

RED FLAGS & GREEN FLAGS

SUBJECT Citizenship Education; Personal, Social and Emotional Learning

TOPIC Understanding Healthy Relationships

DURATION 50 minutes

AGE 14+

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of the lesson, students are expected to:

-  Recognise key characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships
-  Identify “green flags” and “red flags” in everyday situations
-  Reflect on respect, boundaries, and communication in relationships
-  Develop critical thinking skills when analysing relationship dynamics.

MATERIALS

- [Worksheet with scenarios](#)

METHODS

- Guided class discussion
- Case studies/scenarios
- Individual reflection

PREPARATION/OPENING

- Before the lesson, the teacher reviews the key concepts of healthy and unhealthy relationships (respect, trust, communication, control, manipulation, etc.).
- The teacher prints or prepares digitally the scenarios’ worksheet with examples of green and red flags (see the [example](#) below).

Start by asking:

“What makes a relationship healthy or unhealthy?”

Students briefly share ideas. Collect keywords on the board (e.g. respect, trust, control, communication) to activate prior knowledge.

LESSON STRUCTURE/DEVELOPMENT



INTRODUCTION (10 minutes):

- After the initial discussion, the teacher explain key concepts:
- **Healthy relationships** (Green flags) are based on:
 - Respect (valuing each other's opinions, boundaries, and individuality)
 - Trust (feeling safe, not constantly doubted or controlled)
 - Communication (being able to talk openly and honestly)
 - Equality (no one has power over the other)
 - Support (encouraging each other's growth and well-being)
- **Unhealthy relationships** (Red flags) may include:
 - Control (checking messages, deciding what the other can do, pressuring to share location, demanding passwords)
 - Jealousy and possessiveness (especially when extreme or constant)
 - Lack of respect (insults, humiliation, ignoring boundaries)
 - Emotional manipulation (guilt-tripping, silent treatment)
 - Isolation (pushing someone away from friends or family)
- Briefly clarify that these dynamics can happen in friendships, romantic relationships, and even online interactions.

IMPLEMENTATION

Scenario analysis & class discussion (20 + 10 minutes):

- Divide the class into pairs or small groups. Each group receives the scenarios' worksheet.
- The teacher moves around the class, supporting discussion and encouraging participation and deeper reflection.
- Then, review the scenarios with the whole class, asking students to share their answers and perspectives. Guide the discussion, focusing on:
 - Respect and boundaries
 - Recognising patterns (e.g., control vs care)
 - Challenge misconceptions (e.g. "jealousy = love").

Wrap-up (5 minutes):

- The teacher summarises the key message: **Healthy relationships are based on respect, trust, and the freedom to be yourself.**

Let students know that if they are concerned about a relationship they are in, or about someone else's relationship, it is important to talk to someone about it by reaching out after class, speaking to a trusted adult, calling a relevant support service, or contacting a health care professional.

INTERACTIVE ACTIVITY

- Worksheet with scenarios: below.

REFERENCES

- UNICEF - Building Positive Relationships for Better Mental Well-Being
- Fraser Health - Healthy relationships
- Childline - Healthy and unhealthy relationships
- NEMOURS TeensHealth - Am I in a Healthy Relationship?

CONCLUSION/ASSESSMENT

Monitor students' participation during group activities (e.g. quality of engagement, collaboration with peers, etc.), assessing students' understanding of healthy and unhealthy relationships and their ability to explain them and apply them in real-life situations.

HOMEWORK

Ask students to write a short reflective text (150–200 words) based on the following question:

“What does a healthy relationship mean to me?”

They should include:

- At least two characteristics of a healthy relationship (green flags)
- At least one example of an unhealthy behaviour (red flag) and why it is problematic
- A brief reflection on how they would like to be treated in a relationship (friendship or romantic).

RED FLAGS & GREEN FLAGS

Worksheet with scenarios



Instructions:

Read each scenario carefully. Identify whether the situation shows a **red flag** or a **green flag**, explain which behaviours you notice, and reflect on how the person involved might feel.

★ Scenario 1 - "Where are you?" (Control & jealousy)

Chat:

- Alex: "Where are you?"
- Sam: "At the mall with friends"
- Alex: "Which friends?"
- Sam: "Just people from class"
- Alex: "Send me a pic. I don't believe you"
- Sam: "Why??"
- Alex: "If you've got nothing to hide, just do it"

Questions:

- Would you consider this a red flag or a green flag? Could it depend on the context? Explain your reasoning.
- What behaviours can you identify?
- How might Sam feel in this situation?

★ Scenario 2 - Support (Empathy & encouragement)

After a presentation in class, Maria looks upset and stays quiet at her desk. A classmate notices and sits next to her, saying:

"Hey, I think you did better than you think. Presentations are hard. Do you want to talk about it?"

They listen without interrupting and try to encourage her.

Questions:

- Would you consider this a red flag or a green flag? Could it depend on the context? Explain your reasoning.
- What behaviours can you identify?
- How might Maria feel in this situation?

★ Scenario 3 - Pressure in a relationship (Manipulation)

During a private conversation, Mateo asks his partner to do something they clearly said they are not comfortable with.

When they refuse, Mateo replies:

"If you really cared about me, you wouldn't say no".

He becomes distant and makes them feel guilty for not agreeing.

Questions:

- Would you consider this a red flag or a green flag? Could it depend on the context? Explain your reasoning.
- What behaviours can you identify?
- How might the partner feel in this situation?

★ Scenario 4 - Respecting boundaries (Healthy interaction)

Giulia tells her friend that she doesn't want to go out because she feels overwhelmed and needs time alone.

Her friend replies: "Are you sure? I think getting out of the house might make you feel better. Come with us for a little while, and if you don't feel comfortable, you can always go home".

Questions:

- Would you consider this a red flag or a green flag? Could it depend on the context? Explain your reasoning.
- What behaviours can you identify?
- What should Giulia's friend do if Giulia says no again?

★ Scenario 5 - "Just a joke?" (Humiliation & social pressure)

In class, Marco often makes jokes about a classmate's appearance in front of others. Some students laugh, while the classmate smiles awkwardly but doesn't respond.

When someone points out that it might be hurtful, Marco says: "Relax, it's just a joke".

Questions:

- Would you consider this a red flag or a green flag? Could it depend on the context? Explain your reasoning.
- What behaviours can you identify?
- How might the classmate feel in this situation?