

Malarky[®]

Lesson Plans

Recommended Grade Levels: 6 and up

Recommended Subjects: Language Arts, Social Studies

Applicable Concepts, Skills, and Strategies:

- Vocabulary
- Oral Communication
- Listening Skills
- Reading Comprehension
- Reasoning Skills
- Creative Thinking
- Problem Solving

Objectives:

- to ponder the **imponderable**
- to create convincing definitions for given words
- to create plausible answers for a posed question
- to convince others that your answer is correct
- to learn interesting information about some of the mysteries of life

Components: Classroom lessons to prepare students for playing **Malarky**

- Blackline master for overhead use
- Student definition/response sheet for in-class and homework use
- Sheets for Activity # 2 (Need to be cut apart)

Materials Needed: Highlighter markers

- Overhead projector

Definitions for Activity #1 Student Sheet:

- 1. muzzy: dazed; bewildered
- 2. lave: to wash; to bathe
- 3. coffer: a chest for valuables; a large money-box;
 an ornamental panel in a ceiling or archway
- 4. whit: smallest part imaginable; bit
- 5. slog: to hit wildly and vigorously; to work or
 study with dogged determination; to trudge along

To learn more about the board game **Malarky**, visit www.patchproducts.com or call 1-800-524-4263

Malarky[®] Activity #1

Use this "whip" to begin your class. Have it written on the chalkboard or overhead before the students enter your class.

How is bluffing like playing a game of tennis?

Once the students have had some thinking time, begin a class discussion of their ideas. There are no correct or incorrect answers to this question, but it will encourage an understanding of what it means to bluff.

Next, show the students the word on the top of the Activity #1 overhead. Explain to the students that you will be sharing with them four possible definitions for this word. They are to listen carefully and then decide which definition seems most likely to be correct. Tell them that three of your definitions will be bluffs and one will be the real definition. Each student needs to select one of the definitions and write its corresponding number on a piece of paper. Students should be ready to explain why one definition seemed better to them than another. Tally and discuss the results. (The correct definition is #2.)

Now your students will have a chance to practice bluffing. Provide each student with the list of words to be defined. Explain that they need to come up with a definition for each word using only their prior knowledge and creative thinking skills.

Students are to create clear and concise definitions that may or may not be accurate. Allow 15 - 20 minutes for this part of the activity which should be done independently. (You may wish to adapt this by pairing students as needed.)

At the end of the allotted time, group students into groups of 3 to 5 for sharing. Within the group each student (or pair of students) will share the created definition for the first word. The student needs to do this in a way that will be convincing to the other group members. When all definitions for the first word have been shared, the group needs to decide which definition is most likely correct. This can be done by an informal vote within the group. The "winning" definition should be highlighted on the student's paper. Continue this process with the remaining words.

Complete this lesson with the whole group sharing the selected definitions for each word. Have each student decide which definition seems the best and write his/her selection on the response sheet. This response sheet needs to be kept for the next class activity. Assign the remainder of the sheet as homework.

dace

1. the cord that ties back curtains
2. a small fresh-water fish
3. when a player scores two points in a row during a rugby game
4. a hook on a castle wall where the knight would hang his chainmail

Malarky[®]

Activity #1 Student Response Sheet

Write a definition for each of these words. You may write a real definition, if you know it, or you may write a convincing bluff. No dictionaries allowed!

1. muzzy _____

2. lave _____

3. coffer _____

4. whit _____

5. slog _____

Final Definition Choice (Use during whole class sharing time)

Write the name of the student who read the definition you think is most correct.

1. _____ 2. _____

3. _____ 4. _____

5. _____

Homework: Using a dictionary, locate the actual definition for each of the above words. Write each definition on the back of this sheet or on another piece of paper.

Malarky[®] Activity #2

Begin this second activity with a time to share the homework from Activity #1. Discuss the actual definitions and how they compared to the ones given during the first activity. Have a discussion about what makes a good bluff.

During this activity the students will be practicing their bluffing with something called **imponderables**. **Imponderables** are unknown factors that influence our lives. Author, David Feldman, has written a series of books about these mysteries of life.

Introduce your class to this author by sharing the following information.

(A more complete profile is available on Mr. Feldman's website, www.imponderables.com.)

- David Feldman is a man who has always been fascinated with finding out why things are the way they are.
- He was raised in a log cabin in California and majored in literature at Grinnell College.
- He has always loved television and enjoys annoying his friends.
- He currently lives in New York City where he is gathering information for another book.

- Some of the **Imponderables** Mr. Feldman has explored include "Where do houseflies go in the winter," "Why do doughnuts have holes," and "Why do pirates wear earrings?"

Have copies of his books on display for your students to view and read. These books are available at libraries and bookstores, as well as on his website and Amazon.com. Below is a list of these books.

Imponderables

Why Do Clocks Run Clockwise?

Who Put the Butter in Butterfly?

When Do Fish Sleep?

Why Do Dogs Have Wet Noses?

Do Penguins Have Knees?

When Did Wild Poodles Roam the Earth?

How Does Aspirin Find a Headache?

What are Hyenas Laughing at, Anyway?

How do Astronauts Scratch an Itch?

Explain to the students that they will each be receiving a slip of paper with an **imponderable** question. Some of the slips will have the correct answer with the question, while others will have directions for the students to bluff. (It is important that students work independently for this portion of the activity.) Students must develop an answer to their **imponderable**. The students with the correct answer given need to read and assimilate the information and plan how to explain the answer in their own words. Explain that when the answers are shared with the class, the students cannot use their paper, so they must really be prepared with their answers. Allow 5-10 minutes for this part of the activity.

When the students are ready, the responses can be shared with the whole class.

Ask the students with one of the given imponderables to meet at the front of the class. Each one will present his/her answer in an effort to convince the rest of the class that this is the correct answer. When all of the answers are given, have the rest of the class vote for the best answer with a show of hands. For example: "All who think answer number 1 is correct, please raise your hand." Continue this with all answer choices and tally the responses. Then ask for the person with the correct answer to step forward. Repeat this process until all of the **imponderable** questions have been used.

This activity will help prepare your students for playing the game, **Malarky**. Encourage the students to use David Feldman's books to find out amazing answers to other interesting questions of life.

Imponderables used in group activity and the correct responses:

1. What does the "Q" in "Q-Tips" stand for? (Quality)
2. What is the "cottage" in cottage cheese? (Long ago farmers made cheese in their cottage homes.)
3. Why do some insects fly in a straight line while others tend to zigzag? (They zig-zag to escape from predators.)
4. Why are there ridges (usually painted black) on the sides of most school buses? (Ridges make the sides stronger.)
5. Why are carpenter's pencils square? (So they don't roll away.)
6. Why do Scuba divers spit in their mask before they dive? (saliva has an ingredient which coats the mask and keeps it from fogging up.)
7. What causes bags under the eyes? (Excess tissue & fluid)
8. Why are tennis balls fuzzy? (helps have better racquet control when the ball is hit)

Activity #2 Sheet

Cut apart on the lines. You will need one slip for each student. Be sure to use the correct answer slip along with 3 or 4 of the bluff sheets for each question.

Question #1

What does the "Q" in "Q-Tips" stand for?
It's time for you to bluff! *Good luck.*

What does the "Q" in "Q-Tips" stand for?
It's time for you to bluff! *Good luck.*

What does the "Q" in "Q-Tips" stand for?
It's time for you to bluff! *Good luck.*

What does the "Q" in "Q-Tips" stand for?
It's time for you to bluff! *Good luck.*

What does the "Q" in "Q-Tips" stand for?
It stands for Quality.

Question #2

What is the "cottage" in cottage cheese?
It's time for you to bluff! *Good luck.*

What is the "cottage" in cottage cheese?
It's time for you to bluff! *Good luck.*

What is the "cottage" in cottage cheese?
It's time for you to bluff! *Good luck.*

What is the "cottage" in cottage cheese?
It's time for you to bluff! *Good luck.*

What is the "cottage" in cottage cheese?
Long ago farmers made the cheese in their cottage homes.

Question #3

Why do some insects fly in a straight line while others tend to zigzag?
It's time for you to bluff! Good luck.

Why do some insects fly in a straight line while others tend to zigzag?
It's time for you to bluff! Good luck.

Why do some insects fly in a straight line while others tend to zigzag?
It's time for you to bluff! Good luck.

Why do some insects fly in a straight line while others tend to zigzag?
It's time for you to bluff! Good luck.

Why do some insects fly in a straight line while others tend to zigzag?
Some insects zig-zag to get away from predators.

Question #4

Why are there ridges (usually painted black) on the sides of most school buses?
It's time for you to bluff! Good luck.

Why are there ridges (usually painted black) on the sides of most school buses?
It's time for you to bluff! Good luck.

Why are there ridges (usually painted black) on the sides of most school buses?
It's time for you to bluff! Good luck.

Why are there ridges (usually painted black) on the sides of most school buses?
It's time for you to bluff! Good luck.

Why are there ridges (usually painted black) on the sides of most school buses?
They make the sides of the bus stronger.

Question # 5

Why are carpenter's pencils square?
It's time for you to bluff! *Good luck.*

Why are carpenter's pencils square?
It's time for you to bluff! *Good luck.*

Why are carpenter's pencils square?
It's time for you to bluff! *Good luck.*

Why are carpenter's pencils square?
It's time for you to bluff! *Good luck.*

Why are carpenter's pencils square?
So they won't roll away when the carpenter puts them down.

Question #6

Why do Scuba divers spit in their mask before they dive?
It's time for you to bluff! *Good luck.*

Why do Scuba divers spit in their mask before they dive?
It's time for you to bluff! *Good luck.*

Why do Scuba divers spit in their mask before they dive?
It's time for you to bluff! *Good luck.*

Why do Scuba divers spit in their mask before they dive?
It's time for you to bluff! *Good luck.*

Why do Scuba divers spit in their mask before they dive?
Saliva contains something that coats the mask and prevents fog from forming on it.

Question #7

What causes bags under the eyes?
It's time for you to bluff! *Good luck.*

What causes bags under the eyes?
It's time for you to bluff! *Good luck.*

What causes bags under the eyes?
It's time for you to bluff! *Good luck.*

What causes bags under the eyes?
It's time for you to bluff! *Good luck.*

What causes bags under the eyes?
There is excess tissue and fluid there.

Question #8

Why are tennis balls fuzzy?
It's time for you to bluff! *Good luck.*

Why are tennis balls fuzzy?
It's time for you to bluff! *Good luck.*

Why are tennis balls fuzzy?
It's time for you to bluff! *Good luck.*

Why are tennis balls fuzzy?
It's time for you to bluff! *Good luck.*

Why are tennis balls fuzzy?
The fuzz helps the player have better racquet control when the ball is hit.
