after several teaching examples, synonyms, and antonyms for honesty have been discussed. This definition is posted outside each homeroom door.
- Honesty 2 – Students take a quiz entitled, *How Honest Are You?* Each scenario, as well as risks and benefits of being honest, are discussed.
- Honesty 3 – Each homeroom creates an *Honesty Action Plan* after discussing several famous quotes and discussing the many ways that students can show honesty.

**8 Bullying** – an 8 part series (JANUARY – FEBRUARY)

- Bullying 1a – Students take a quiz titled *The Truth About Bullying*. Answers are discussed in order to debunk common misperceptions about bullying.
- Bullying 1b – Discussion on quiz continues and a definition of “Bullying” is created.
- Bullying 2a – The definition of “Bullying” is reviewed. A handout is used to identify *Types of Bullying Behaviors*.
- Bullying 2b – Students classify scenarios into the types of bullying behaviors identified in previous lesson. A short survey is administered to students about their experience(s) with bullying.
- Bullying 3a – The definition of “Bullying” as well as the survey results are reviewed. A handout titled *Responding to a Bully* is used. Students are placed into groups with a scenario that contains a bully and a victim. Each group is to create a productive response which allows the victim to respond to the bully.
- Bullying 3b – Each group from the previous Cool Tool either explains their victim response or acts it out.
- Bullying 4a – A handout titled *Be a Helpful Bystander to Bullying* is used to teach students how to be productive bystanders when they see bullying. Students are placed into groups with a scenario that contains a bully, a victim, and a bystander. Each group is to create a productive response which allows the bystander to respond to the bully.
- Bullying 4b – Each group from the previous Cool Tool either explains their bystander response or acts it out.

**6<sup>th</sup> Grade Cool Tools by Series Topic:**

**1 Assemblies** – addresses appropriate types of behavior at different types of assemblies (AUGUST)

- Informational Assembly
- Award’s Assembly
- Performance Assembly
- Sport’s Assembly

**2 Respecting Substitute Teachers** – uses a handout titled *6 Steps for Substitute Success* (SEPTEMBER)

**3 Respect Review** – (AUGUST)

- Respect 1 – Students generate 3 lists: How to respect yourself, How to respect other students, How to respect staff. Discussion occurs within student groups.
- Respect 2 – Students receive a list of all the 6<sup>th</sup> Grade responses to the questions in Respect 1. In Art Class, students create a ‘Wanted Poster’ showing a respectful action from the list. Their creation must include a title, picture, and phrase in regard to a respectful action. Upon completion, these posters are published in the John Greer hallways.

**4 Using the Sort-It-Out-Box** – (SEPTEMBER) – This box, located at the entrance to the cafeteria, gives students an opportunity to privately share concerns and to receive appropriate assistance. These concerns can be about home, school, and/or relationships. It is not for tattling or for reporting emergencies. This lesson uses a quiz as a starting point for discussion on the types of concerns that should be placed in the Sort-It-Out Box.

**5 STAR Decisions Review** – (SEPTEMBER)

- STAR Decisions 1 – Using a teaching example, the class creates a *STAR Chart* graphic organizer around the scenario given in the teaching example. This reviews the concept of **Stop, Think, Act, Review** and how it is used in decision making.
- STAR Decisions 2 – Each class is divided into groups. Each group writes a short story of a student who was not responsible in decision making at school. Teachers give groups a topic to base their story on. Stories must include 3 or 4 characters, dialogue, incident description, and an explanation of the negative consequences the student earned who made the wrong choice.
- STAR Decisions 3 – Groups from the previous Cool Tool complete a *STAR Chart* graphic organizer based on their story. Each group reads their story to the class and explains their *STAR Chart*, including when the person should have stopped, what they should have been thinking, and what actions that person should have taken.

**6 Academic STAR – Students Taking Academic Responsibility** by writing a letter home explaining their Quarter 1 Report Card. (OCTOBER)

**7 Bullying Review** – (NOVEMBER)

- Bullying 1 – Students review the definition of “Bullying”, different types of bullying, and appropriate ways to respond to a bully. Handouts from 5<sup>th</sup> Grade are reviewed: *Types of Bullying Behaviors, Responding to a Bully*.
- Bullying 2 – The class is divided into groups. Each group writes a rap song around one of the following topics: How to respond to a bully, why bullying is bad, types of bullying, experiences with bullies, responding appropriately as a bystander, etc...
- Bullying 3 – Each group from the previous Cool Tool presents their rap to the class. A best rap is chosen in each classroom. At a future recess, raps are performed for the entire 6<sup>th</sup> Grade.

**8 Inappropriate Language** – a 2 part series (DECEMBER)

- Inappropriate Language 1 – Students brainstorm reasons and discuss why people use cuss words or call other people names. They also discuss situations in school when they have heard such language. Teachers redirect the conversation toward other word choice alternatives when students give examples. Discussion on why it is important to use peaceful/respectful language at school concludes

the lesson.

- Inappropriate Language 2 – Teachers read 3 scenarios to students that might be common to school. All involve inappropriate language. Students discuss questions related to the scenarios.

## 9 Friendship – a 9 part series (JANUARY – MARCH)

- Understanding Friendship 1 – Students discuss the meaning of friendship. They consider a quote from Ralph Waldo Emerson and King Solomon. A story entitled *First Day at Rockdale* is read. The lesson theme is that people have to be friendly in order to have friends.
- Understanding Friendship 2 – Students brainstorm answers to the question “Why do people want to have friends?” Two basic reasons are discussed: To share enjoyment and to provide support. Three types of friendships are introduced: Acquaintances, Social Friends, Best Friends. Students individually complete an inventory of the characteristics they look for in these types of friends.
- Understanding Friendship 3 – Three influences on choosing friends are discussed: Proximity, similarity, and affirmation. A role play and student inventory are used to direct the discussion on choosing friends.
- Maintaining Friendships – Three qualities are discussed that help people form and maintain friendships: Optimism, respect, and trust. A role play, story, and worksheet help to reinforce the importance of these qualities in maintaining friendships.
- Handling Conflict with Friends 1 – This lesson shows that friends can disagree. The purpose of the lesson is to help students understand that all people have different perceptions but they need not ruin relationships. Optical illusions are used.
- Handling Conflict with Friends 2 – This lesson shows that friends can disagree. The purpose of the lesson is to help students understand that powerful perceptions can cause people to overlook the facts of a given situation. Wrong perceptions can ruin friendships.
- Handling Conflict with Friends 3 – This lesson highlights the most common cause of conflict among 6<sup>th</sup> Grade students: Words. This is done through a role play and follow-up discussion.
- Handling Conflict with Friends 4 – This lesson highlights the best way to handle a conflict: It all begins with listening. If we don’t hear what the other person is concerned about, then we can’t hope to address the cause of the problem. This lesson revolves around a role play and a handout entitled *Obstacles to Listening*.
- Handling Conflict with Friends 5 – This lesson focuses on positive ways to handle conflict with friends. A role play is used as well as a handout titled *Handling Conflict: A Positive Approach*. This handout gives 7 tips for handling a conflict with friends. The lesson concludes with a discussion about whether all conflict can be resolved and when it is appropriate to end a friendship.