

SEL · GRADES 3–5

I-Statements

Words that solve problems instead of starting them

The I-statement formula

When someone does something that bothers you, it's tempting to attack them: 'You always interrupt me!' That makes the other person defensive. Instead, try: 'I feel ___ when ___, because ___. I would like ___.' This is honest, calm, and gives the other person something concrete they can change.

Examples — switch from YOU to I

YOU-statement (attacks)	I-statement (explains)
You always interrupt me!	I feel frustrated when I'm interrupted, because I lose my thought. I'd like to finish what I'm saying first.
You're being mean!	I feel hurt when I'm called names, because I really don't like it. Could you stop, please?
You took my pencil!	I feel annoyed when my pencil gets taken without asking. Next time, please ask first.
You never let me play!	I feel sad when I'm not invited to play, because I want to join in. Could you include me sometimes?

Your turn — write an I-statement

1. Someone keeps copying off your work. Write what you'd say.
2. A friend laughed at your idea in front of others.
3. Someone borrowed something and hasn't given it back.



4. Your group isn't listening to your suggestions.
5. Someone keeps changing the rules of the game while you play.

