

# The Third Side Conflict Resolution Activity- Ending the Conflict Between Palestine and Israel

By Craig Angus

**Introduction** -The Third Side Conflict Resolution Activity is a an opportunity for students to learn and practice a wide variety of skills and abilities including public speaking, debate, listening, thinking on your feet, note taking, working in groups, questioning and reflecting. In addition it is one last opportunity to think about the things you learned from your study of the conflict between Palestine and Israel.

## **Procedure:**

**1. Prepare Your Argument** - Most of the work for this step was done when you read the text, the other short readings we have done and during your I-search Project. You will be meeting as a group and preparing an opening statement and your whole argument. You will be given one class period to do this. One group will be advocating the position of the Palestine, one will argue the position of Israel and one group will speak on behalf of the Third Side, or "the community itself, in the form of neighboring countries, relatives, and friends - innocents who will no doubt be adversely affected by your decision to fight a war - acting as third parties to facilitate the prevention and resolution of conflict. For this step you will be working in your big group with only people who are like-minded.

**2. Opening Statements** - Each team will devise an opening statement that you feel strongly expresses your position. Individuals from each team will join up with single member of the other teams, with each small team consisting of an Israeli, a Palestinian and a Third Sider. . Each person will make an opening statement similar to a lawyer's opening statement given during a trial. Each side will have two minutes to make this statement. Other members of these new teams should take good notes during opening statements. Third Siders must specifically state who they are in their statements. Each person should have a typed opening statement.

**3. Whole Argument** - Each person has three to five minutes to present his or her whole argument. This should be similar to the body of an essay. You should be making all the main points of your argument and giving evidence to support your claims. This step is similar to the Opening Statement but should be fleshed out with detail. You should also consider you opponents opening statements in formulating your whole argument. Other members of these new teams should take good notes during whole arguments. Each person should have a typed whole argument.

**4. Rebuttal and Challenges** - There will be a five minute period to prepare questions to ask to opposition. You should reconvene with your original groups to formulate your rebuttals and arguments. The intent of these questions is to put holes in their argument and to refute what they have claimed. Following the five-minute break each member will have three to five minutes to question the other sides. Type up your rebuttal and challenge questions.

**5. Clarification From Third Siders** - Third Siders will have three to five minutes to question each side for the purpose of clarification. These questions should also be typed up.

**6. Compromise and Resolve** - Your write up on compromise and resolve will be in four parts. **The role of mediator and arbiter will be played by the third side.** By this point each side should understand the position of the other sides. Palestine and Israel, with encouragement and coaching from the Third Side will compromise and resolve their differences. Knowing that compromise can be arrived at through the use of a **Mediator** who will bring the two sides together for the purpose of facilitating communication and searching for a solution, you must develop a plan for utilizing a **mediator**. Remember that a **mediator** does not take a side, they only keep the dialog going and advise you that it is your best interests to setting the dispute without going any further into the process. You must also develop a plan for using an **arbiter**, in case mediation does not work. An **Arbiter** will determine the disputed rights and develop a plan for replacing destructive conflict and for encouraging justice and negotiation. In this case **arbitration** is binding and each side agrees to accept the decision of the arbitrator. If this doesn't work you must have a

plan for inviting an **equalizer** into the mix. The **equalizer** will help bring the powerful to the table because he (or she) has some sway over the competing parties. You must choose someone who is agreeable to all three sides. It is important the **Equalizer** also support non-violent action. Finally a **Healer** must be included in the process. Choose someone in today's world who is renowned for his or her work as a healer of world problems, i.e. Jimmy Carter, Nelson Mandela, Desmond Tutu. Please type up this step. Your write-up on this step should include your description of what you think these things are and how the process went in your group.

**7. Containment** - Each small group will write up a plan for containment. Containment must follow the lines of chapter seven in The Third Side and must include a plan to include **witnesses, referees and peacemakers**. **Witnesses** must have a plan for detecting escalation, for identifying and reporting early warning signals and must provide a referee for seeking limits to fighting, establishing fair rules for the fighting which will be permitted and for limiting the threat each side present to the other. **Peacemakers** must devise a plan for providing protection by stepping in when conflict starts and enforcing the peace. Your write-up on this step should include your description of what you think these things are and how the process went in your group.

**8. Point Counterpoint Debate** - The final step will be the whole class conducting a point counter-point debate. With each side sitting together and speaking in an organized rotation with a time limit on each speaker.

**9, Final Write-Up:** This should include the following pieces

- a. A Title Page
- b. Part One - Three opening statements
- c. Part Two - Three Whole Arguments
- d. Part Three - Questions for Rebuttal and Challenge
- e. Part Four - Clarification Questions From the Third Side
- f. Part Six - Compromise and Resolve
- g. Part Seven - Containment Plan

**Ground Rules** - Throughout this activity you must follow these simple ground rules:

- a. you must agree not to interrupt anyone who is speaking
- b. you should talk about your feelings
- c. you should look for a mutually agreed upon solution.
- d. team members should equally share the work.

If you have comments or questions please email them Craig Angus at [cangus@dawsonschool.org](mailto:cangus@dawsonschool.org) or Joshua Weiss at [jweiss@law.harvard.edu](mailto:jweiss@law.harvard.edu)