

# ***Negotiating Conflicts with S.T.A.R.***

Lesson Objective:

Students will learn to recognize emotional responses during conflicts and practice resolving disagreements using the S.T.A.R. Strategy (Stop, Think, Act, Reflect).

Materials Needed:



- Copy of Chapter 14: Negotiating Conflicts with S.T.A.R.
- Paper and pencils
- S.T.A.R. Strategy Poster
- Scenario Cards for Role Play
- Home Connection Letter

Introduction to the Topic (10 minutes)

Greeting Outline:

- Welcome the children and have them sit in a circle (if applicable)
- Briefly discuss the concept of negotiating conflicts

## **Greeting and Circle Time Teacher Script**

### **1. Warm Welcome and Opening Discussion:**

- “Today, we’re going to explore how we can navigate conflicts with friends or teammates by using a strategy we’ve talked about before: the S.T.A.R. strategy. Disagreements happen—whether it’s about what to play at recess or how to work on a group project. The important thing is to handle these situations in a way that strengthens our relationships.”

### **2. Discussion Starter**

- “What do you usually do when you have a disagreement with someone? Do you think it’s easy or hard to come to an agreement?”
- “Does anyone know what negotiation means?”
- “Negotiation is when two or more people talk and listen to each other to find a solution that everyone can agree on.”
- “An example of negotiation might be two friends who both want to play different games at recess. One wants to play soccer, and the other wants to play basketball. They talk and decide to play soccer today and basketball tomorrow so both get a turn.”

- “Has anyone heard the phrase, ‘You have to give a little to get a little’?”
- Negotiation isn’t always easy, but it usually requires both sides to give in a bit so that each person can get some of what they want.

Read the Chapter (15 minutes)

Story Time Outline:



- Read Chapter 14 aloud.
- Ask questions during key parts of the story.

### Story Time Teacher Script:

#### 1. Prepare the Children for the Story:

- “Let’s read Chapter 14 from \*The Star Squad: Navigating Fifth Grade Adventures.\* In this chapter, Ollie and his friends experience a disagreement while working on a group project. As we read, listen for how they use the S.T.A.R. strategy to solve the problem.”

(Read the chapter aloud, pausing at key moments to ask questions and engage the children.)

#### 2. Read the Chapter with Emphasis on Key Moments.

**While reading,** pause during key moments.

#### Ask Questions:

- Why does the disagreement start among the friends?
- What idea does Harriet suggest for the skit?
- What does Buzz want to include in the project?
- Why is Betty concerned about the length of the skit?
- How does Maya help the group stop the argument?
- What does each friend share about why their idea is important?
- How do the friends decide to combine their ideas?
- How do the characters feel once they’ve reached a compromise?
- What emotions did the friends experience during the disagreement?
- Why does Bennie mention how his brain was predicting a negative outcome?

## Chapter 14: Negotiating Conflicts with S.T.A.R.

It was late January, and the fifth graders were busy working on a group project for the upcoming class presentation. The assignment was to create a skit that taught the other students about an important historical event. Ollie, Harriet, Bennie, Sammy, Buzz, Betty, and Maya had decided to make their skit about the civil rights movement. They were excited about the project, but as they worked on it, disagreements started to arise.

### *A Conflict Emerges*

The friends were gathered at Maya's house, brainstorming ideas. Harriet thought the skit should focus on a famous speech, while Buzz wanted to include a scene that showed how everyday people made a difference. Betty felt strongly about including songs from the time, and Bennie thought a slideshow of historical images would help set the mood.

As each person voiced their opinions, the conversation grew louder, and no one seemed to agree on the direction the skit should take. Harriet crossed her arms, frustrated. "We need to decide on something, or we'll never finish," she said.

Buzz, equally frustrated, replied, "But we don't have to pick just one idea. We could combine them."

"Then it'll be too long," Betty said, shaking her head.

Maya, noticing the tension, spoke up. "It seems like we're all getting stuck," she said. "What if we use the S.T.A.R. strategy to help us figure this out?"

### *Applying the S.T.A.R. Strategy*

The friends agreed to try using the S.T.A.R. strategy—\*\*Stop, Think, Act, Reflect\*\*—to navigate their disagreement.

**Stop:** Maya suggested that they take a break and each think about what was really important to them for the skit. "Let's all take a deep breath and pause for a moment," she said.

The group took a short break, which helped them calm down and gather their thoughts.

**Think:** As they regrouped, Ollie suggested they each share why their idea was important and consider how it could fit into the project. Harriet explained that she wanted to highlight a famous speech because it showed how words could inspire change. Buzz said he wanted to focus on ordinary people to show that anyone could make a difference. Betty thought music was important because it helped express the emotions of the time, and Bennie believed the images would add a visual impact to the skit.

The friends listened to one another, trying to understand each person's point of view.

**Act:** After hearing everyone's thoughts, the group brainstormed ways to combine the ideas in a balanced way. They decided that the skit could start with a slideshow of images, transition into a scene showing how people participated in the movement, and include a few lines from a famous speech. To add music, Betty suggested playing a song quietly in the background to set the mood during the slideshow.

Reflect: Once they had their plan, the friends reflected on how they had worked through the conflict. “At first, it felt like we’d never agree,” Harriet admitted. “But once we stopped arguing and listened to each other, it was easier to see how all our ideas could fit.”

Buzz nodded. “I’m glad we found a way to include everyone’s ideas. It’s going to make our skit even better.”

### *Understanding Emotions During Conflicts*

After resolving the disagreement, the friends talked about what they had learned. Maya reminded them about something Mr. Jenkins had taught in class: “Our brains often predict what’s going to happen based on past experiences, and that can affect how we react during conflicts.”

Harriet thought about this. “When we were all trying to share our ideas at the same time, my brain was predicting that no one would listen to me, so I got frustrated.”

Bennie added, “And my brain was predicting that if we didn’t include the slideshow, it wouldn’t have the impact I wanted. But once I heard everyone else’s ideas, I realized there were other ways to make it work.”

The group realized that by using the S.T.A.R. strategy, they could take control of their reactions and find a solution that worked for everyone. They saw that their initial emotional responses didn’t always match the reality of the situation, and stopping to think allowed them to make better decisions.

### *Moving Forward*

The next day at school, the friends were more prepared to work together. They put the final touches on their skit, feeling confident about what they had created. When it was time for their presentation, the whole class enjoyed the skit and complimented them on how well it captured different aspects of the civil rights movement.

As they left the classroom, Ollie said, “I’m glad we used the S.T.A.R. strategy to work through our disagreement. It helped us understand each other’s ideas better.”

Betty agreed. “It’s a good reminder that when we’re working with others, listening and finding a way to include everyone can make things stronger.”

The friends left school that day knowing they had not only created a meaningful skit but had also learned valuable lessons about negotiating conflicts and managing their emotions. And with every challenge they faced, they were growing closer, learning to work together as a team and navigate the ups and downs of relationships with care and respect.

### 3. Post-Chapter Teacher Script

- **Teacher:** “This story shows us how Ollie and his friends were able to use the S.T.A.R. Strategy to help them negotiate conflicts

### 4. Post-Chapter Questions

These questions encourage children to think deeply about what they listen to and to understand that they can use the S.T.A.R. Strategy in many different situations.

- Why was it important for each friend to express their ideas?
- How did the group benefit from using the S.T.A.R. strategy?
- What might have happened if they hadn’t taken a break to stop and think?
- How did listening to each other’s perspectives change the outcome?
- What role did emotions play in the conflict?
- How did understanding their emotions help the friends?
- Have you ever felt frustrated when your idea wasn’t accepted? How did you respond?
- Why is it important to reflect on how we handle disagreements?
- What other situations could the S.T.A.R. strategy be helpful in?
- How can you use what you learned today to handle future conflicts?

Do an Activity (20 minutes)

- Students will practice negotiating conflicts using the S.T.A.R. Strategy.



#### Activity: Social Cue Role-Play (20 minutes)

##### 1. Introduce Activity

- “Now, it’s your turn to practice using the S.T.A.R. strategy. Each group will act out a situation where there’s a disagreement. Your task is to use S.T.A.R. to work through the conflict. After your role-play, take a moment to reflect on what worked well and what you might do differently.”

##### 2. Instructions

- Divide students into pairs or small groups.
- Provide each group with a “scenario card” (see examples below).

- The students act out the conflict and use the S.T.A.R. Strategy to work through the problem and negotiate a solution.
- Groups switch roles and try a new scenario.

Closing Discussion (5 minutes):

### 3. Sharing



- After role-playing, discuss what students noticed about negotiating conflicts and how the S.T.A.R. strategy helped them.

### 4. Wrapping it Up

- “You did a fantastic job practicing the S.T.A.R. strategy today. It’s not always easy to handle conflicts, but when we take time to stop, think, and listen to each other, we can find solutions that work for everyone.”

Wrap Up the Lesson (5 minutes)

#### 1. Review and Reflection Overview:

- Have students reflect on possible misunderstandings as a consequence of misreading social cues.

### Review and Reflection Teacher Script

#### 1. Gather in a Circle for Reflection:



- “Let’s all come back together in a circle.”
- "Negotiating a conflict and trying to find solutions that make everyone happy can be tough."
- “What’s one thing you learned today about handling disagreements? How can you use what you learned in other areas of your life?”
- Encourage students to use the S.T.A.R. Strategy when conflicts arise throughout the year.

## 2. Closing

- “Great job today practicing your negotiation skills and trying to solve conflicts peacefully. I think if we use the S.T.A.R. Strategy when conflicts arise, we might find that we deal with these situations more effectively.”

## Home Connection Letter

### 1. Sending Information Home:

- “Before you go, I have a letter for you to take home. It explains that we learned about negotiating conflict and how to use the S.T.A.R. Strategy when trying to solve problems peacefully.”
- Hand out the letters as the children prepare to leave.

## Parent Letter

### Sending Information Home:

- Provide each child with a letter to take home to their parents explaining the lesson.

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

Today, your child participated in a lesson focused on navigating conflicts using the **\*\*S.T.A.R. strategy\*\*** (Stop, Think, Act, Reflect). During the lesson, students read a chapter from *\*The Star Squad: Navigating Fifth Grade Adventures\** and explored how characters resolved a disagreement. Through role-play activities, they practiced managing emotions and working toward solutions collaboratively.

We encourage you to ask your child about what they learned. You might ask:

- What did you learn about the S.T.A.R. strategy?
- How can you use it the next time you have a disagreement?
- What was the most important thing you learned today?

Learning to manage disagreements helps students develop skills like empathy, communication, and teamwork.



Thank you for supporting your child in building these valuable skills!

With Gratitude,



# ***S.T.A.R. Strategy***



**Stop** -Take some deep breaths.

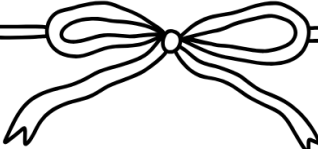
**Think** -What solutions are there?

**Act** -Pick the best solution.

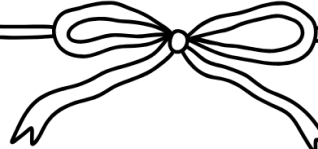
**Reflect** -How did it go?



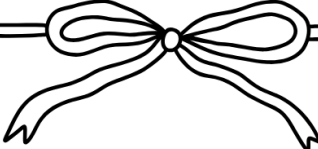
©2025 Anna-Lisa Mackey, M.Ed., All rights reserved.



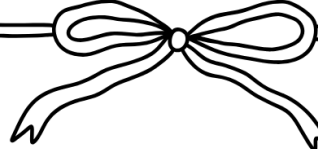
**Your group is assigned a project, but everyone has different ideas about the topic. One person wants to do it on space exploration, another on ancient civilizations, and another on ocean life. No one can agree, and time is running out to start the project.**



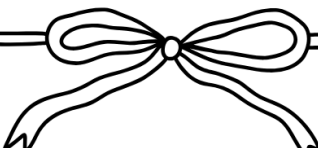
**You and your friends can't decide what to play during recess. Some want to play soccer, others want to play tag, and one person wants to read quietly. Everyone is getting frustrated because they don't want to miss their chance to have fun.**



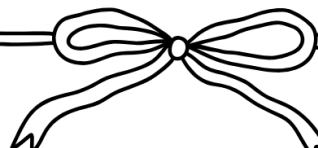
**During a group presentation, one student keeps interrupting others and trying to take over. The other group members feel frustrated because they don't get a chance to share their parts of the presentation.**



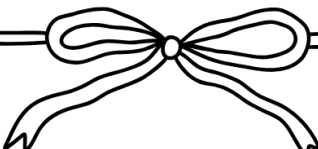
**Two students want to use the same set of art supplies at the same time. One wants the markers, and the other wants to use the colored pencils. Both are upset and refusing to share, making it hard to finish their projects.**



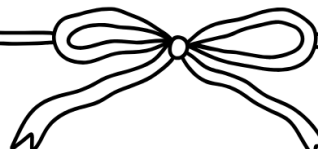
**At lunchtime, two students argue over who gets to sit in a particular seat at the table. One student says they always sit there, but the other wants to sit with friends too. Neither student wants to move, and the disagreement is getting louder.**



**Your class is putting on a play, and several students want the same role. Each person feels they are the best fit for the part, and no one wants to compromise. Tensions are rising, and the teacher asks your group to work it out.**



**Your group is planning a surprise birthday card for a friend, but each person has a different idea of what should be included. One person wants to add jokes, another wants to make it serious, and someone else wants to include a drawing. The disagreement is slowing down progress.**



**Two students need to share a tablet for a class project, but one student keeps using it longer than their fair share. The other student is feeling frustrated but doesn't want to cause a scene.**