

# Forgiveness

## Syllables

for•give•ness

## Pronunciation

fer-giv-nis

## Definition

Excusing or pardoning a mistake or offense; letting go of blame.

*(“I’m sorry that I broke your toy,” Gussie said, “and I’m asking for your forgiveness.”)*

**Simply put:** Being willing to accept other’s apologies.

## Related Terms

Excuse: Pardon.

## Fundamental Question:

**How do I forgive someone who has treated me so badly?**

**Students will investigate the idea that** forgiveness helps us to mend our relationships and get rid of bad feelings.

## Objectives

Each student will:

1. Identify someone (s)he hurt or offended and seek that person’s forgiveness; and
2. Identify someone who hurt him or her and will clear the record by granting forgiveness.

## Before you begin

- Write on the board:
  1. Think about a time that you were really, truly sorry for something that you did, but the person you hurt would not forgive you.
  2. React to this statement: “If you refuse to forgive someone, you continue to be the victim.”
  3. How is forgiveness like mending a torn coat?
- Print out a copy of *So Sorry* for each student.

## Suggested Sidebars:

### Speaking of Forgiveness (Discussion Idea)

Is there anything so bad that it could never, ever be forgiven; that it is unforgivable?

(Teacher: Depending upon the maturity of your class, you may want to include topics like the Holocaust, the Twin Towers and 9/11, school shootings, or other related examples here.)

### Taking It to the Next Level

To some people, forgiveness is something a person can do without even being asked. Can *you* forgive someone for something they did to you without them apologizing or asking for your forgiveness? Try it and see.

# Forgiveness

## Procedure

1. Invite a student to read aloud the three sentences you wrote on the board. Ask the children to select one of the topics and to write about it in their daily (or better yet, character) journal.
2. Ask: “Is it enough simply to ask for (or grant) forgiveness as a way to get rid of pent-up anger and get on with business as usual? What about taking responsibility for our actions?” (Discuss.)
3. Have the students look up the words *amends*, *restitution*, and *consequences*. Ask: “What role do these things play in the process of forgiveness?” (Discuss.)
4. Distribute the *So Sorry* activity sheets and review the instructions with the class.
5. **Follow-up:** Have the media specialist or local librarian assist your students in finding level-appropriate books (fiction or nonfiction) that deal with the issue of forgiveness. Each day this week, dedicate 20 minutes to a silent reading period. (Of course, the books may be read at other times, too.) At the end of the week, ask each student to write a one-sentence synopsis of the forgiveness aspect of the book.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

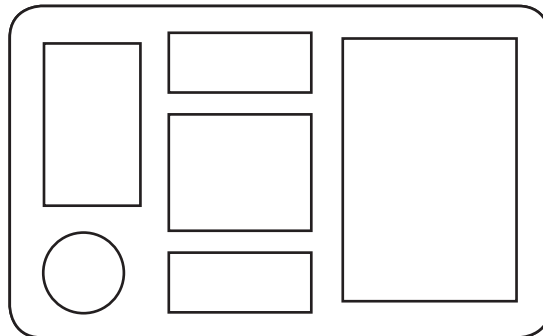
**Reminder:** Forgiveness means excusing or pardoning a mistake or offense; letting go of blame.

## So Sorry

The library has asked you to put together two useful “Forgiveness Kits.” The “I’m Sorry” Kit can be checked out when people want to *ask for forgiveness*. The “All’s Forgiven” Kit can be checked out when people want to *forgive*.

Show what you would include in each kit. Label each item or feature. Briefly describe how the kit should be used for the best results.

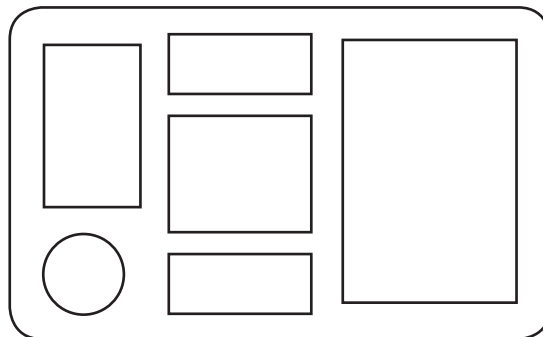
### I’m Sorry Kit



For best results with the I’m Sorry Kit: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### All’s Forgiven Kit



For best results with the All’s Forgiven Kit: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Today’s Thought: *Forgiveness does not change the past, but it does enlarge the future.* – **Paul Boese, Author/Businessman**