

2018: An Entangled World

Special Area: Human Relationships

Introductory Questions

- Why do you think we form relationships with other people? Are humans meant to be social?
- What makes some relationships more lasting or more meaningful than others?
- Are some people more social than others? If so, why do you think this is?
- Friendship comes with benefits; does it also come with costs?
- For many people, the most important human relationships are those they form with their families. Are family relationships similar all over the world, or do they vary by culture? And, is it always better to be close to your family?
- Is there anyone with whom you thought you'd never become friends, but to whom you are now close? Is there anyone with whom you thought you'd be friends forever, but from whom you have since grown apart?

Hoops of Steel | Understanding Friendship

Questions to Explore

- Is proximity—being near someone—the way most friendships start?
- Why do some people choose to have fewer friends?
- What is the greatest number of friends a person can have?

Terms to Research

- sympathy | empathy
- imaginary friend | BFF | frenemy

We're a Happy... | Family and Kinship

Questions to Explore

- What is unique to your family relationships? What makes your family special?
- What would your life be like if you grew up in a differently structured family?
- Biologically, your family is the people who are genetically closest to you. Socially, how and why might this definition be different?

Terms to Research

- nuclear | extended | beanpole |
- parenting styles | family tree

Wherefore Art Thou? | Romantic Entanglements

Essential Questions

- Is “romantic love” a modern concept? When did it first come about?
- How are dating and courtship viewed in different cultures?

Terms to Know

- infatuation | puppy love | love-hate |
- unrequited love | love triangle

Friending is a Verb | Digital Connections

Essential Questions

- How has social media influenced your relationships?
- Does social media affect the way you perceive other people?
- What would your life be like without social media?
- Do people relate differently when they are anonymous online than when they use their real names?

Terms to Research

- Facebook | Snapchat
- celebrity worship | virality
- voice-enabled technologies | artificial intelligence

Over Sideways and Under | Relationships Around Boundaries

Questions to Explore

- Some communities create boundaries between themselves and the rest of the world; does living within such boundaries affect how relationships form?
- Other communities are organized with internal boundaries, whether hallways in a dormitory or castes in a society. How do relationships form within and across such boundaries?
- When two very different communities are forced to interact, how do the people within them relate? Do they become more alike or more different?

Terms to Research

- Dormitory | gangs | fraternities and sororities
- “Chinatown” | culture shock | assimilation

Questions for Further Discussion

- This [linked TIME article](#) discusses the changing American family, but industrialization (and technologization) is changing families around the world. What does your family look like? Have families changed since your parents were children? Your grandparents?
- [Studies suggest](#) that people with pets (in this case, dogs) live longer. Discuss with your team: is it possible for animals to substitute for humans in terms of companionship and friendship? Do humans ultimately need to lead lives entangled with those of others in order to be their healthiest, happiest selves?
- That filter on your selfie, that Photoshopped landscape—some consider the way we portray ourselves on social media to be deceptive, or to amount to a [double life](#). Discuss with your team: should people be more authentic on the Internet, or are there benefits to lying?