

# CURSING AND PROFANITY

Special Ed



SOCIAL STORY + ACTIVITIES



*These social stories are something I created and started using in my classroom. The story paired with the activities gave students a structured way to practice a new or uncomfortable skill.*

# Choosing the Best Word Social Story Unit

By  
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Special Needs for Special Kids



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In a separate file you will find:

- PowerPoint version of social story (**editable**)
- Activities in black and white

You can also download this social story as a google slide presentation. You will be prompted to make a copy. This is **editable** in case you need to adjust to the needs of your students. [CLICK HERE](#)

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*This unit has a story and activities. The activities come in 2 separate files, one in color and one in black and white.*

## Teaching **suggestions**

Any time you try to address a negative behavior, it can be a sticky and somewhat long progress. So, if you have a student who is cursing, be prepared to be in it for the long haul. This is especially true if you have an older student who has been using this language for a while. It is going to take some time for him/her to stop the reflex of using those words and implementing a replacement behavior strategy. But don't despair!! There is plenty of research to show that consistent and proper implementation of replacement behaviors is very effective and can have long lasting effects. So here are some important things to figure out and remember:

- Figure out **WHY the student is cursing**. What is the function of the behavior?
  - For attention/shock value
  - To escape a demand being put upon him/her
  - To gain access to a reinforcer (someone is surely going to give me what I want to get me to stop cursing)
  - Poor coping strategy; evidence of frustration
- Identify the key words you want to eliminate (*You may want to just start with one*)
  - Make sure **everyone** who works with the student knows what words these are
  - Make sure the student knows what these words are.
  - That means you will ignore the other or new curse words being used.
- Develop a **behavior plan** that addresses the function of the behavior and identifies an appropriate **replacement behavior**.
  - This is often the choice of using a different word.
  - Can also be a physical response, like clenching fists, squeezing a stress ball, etc.
  - Make sure the plan is very clear and communicated to EVERYONE who will work with the student.
  - Develop a set of cues and how they will be faded.
- *Make sure parents are on board.*
- You may need to talk to the other students in the class separately, so they understand how this cursing will be handled and what their response should be.
- Teach the unit to the entire class.
- Send a copy of the social story home to the parents of the identified student.
- Review **OFTEN!!** The more often you read the story, the more it will become part of the student's internal dialogue.
- Have some powerful reinforcers ready for when the student chooses to use the replacement behavior.

I know firsthand how difficult profanity in the classroom is to deal with, especially when you have students who already have limited communication skills.

I have included some suggestions on how this worked best for me and my colleagues.

So, sometimes I choose to yell or use words that are not very nice.



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First, I need to make sure I am calm. This helps me figure out exactly what I want to say.



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There is an 18 page social story that has simple text and engaging photos. This story is in a PowerPoint and Google Slide format so you **can edit** the text if needed to fit your own situation.

Cut apart pictures and place in circle map about things to think about when choosing the best word.



Cut apart pictures and place in circle map **ONLY IF** they are good alternatives to using angry or bad words.

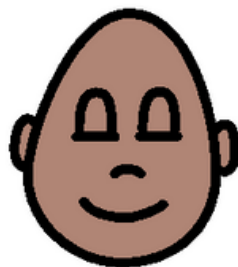


There is a circle map that reviews things to remember when trying to choose the best word. It comes with 2 versions, one that only has correct answers and one with wrong answers mixed in.

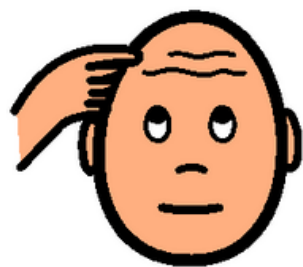
But there is a better way to get people to listen to me.



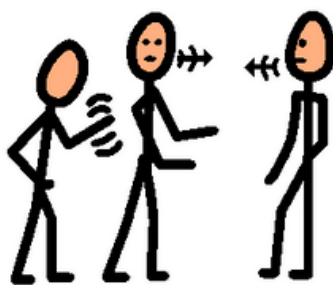
1. I need to try and stay calm.



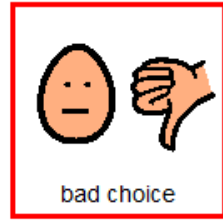
2. I need to think of the best word so people will listen and not walk away.



3. I need to get their attention by saying excuse me or tapping them on the shoulder.



There is also a 14 page booklet in color and black and white that students can keep with them and take home to review as needed.



 stupid	 silly	 you're crazy	 let me help you	 excuse me
 walk away	 yucky	 hit others	 frustrated	 I hate that
 you are the devil	 mean	 ugly	 stay calm	 oops
 quiet please	 scream	 I don't like that	 wait a minute	 fat

There is a sorting activity about good and bad choices when you are upset and trying to choose the best word. Suggestions for differentiation are included.



Look at each set of words.

Circle the best word/phrase to use.

stupid      dumb      unwise

I hate you!      I don't like that.      You are the devil!

jerk      idiot      not nice

That tastes gross!      That is terrible!      I don't like that.

overweight      fat      big as a house

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Look at each set of words.

Circle the best word/phrase to use.

You are crazy!      You are silly.      You are retarded

Oops      Darn it      Dammit

Goodness      O my God      Jesus Christ

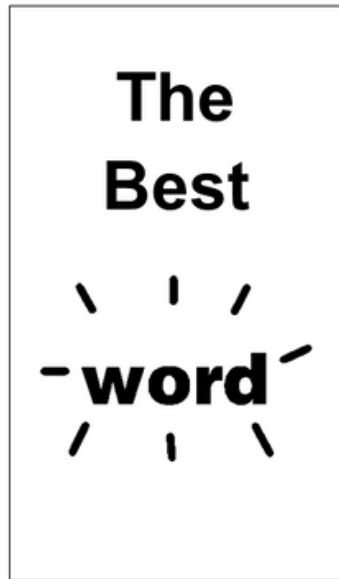
Shut up      Shut your face      Be quiet

butt      ass      rear end

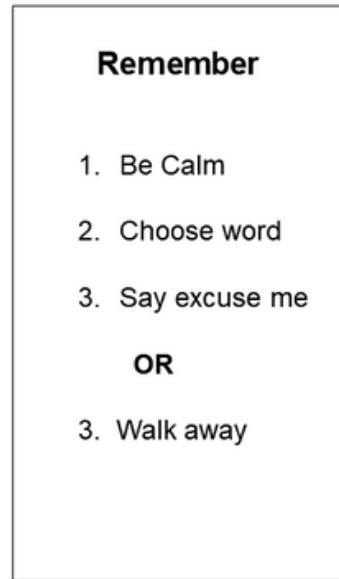
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There are 2 worksheets where students will look at three words and circle the best one.

Front of card



Back of card



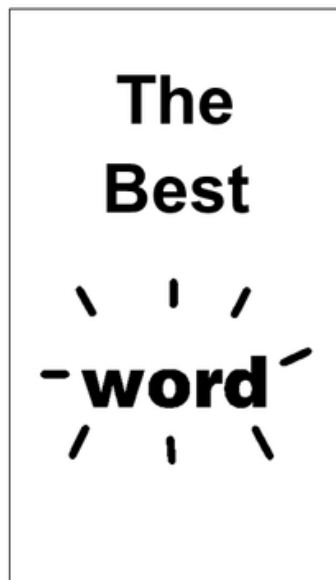
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Th

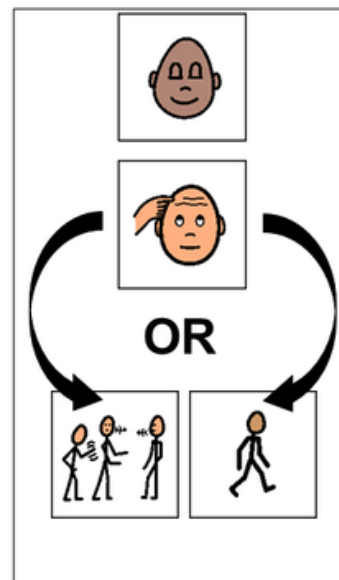
There is a power card that comes in 2 versions that reviews what to remember when trying to choose the best word. These are great for students to carry around and personalize.

Suggestions on how to use are included.

Front of card



Back of card



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**The activities that accompany this social story provide:**

- 1. A structured way for you to review this skill.**
- 2. A way to informally assess if students are comprehending the material.**
- 3. Engages the student by providing different ways to review the same material.**