

Cool Chat Discussion Ideas

A cool chat involves reading a story with your girls to open up discussion about a behavior/issue that is affecting your troop.

How does it work?

As you read the story, find places to pause that provide opportunities for group discussion. Allow girls to share how experiences in their life are similar to what the characters in the story are experiencing. Girls can share their feelings and learn how their actions (or nonactions) can make a difference for themselves and others.

What ages are Cool Chats appropriate for?

Girls of all ages enjoy listening to a story that relates to them personally. If the reader is enthusiastic and incorporates story telling skills, the readers are drawn into the story. For great read out loud tips check out:

<http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/article/teaching-techniques-reading-aloud-artfully>

Where can I find books that are good to use with Cool Chats?

Listed below are some stories around common themes that girls experience. Another good resource is the website, "A Mighty Girl," which sells books, toys, and games geared towards girls: <http://www.amightygirl.com/books/personal-development/lifechallenges>

Note: the above websites are suggested resources. Girl Scouts of Central Texas does not endorse either site.

If you need help discussing a specific topic with your girls or need additional resources, please email customercare@gstx.org for support. Do you have a great book that would work well for a Cool Chat? Please let us know at customercare@gstx.org.

Bad Case of Stripes (All about being yourself.) by David Shannon

- Have you had to decide something at least 42 times?
- What other times, beside the first day of school, make you nervous? How many of you were nervous your first day of camp?
- Have you ever felt embarrassed? What made you feel that way?
- If you were in this situation, what could you do to make yourself feel better?
- What was the real cause of this to happen? Have you ever had a time you were afraid to be yourself?

The Recess Queen (Bullies) by Alexis O'Neill

- Why do you think Jean was so mean?
- How do you think the other kids felt about Jean? How did they treat her?
- What did the new girl do that was different?
- Why do you think Jean stopped trying to bully Katie Sue?
- How can you use what you learned in this story to help you with your friends?

Elmer (Being ok with being different.) by David McKee

- Why do you think all of the elephants were sad when Elmer was gray?
- Why was Elmer so important to the herd?
- Why is it important to be yourself?
- Do you think Elmer should have changed himself to fit in? Why?
- Have you ever changed yourself to fit in?

Tacky the Penguin (Being ok with being different.) by Helen Lester

- How would you feel if you were Tacky? Why?
- What would you do if you were one of the perfect penguins and you had a friend like Tacky?
- Would you rather be a perfect penguin or Tacky? Why?
- What made Tacky different from the perfect penguins?
- Why did the hunters leave?
- What would you do if the big, scary hunters came to your home?

Stand Tall Molly Lou Melon (Being happy about who you are.) by Patty Lovell

- Did Molly Lou Melon do the right thing by standing up for herself and not letting Ronald bully her?
- Do you think it was right for Ronald Durkin to bully others?
- How should Ronald Durkin change his attitude?
- What would you do if you saw someone being bullied?
- Why did Molly Lou not get upset that Ronald was being a bully? How did her grandmother help her feel about herself?
- Have you ever been in a situation where you had to deal with a bully? What advice helped you?

Don't Laugh at Me (Respecting different abilities.) by Steve Seskin and Allen Shamblin

- Do you know anyone who has different abilities than you? If you do, how do they deal with the challenges they face?
- What do you think it feels like to be different?
- What would be a positive way to help someone with disabilities be included in the group?
- Why is it not ok to make fun of someone who is different than you?
- Have you ever made fun of someone who was different than you (or know someone who made fun of someone else?) What could you have done differently?

Click Clack Moo-Cows That Type (Working together on a cause.) by Doreen Cronin

- What is the story about?
- Why were the cows successful?
- Why were the ducks successful?
- What does the story tell us about teamwork?
- Is this a way to deal with our problems?
- How might this type of situation occur at camp?
- How would you deal with it?

Hooway For Wodney Wat (Learning to accept others for who they are.) by Helen Lester

- What is the story about?
- How did Wodney feel at the beginning of the story?
- How did he feel at the end?
- How did the other students behave?
- How would you feel if you were Wodney?
- Why is Priscilla's behavior unacceptable?
- How would you feel if this happened at camp?
- How can make sure it doesn't happen?

Armadillo Tattletale (Tattling) by Helen Ketteman

- Do you feel bad for Armadillo? Why or why not?
- Why did Armadillo tattle so much?
- How do you feel about how the other animals behaved when Armadillo tattled on them?
- What would you do if you heard other people talking about someone?
- How do you feel about what Alligator did to Armadillo? What could she have done differently?
- Is it ok to tell on some one? Why or why not? (Tattling is when you try to get someone in trouble, Telling is if you are trying to help someone who is hurt/being hurt)

Other books that are great to use for Cool Chats:

- My Secret Bully, I'm sorry, Just Kidding - all by Trudy Ludwig - there are discussion questions in the back of the book.
- A Porcupine Named Fluffy - all about feeling like you don't fit in
- Chrysanthemum - all about a little girl who is bullied about her name.
- Angel Child, Dragon Child - all about a Chinese immigrant girl who deals with being angry on the inside but having to be nice on the outside.
- Lorretta Ace Pinky Scout - All about a girl who does almost everything perfect. (Learning it's ok not be perfect!)
- Why Do Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears - all about what happens when you tell tales.