

Navigating the Island of Aggression

Lesson 1: Warning Aggression

Key concepts:

- Warning aggression is used to avoid violence.
- Warning aggression usually precedes the fight or flight response.

Learning Outcomes:

- Students identify different forms warning aggression.
- Students differentiate warning aggression from hostile aggression.

Profile of Graduate Standards:

- Upper Elementary, Global Citizenship: 3) I express a personal perspective on a situation, event or issue.
- Upper Elementary, Social and Cross Cultural Empathy: (4.1) I identify how perspectives affect the way different people react to a situation, event or issue.
- Middle School, Critical Problem Solving: (4) I consider advantages and disadvantages to my chosen method for solving a problem (4.1) I understand that there may be alternative answers, approaches and strategies.

Materials:

- Laptop, Chromebook, or iPad
- Projector or other way to display a digital slideshow
- Slides and digital exit ticket available at peaceliteracy.org/navigation-curricular-materials

Vocabulary:

- aggression
- warning aggression or posturing
- hostile aggression

Lesson Procedure:

1. **Show slide 1.**
2. **Show slide 2.** “Imagine a bear and a pack of wolves facing off over food in the forest. What do you think will happen? Who will eat first? How will it be decided?”
Allow for student responses.
3. **Play Video** by clicking on the image of the bear and wolves.
4. **Questions** for students:
 - a. What happened?
 - b. Why did the bear walk away?

Lesson 1: Warning Aggression, continued

5. **Questions** for students, continued (Allow for responses):

- c. What kinds of behaviors did you see in the bear? In the wolves?
- d. How was their behavior different from physical fighting?
- e. If it wasn't fighting, what was the purpose of the behavior?
For example, why did the bear growl and charge?

6. **Show slide 3.** "We call this behavior *warning aggression* or *posturing*." (This slide has animation. Show the word, then hit the spacebar to bring up the definition)

Definition: "Warning aggression is when animals make noise or try to appear larger in order to frighten away a threat. Warning aggression is also called 'posturing.'"

Question: Why do animals prefer to posture rather than fight?

Explanation: "Animals posture in order to avoid injury. There are no hospitals in the wild!"

7. **Show slide 4.** More on warning aggression.

This slide has animation. Show the word, then hit the spacebar to bring up the definition.

Definition: "Warning aggression is aggression that is designed to threaten and frighten in order to *avoid* violence. This is why aggression and violence are not always the same thing.

The most common form of aggression in nature is warning aggression, which is trying to *prevent* violence."

8. **Questions** for students:

- a. Can you think of how a cat postures? **Slide 5**
- b. How does a dog posture? **Slide 6**
- c. How about a rattlesnake? **Slide 7**

9. **Question** for students:

- a. If we see an animal posturing, but ignore the warning, the animal has two options. What are those two options?

Digital exit ticket:

- 1. What is warning aggression (posturing)?
- 2. What are 3 examples of warning aggression?

Navigating the Island of Aggression

Activity 1: Warning Aggression

Key Concepts:

Humans use warning aggression (posturing) when they are in distress and want to avoid violence.

Learning Outcomes:

- Students list examples of humans displaying warning aggression (posturing).
- Students identify how perspectives affect the way different people react to a situation, event, or issue.

Portrait of Graduate Profile/Standard:

- Upper Elementary, Global Citizenship: 3) I express a personal perspective on a situation, event or issue.
- Upper Elementary, Social and Cross Cultural Empathy: (4.1) I identify how perspectives affect the way different people react to a situation, event, or issue.
- Middle School, Critical Problem Solving: (4) I consider advantages and disadvantages to my chosen method for solving a problem (4.1) I understand that there may be alternative answers, approaches and strategies.

Materials:

- Notebook or paper and a pen or pencil
- Laptop, Chromebook, or iPad
- Slides, available at [.peaceliteracy.org/navigation-curricular-materials](https://www.peaceliteracy.org/navigation-curricular-materials)
- Projector or other way to display a digital slideshow

Vocabulary:

- aggression
- warning aggression
- posturing

Lesson Procedure:

1. **Show slide 1.** Title Slide.
2. **Questions** for students:
 - a. What is the purpose of warning aggression?
3. **Show slide 2.** Definition
4. “Today we will be looking a little more deeply into warning aggression.”

Activity 1:

Warning Aggression, Continued

Lesson Procedure, continued:

5. **Questions** for students:
 - a. Do human beings posture?
 - b. What are some ways that human posture?
6. **Show slide 3.**
 - a. What could be considered posturing in these pictures.
 - b. Why do you think these people are posturing?

Activity:

1. **Group students** in pairs or small groups to make the following lists:
 - a. List as many ways as you can think of that people posture.
 - b. List as many different situations as you can think of in which people might feel the need to posture.
2. **Regroup students** and share lists.
3. **Questions** for students:
 - a. How might different people respond differently to the same situation?
Note for teachers: some examples are: People with different experiential backgrounds, or different expectations placed on them. (Gender roles, pressure to not lose face...)
 - b. Think of a situation in which one person may feel the need to posture while another person may not feel the need to posture.
 - c. Can you imagine an example of how a person's mood could affect whether or not they respond with warning aggression.
 - d. How can a person's mood affect their perspective and how they respond?