

Uncover Reasons for the Disagreement (Elementary)

Have you ever said something to a friend, and they became really upset even though you didn't mean for that to happen? Maybe someone said something to you and didn't realize how hurtful it was. There are many reasons why a conflict happens, and it's often because of miscommunication and misunderstanding. When we miscommunicate, we say or do something that we don't really mean, or our words and actions come out differently than how we intended. Sometimes another person misunderstands our intentions.

Miscommunication and misunderstandings happen when we don't listen to each other or when we don't understand each other. When this happens, it can cause a disagreement. You can use the strategy ***uncover reasons for the disagreement*** to think about why a disagreement may have happened. You start by thinking about exactly what happened and where there may have been a misunderstanding. You think about your own words or actions and ask yourself, "What did I say and do that could have been confusing?" "What did they say and do which I may have understood wrong?" and "Is there another way to look at this?"

I used the strategy ***uncover reasons for the disagreement*** when I couldn't understand why my sister was so upset with me for borrowing her camera. Our class was going on a field trip to the aquarium, and I wanted to take pictures. Before leaving, I left a note on my sister's door that I had borrowed her camera. When I got home, she was upset with me and yelled, "I don't like when you borrow my things. You're so irresponsible!" She yanked the camera out of my hands and slammed the door in my face. I was so hurt by her actions I felt tears in my eyes. I couldn't understand why she would be so upset.

I decided to take a few breaths and use the strategy ***uncover reasons for the disagreement*** to determine why the disagreement had happened. I said to my sister, "I left a note explaining that I had borrowed the camera. Is there something going on that I don't understand? Was my note confusing?" She explained that she had read the note, but last year when I borrowed her soccer ball, I had lost it, and she was afraid I would lose or break her new camera too. I understood why she was upset, and I explained that I was very careful with the camera because I knew she was still frustrated that I had lost the soccer ball. She apologized for raising her voice and said that she would try to be more trusting the next time I needed to borrow something of hers.

You can use the strategy ***uncover reasons for the disagreement*** anytime you don't understand why a disagreement has happened. ***Uncovering reasons for the disagreement*** will help you think about what happened and where misunderstandings might have occurred.