

The Pillars of Friendship: A Sorting Challenge

Learning objective: To understand the qualities that contribute to healthy, positive, and supportive friendships, and to distinguish these from less helpful behaviors.

Below is a list of behaviors and attitudes. Sort them into two categories: 'The Pillars of a Strong Friendship' (behaviors that build trust and kindness) and 'The Friendship Weeds' (behaviors that can make a friendship difficult). Once you have sorted them, use your critical thinking skills to answer the deeper questions about why these traits impact our relationships.

Word bank: Active listening · Constant gossiping · Encouraging others · Taking turns · Being bossy · Sharing honestly · Excluding people · Forgiving mistakes · Laughing at someone · Showing empathy

1. Choose one 'Pillar' and one 'Weed' from the word bank. Compare and contrast how these two behaviors might affect how a friend feels after spending time with you. (4 marks)

2. Explain why 'Active listening' is considered a fundamental skill in maintaining a healthy friendship. What might happen if a friend never felt truly heard? (3 marks)

3. Justify your decision: Why is 'Forgiving mistakes' placed in the Pillars category rather than the Weeds category? Is it ever possible for a mistake to become a positive learning opportunity? (3 marks)

4. Max the monkey is trying to solve a friendship puzzle. He says, 'Friendship is just like a math equation: Kindness + Trust = A Strong Bond.' Do you agree with this formula? Explain your reasoning. (3 marks)

5. What might happen to a friendship group if someone consistently displays 'Excluding people'? How could you, as a brave and kind friend, intervene to make the group more inclusive? (3 marks)

6. If you had £10 to spend on a surprise activity to celebrate a friend's achievement, describe what you would do and why this gesture strengthens your connection. (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a 'Friendship Tree'. On the roots, write the qualities that hold a friendship together (the Pillars). On the leaves, draw scenes of you and your friends engaging in these positive behaviors.



Extension challenge: Write a short, reflective poem in the style of Leo the Lion about what it means to be a 'loyal friend'. Focus on the importance of reliability and empathy, and consider how a good friend acts even when things become challenging.