

Tearing off Your Labels

1. Apples

Spatial Requirements: Regular classroom setup: Little or no space required

Activity Type: Group/object lesson

Grades: 1-12

Group Size: 2 or more

Time: 15-20 minutes

Introduction: This activity will help students understand their own labels. They will learn how to tear off negative labels by using inner strengths and positive attributes.

Materials:

- 1 apple for each student (lighter colored apples work best), or 1 apple for the teacher to show the class
- 1 kitchen knife
- 1 dark permanent marker for each student, or 1 permanent marker for the teacher (If you want them to be able to eat the apples later, you may use dry erase markers and peel or carefully wash the apples afterwards.)
- 1 large bowl or basket to hold the apples

Activity:

Place the container of apples on a table with the markers. Ask each student to pick an apple from the container and do the following:

Write your name on the apple.

Write on the apple negative labels that others have given you (fair or unfair) and labels you have given yourself.

If you are using this activity as an object lesson, ask students to identify negative labels and write them on your apple. If not, have the students share their labels with the group. Then cut each student's apple open (around the middle, not from stem to blossom) and have each student hold his/her apple together until all apples are cut in half. Ask the students to look at the center of each apple. The seeds inside will form a star shape.

This activity can be used in conjunction with the book "Sneetches."

Processing the Experience:

- What shape do you see inside?
- What does the star shape represent? (Good qualities, positive attributes, goals, dreams, positive labels, strengths, etc.)
- What are you wearing on the outside of you? (Positive or negative labels)
- Do people see your negative labels or the "star inside"? (Thought question)
- Who determines if people see what is on the outside or inside of "your apple"? (You do.)
- Will the attributes on the outside or the inside of the apple help you be successful in life? (Those on the inside of the apple) Why?
- Does everyone have a "star" inside? Why or why not?