

Intent vs. Impact: Why Does it Matter?

Compelling Question: Why should we prioritize impact over intent?

Grade Level		Time	Common Core Standards
K-2	3-5	45- 60 minutes	Reading, Writing Speaking and Listening, Language
6-12			

LESSON OVERVIEW

The lesson is to guide students to understand how the intent of their actions can cause harmful impact for someone else or another group. We have to worked to understand that despite our intent, our words or actions can negatively affect someone else and emotionally hurt them. We need to do better as a group of people and recognize the impact of our words/actions, regardless of intent.

MODIFICATIONS

In Part One, Teachers can differentiate by student readiness and ability to engage in the discourse regarding the topics. There are a couple of ways to convey information in part one. Teachers can choose to use the Kyrie Irving suspension as a springboard to conversation, utilize anecdotal situations they have had to address as a whole class either this year or past years, or show video of American Teens who face Antisemitism. Teachers should avoid using actual present or past student names.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Students will understand the difference between "intent" and "impact" in communication.
- Students will reflect on their thoughts, feelings and experiences about the disconnect between intent and impact and the extent to which "words matter."
- Students will gain skills in being able to more effectively consider impact over intent in communicating with others.

AGENDA

Part One: Information Sharing: What is Intent and Impact? Teachers may choose one of the options in this section based on the knowledge of the class and the ability to convey the objective of Intent v Impact.

Teacher Choice 1....Kyrie Irving...Antisemitism

Prior to the lesson, teachers will review the timeline of events regarding the Kyrie Irving situation. The teachers use this information for talking points, not for the students to read.

[Timeline of the Kyrie Irving Controversy](#)

Kyrie Irving, professional basketball player on the Brooklyn Nets has been in the news recently due to what is consider an endorsement of an Anti-Semitic (Anti-Jewish) 2018 film. Irving has faced backlash because in many peoples' eyes, he failed to provide a suitable explanation or take ownership of his words.

Since the Tweet, Kyrie Irving has faced a lot of backlash from his post. He was asked to apologize and at first was criticized because he didn't do an adequate job apologizing. He was then temporarily suspended from the NBA and Nike temporarily stopped endorsing him. Recently Kyrie was reinstated into the NBA after others felt he gave a genuine apology.

1. Ask students: *What have you heard about Kyrie Irving and his tweet or suspension?* Allow several students to share what they know or heard. Have students read the lesson overview and see Kyrie Irving's Tweet (Will be posted on the Buidling Better Bulldog webpage
2. Explain the root of the October 2022 controversy involving Kyrie Irving and the feeling that he issued an antisemitic endorsement. Summarize the information for the students:

- Kyrie Irving, professional basketball player on the Brooklyn Nets has been in the news recently due to what is consider an endorsement of an Anti-Semitic (Anti-Jewish) 2018 film. Irving has faced backlash because in many peoples' eyes, he failed to provide a suitable explanation or take ownership of his words.
3. Share some key ideas from the timeline of events surrounding Kyrie Irving's situation. After the students watch two perspectives, they will view actual the Tweet
- Check out various opinions on the Irving Situation
 - i. [Good Morning America News Report of the Situation](#)
 - ii. [Jaylen Brown, vice president of the player's union responds to Kyrie Irving's suspension.](#)
 - Define **Antisemitism**- hostility to or prejudice against Jewish people.



- After seeing the overview and the tweet, engage in a discussion with the student based on preplanned questions

Some pre-planned questions could be

- What is happening here?
- In what ways is Kyrie Irving's post harmful or offensive?

- What does Irving say about his post as intentional or unintentional?
- Were people harmed by his words even though he didn't mean to offend.

OR

Teacher Choice 2...Reflecting on Jokes in Class about One's Identity, Race, Ability, Religion

- 1a. Using examples from past class discussions or interventions, discuss times in class when our intent was to joke with someone, but it ended up insulting or hurting someone based on their identity, race, ability, or religion. Provide specific examples that you've addressed in class or from passed years wish you had (without student names)

OR

- 1b. Show the students the following video how some American teens who are Jewish feel toward antisemitism.

[CBS News "Jewish teens discuss personal encounters with antisemitism in school and online"](#)

To Do for both 1a and 1b.

2. Go over the following terms:
 - a. **Antisemitism**- hostility to or prejudice against Jewish people.
 - b. **Microaggression**- Microaggressions are the everyday slights, insults, putdowns, invalidations, and offensive behaviors that people experience in daily interactions with generally well-intentioned individuals who may be unaware that they have engaged in demeaning ways.
3. After discussing some of the events in class provide opportunities for reflection as a whole class.

Some pre-planned questions could be

- What happened in those situations?
- In what ways were some of the things that were said or acted upon in class harmful or offensive?

- What was our initial response if the situation was intentional or not?
 - Were people harmed by the words or actions even though the one who said it didn't mean to offend anyone?
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To Do for both Teacher Choice 1 and Teacher Choice 2

4. Then ask: *When we are communicating with others, what do we mean by the **impact** of our words?* Elicit/explain that impact means how those words or actions are experienced, felt or understood by either the person they are directed to, or others.
5. Go over the following terms
 - a. Intent-is what you hope to accomplish through words or actions.
 - b. Impact-is how a person or community feels about those words or actions
6. Explain to students that sometimes there is a disconnect between what someone means to say and how their words impact or are experienced by others. Sometimes this is because the words or tweets or endorsements the person using may not know how it will offend.
7. Engage students in a whole class discussion or put students into groups by asking some or all of following questions as the teacher circulates around the room:
 - a. Have you ever had an experience when your words didn't convey what you meant to say, or they harmed others? What happened and how did you feel?
 - b. Have you ever been on the other side of this type of interaction where language directed at you (or your identity group) caused harm even though that wasn't the intention? What happened and how did you feel?
 - c. What happens when your intent doesn't match the impact your words have on another person?
 - d. How can you better match your impact with your intent?

Part Two. Here I Am Activity

To Do for both Teacher Choice 1 and 2 from Part One

1. Explain to students that in the "Here I Am" activity, they will explore their thoughts and feelings about this topic. Explain that they will listen to statements and decide to what extent they agree or disagree with the statement. Then, based on their opinion about each statement, students will fill out the Microsoft Form (Strongly Agree, Agree, In Between/Not Sure, Disagree)

2. Read each statement below and indicate these will be the questions on the Survey

Survey #1

Intent v Impact Questionnaire: Agree or Disagree

Click on the link above to access the questionnaire

- A. When you didn't mean anything by what you said or posted, you don't have to justify your intent.
 - B. It's impossible to really know what impact your words will have on others.
 - C. You can't hurt someone with your words.
 - D. It's important to think about impact, but it's really hard to do in the moment.
 - E. I have hurt or harmed people with my words and wish I could learn how not to.
 - F. Words matter.
3. Review the Survey and then have the students discuss some of the answers. Consider showing the students the pie charts and results of the survey. Survey will encompass feelings from the whole school
 4. Implement a second survey that provides some more reflection as to why the students responded the way they did to the first survey.

Survey #2...This survey is more open ended

Intent v Impact Survey: Evaluate what you learned.

Click on the link above to access the survey

- A. Was it easy or difficult to decide where to position yourself? Were some statements easier to decide and some more difficult?
 - B. What did you learn about yourself? What did you learn about others?
 - C. Was there anything said that changed or challenged your previous thinking? Please explain.
 - D. Have you shifted your opinion during or after the activity? Please explain.
 - E. What is needed moving forward for our school community?
5. Have the students share out as they feel comfortable, whether whole class or in groups.

Part III. Closing Reflection

To Do for both Teacher Choice 1 and 2 from Parts One and Two

Discuss the following Reflection Ideas “Acknowledging Impact” with the students prior to the end of class. This will be on the BHMS Webpage so you can post on the board. We will be making posters of this document for the halls. Please let us know if you would like one for your classroom.

*See Next Page



ACKNOWLEDGING IMPACT

1. Resist the urge to say "I didn't mean that" or "I was just joking" or "You're over-reacting."

2. If the person shares why it was harmful, listen with the goal to understand and show empathy, not to defend or explain yourself.

3. Center the discussion on the feelings or experiences of the person who was harmed-- not yourself or your intentions.

4. Acknowledge or apologize for the impact your words or actions had on the person

5. Learn from your mistake and do better. However it is not the person who you offended responsibility to teach you.

6. Take responsibility for your own learning and harmful language. Reflect, Read, Watch, Listen



Common Core Anchor Standards

CONTENT AREA/STANDARD
Reading
R1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text. R2: Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
Writing
W3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details and well-structured event sequences.
Speaking and Listening
SL1: Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. SL2: Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally. SL3: Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.
Language
L4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate. L6: Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression.

CASEL's SEL Competencies

COMPETENCIES
Self-Awareness: The abilities to understand one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior across contexts.
Social Awareness: The abilities to understand the perspectives of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds, cultures, & contexts.
Relationship Skills: The abilities to establish and maintain healthy and supportive relationships and to effectively navigate settings with diverse individuals and groups.
Responsible Decision-Making: The abilities to make caring and constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions across diverse situations.