

LESSON 1

OBJECTIVE

Students will:

- Use storytelling to practice verbal and non-verbal ways of being there.

MATERIALS

- Be There Reflecting Pool discussion questions (see Appendix)
- Graffiti Web Wall
- Colored markers
- FISH! video

TIME

25 minutes

INPUT/ACTIVITIES

Together with students, watch the Be There section of the FISH! video.

Reflecting Pool

Small Group Discussion:

“Connect with others by living in the moment and offering help.”

Divide the students into groups of three to five students and conduct small group discussions about the following concepts:

- In the video, Dick said, *“You’re here now. Do what you have to do.”* When do you feel you’re being there in the moment the most in your day? What keeps you from being fully present right here, right now? How might you benefit from being there more often either in or out of class?
- *“When you’re at work, have you noticed there are times when you drift off or sleep or daydream? You’ve got to pay attention to the time you’re not present here. I look back and think, ‘I missed somebody.’ It’s about who you are when you’re doing what you’re doing.”* Describe a time when you lost out on a golden opportunity by not being present and aware of what was going on around you. What was the effect on you? On those around you? What did you miss? Imagine what you might do differently next time.
- Rodger said, *“We acknowledge people when they walk by. We don’t ignore them.”* Why would you want to connect with others in the classroom? What might you get out of it? What might they get out of it? What can you do to acknowledge people’s interests, accomplishments, and creativity more often at school?
- J.P. said, *“That person who just asked me the same question someone else asked ten minutes ago doesn’t even know that [first] person. They are just honestly asking a question.”* People often lose their patience when asked to answer the same question over and over again. In the classroom, how could you Be There for both your classmates and teacher when they ask you a thoughtful question?
- How do questions relate to a healthy classroom? What conditions are needed for everyone to feel comfortable asking questions in the classroom?

Fact and Imagination Activity

Begin by explaining that this will be a test of observation and listening—really being there. Ask for two to four volunteer storytellers who are willing to tell a three- to five-minute fact or fiction story about themselves. Examples of topics

BE THERE

may include a time when they overcame something they thought they couldn't, a time when they got lost somewhere, a childhood accident, etc. It is recommended that you brainstorm with the class about what the topic of the true or imagined stories will be. Once an appropriate topic is agreed upon, give each storyteller a slip of paper that you have prepared. Only one slip should read "Pure Imagination"; all others should state "Factual Account." Inform the storytellers that regardless of what their slip of paper says, their job is to be as convincing as possible, offering as many specific, concrete details in their story as they can. It may be useful to give them a moment to collect their thoughts. Remind everyone that the power of a story lies in the details and being present in front of your audience.

Once the storytellers have stood up and told their stories one by one in front of the class and without class commentary until the very end, have the class debate and vote on who was telling a factual account and who was using their imagination. Discuss why they thought what they thought. Ask the listeners to try to recall the storytellers' specific words and actions. Ask the storytellers to describe what made things easy or hard to tell their story in front of everyone. Topics for discussion might include eye contact, body language, details, being in the moment, presence, awareness, etc.

EVALUATION

Graffiti Web Wall

In small groups, have students begin a graffiti wall of FISH! behaviors. Student webs can be creative and colorful as they create a banner of ways to live FISH! both in and out of the classroom. Start with FISH! in the middle (see the example on this page). Add this statement to the Graffiti Web Wall: "Things you can do in your life to Be There."

Have students add things to the Graffiti Web Wall that they can do to practice being there at school.

Example:

