



MINNESOTA  
JUDICIAL  
BRANCH



# ***RESOLVING CONFLICTS***

**A Lesson Plan**

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# About the Lesson



## Objectives:

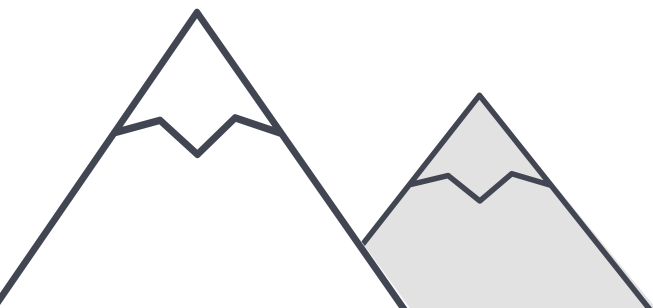
- To learn the mediation process for resolving conflict.
- To learn the courts' role of resolving conflicts peacefully.

### In-Person Activity Format:

Role play, classroom discussion

### Virtual Format:

Story-telling, student participation, class discussion





## Teaching Prompts

Please see the notations on each slide to assist you in guiding the dialogue.



Why are we here?



4 Steps



Tell the story



Participation &  
Discussion



# Why are we here today?

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- The Judicial Branch is one-third of our government in Minnesota. In courtrooms, judges help people resolve their disagreements peacefully. There are several ways of resolving arguments.
- Today, you are going to learn one way.
- But first, how many of you like to play on the playground? Have any of you had any problems on the playground? *[Elicit several responses.]*
- When you have problems, how do you solve them? *[Listen to several responses.]*
- I am going to share with you a special way to solve problems. It's called mediation. *[Write the word "mediation" on the board or click to next slide.]*
- A lot of people solve their problems this way with the help of a third person. Sometimes that third person is a judge.





# MEDIATION



## 4 Steps of Resolving Conflict

- The first is the introduction. Can everyone think about what it's like to shake hands? This is when we try to make everyone feel at ease. Remember, the mediator does not make the decisions. The mediator only helps the people with a problem agree on their own solution.
- The next step is telling the story. We can show this step by making talking gestures with our hands. *[Make talking gestures with your hand, as if it were a puppet.]* Everyone gets to tell their side of the story without interruptions from others.
- The third step is brainstorming solutions. Everyone touch your head to show this step, which is when we come up with ideas of how to solve the problem.
- And the final step is reaching an agreement. We show this by giving a “thumbs up” sign.





# REVIEW



1. Introduction (handshake)



2. Telling the Story (talking)



3. Brainstorming ideas (touching head)



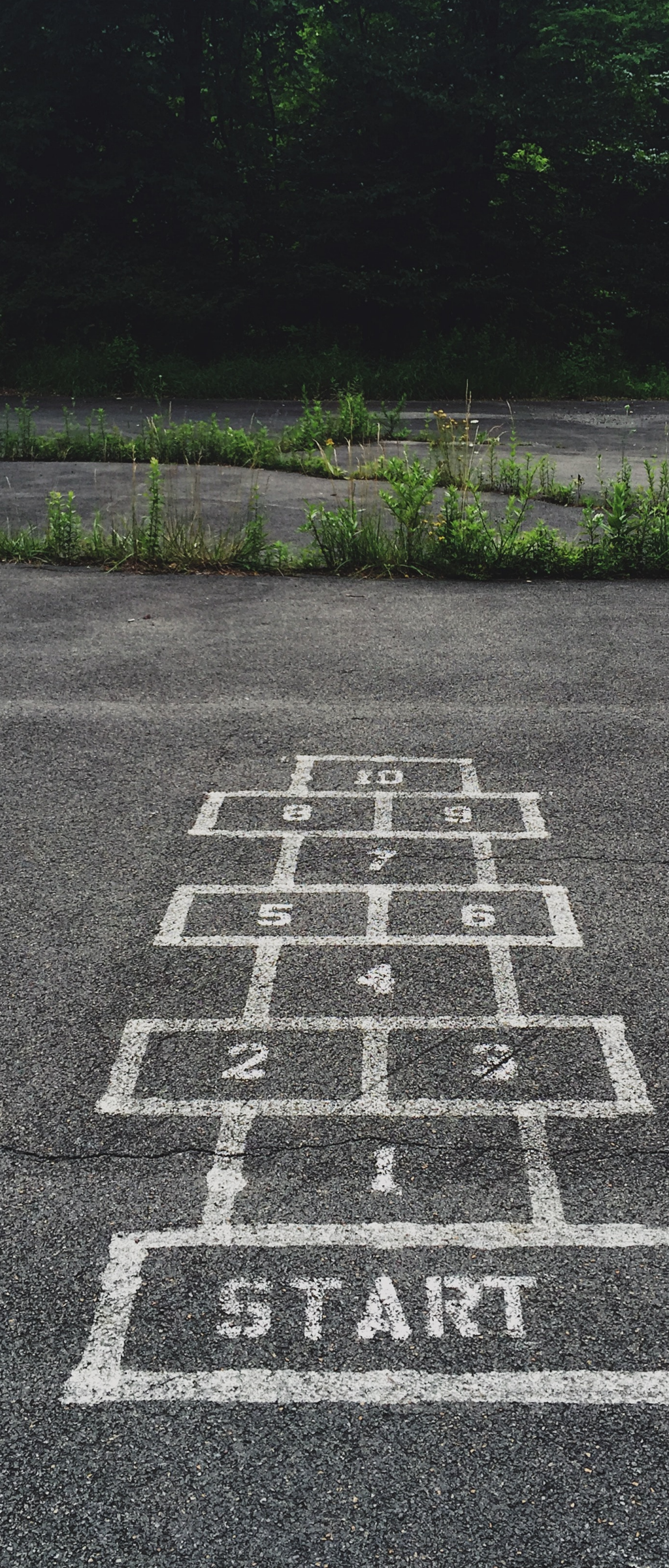
4. Reaching agreement (thumbs up)

**... Now, back to the playground**



## Playground Story

Two children were playing on the playground at recess. Pretty soon another child came along and asked to play. The two children said, “No! We don’t want to play with you.” The little child who was left out cried and cried.





# Role Play or Participate

*In-person volunteers, Virtual class participation*

First, remember the story.



Let's begin with the first step,  
the INTRODUCTION

[To volunteers or virtual class]:

Hello, my name is  
Judge \_\_\_\_\_.

What are your names?

It seems like you have a  
problem here.

Would you like me to help?





# Role Play or Participate

*In-person volunteers, Virtual class participation*

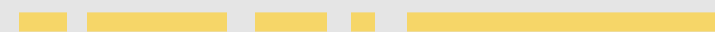
What's the next step?



TELLING THE STORY

I'd like each person to tell his/her side of the story without anyone else interrupting. Everyone will get an equal chance.

*Allow students to tell their story.*





# Role Play or Participate

*In-person volunteers, Virtual class participation*

The Next step is



## BRAINSTORMING

Can anyone give me an idea about how to solve the conflict?

*Suggested questions are: "What would have to happen for you to feel better about this? How could we solve this problem?"*





# DISCUSSION

- Could this situation ever happen on your playground?
- How do you think the children felt?
- Was this a good thing to happen?
- How could we solve this problem?



# Role Play or Participate

*In-person volunteers, Virtual class participation*

And, the final step?



## REACHING AGREEMENT

Students should find agreed upon resolutions.

*Help the students find a compromise to resolve the dispute.*



# CONGRATULATIONS



By following the four steps, you have successfully completed **MEDIATION**.

This process is very much like how judges help people solve their differences.

The next time you have a conflict, try your skills at **MEDIATION!**





## More Information

For more information about the  
Minnesota Judicial Branch and the role  
of judges, please visit  
[www.mncourts.gov](http://www.mncourts.gov).

