

TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A normal part of adolescence is "Young Love", "Puppy Love", and "First Loves". As teens begin to enjoy the fascination of the opposite sex, they can quickly fall in and out of "love". Some "true loves" only last a few days, but they are still real and the feelings strong. This young love should be a time of emotion, caring, and sharing. It is different, however, than the long enduring true love between those who marry and commit to a life together.

The initial attraction is usually a "surface characteristic" such as physical beauty or athletic ability. This is not a negative commentary--it simply is the result of first meetings or "sightings". Because teens "fall in love" with these surface level qualities, these relationships tend to be short lived. In the process, young people learn positive steps in boy-girl relationships, love and commitment, and qualities they like and dislike in a more serious relationship, or in a mate later on.

Early relationships are wonderful! They can be exciting, heart palpitatingly breathtaking! On the other hand, they can cause feelings of rejection, and pain. It feels good inside to know that someone is interested in you--it can make your self-esteem soar! But if the relationship goes sour, it can be quite painful when the person you are dating dumps you for another. Take comfort in the fact that everyone experiences the pain of being "dumped". It's part of becoming a well-rounded person, and usually gives you a good story to tell later on! Think of each ending as a new beginning.

Dating is important, but keep in mind it is only one part of teen development. It is also important to direct their energies toward life skills development, and not just their interest in boy-girl relationships. Skills learned during the dating time are part of the development that prepares one for a strong, committed, relationship in the future.

Adolescent relationships are like a big fire; they begin from a spark, become a big blaze very fast, are exciting and scary, and over quickly. Pairing takes place when two people get together to enjoy one another's company. These are new experiences for boys and girls. The first concerns are not about love vs. infatuation, but getting up enough nerve to say "hello".

There is no magic potion that will make relationships always work out the way you want them to, plus everyone has a different time clock for romances to begin. Most adolescent relationships end as quickly as they begin. It can hurt terribly even when very young teens break up. This is part of the cycle, and the best way to get over it is to move on and look for a new friend.

INTRODUCTORY INCIDENTS: PAIRING

Incident No. 1 -

Six-year-old Megan came home from school and seemed upset. Sensing something was wrong, her mother asked her how her day was at school. Megan said it was a terrible day and she was too embarrassed to go back to school. After a few more questions the story unfolded like this. Several of Megan's friends all "loved" Robbie--they enjoyed teasing each other and playing during recess each day. Today Megan was upset due to the fact that Robbie found out that she was one of those who loved him. When Mom asked how he found out, she said, "Well, he knew it was me that put the pine cones in his hood!"

Mom still didn't understand so Megan explained, "That's how you tell if someone likes you--they put pine cones from the playground in the hood of your jacket. Gol, Mom, don't you know anything?"

Follow up questions:

- When did you have your first crush on a girl/boy?
- How did you act?
- How long did the attraction last?
- Had you ever talked to the person before you decided you "liked" them?

Incident No. 2. -

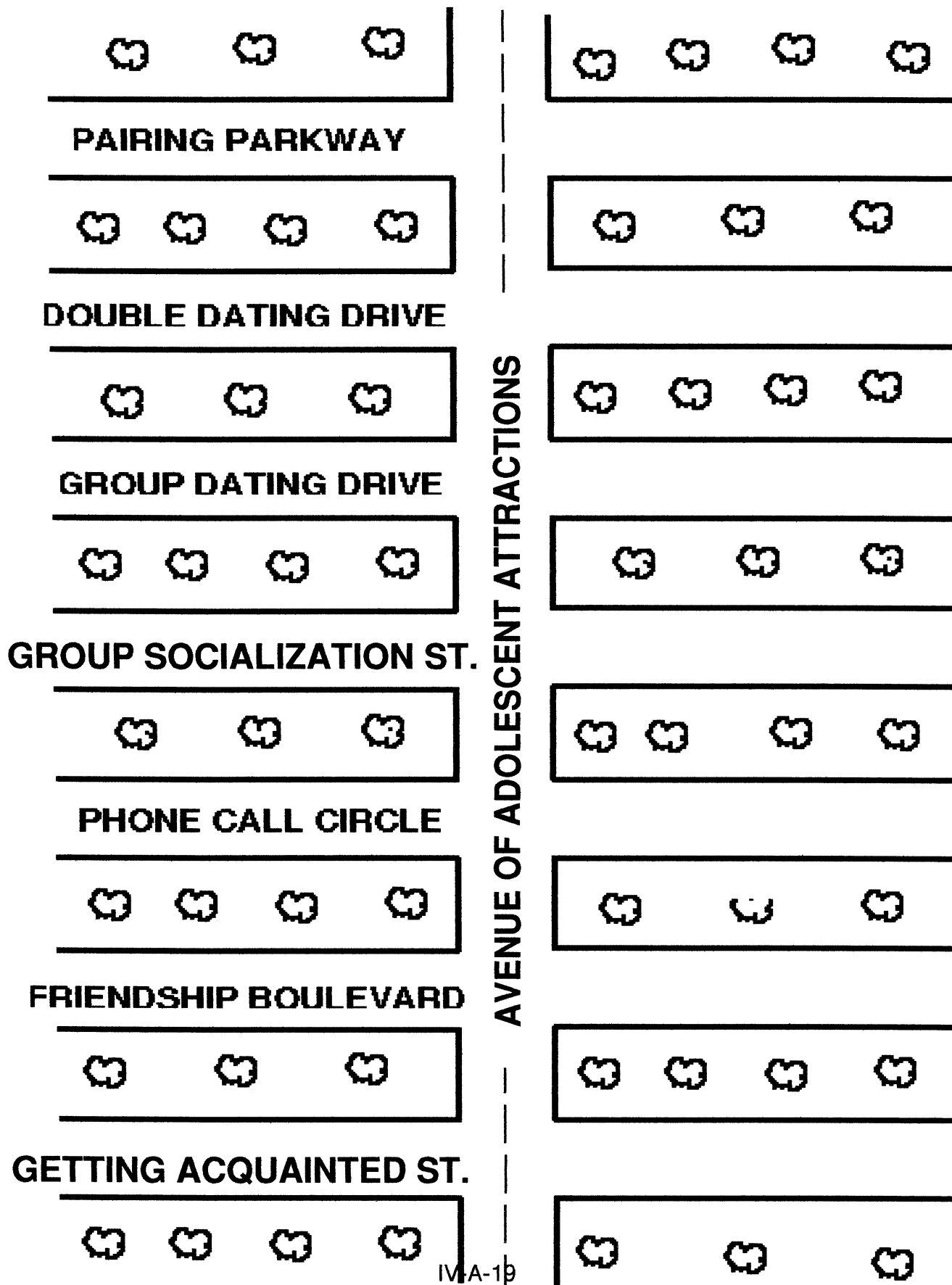
Keven called Jessica's home three times in one night. Each time he hung up as she answered because he was too nervous and afraid to talk to her. He was afraid she wouldn't know who he was, or she would laugh at him for calling her. He worried so much about it that he stayed home from school the next day with a stomachache.

Follow up questions:

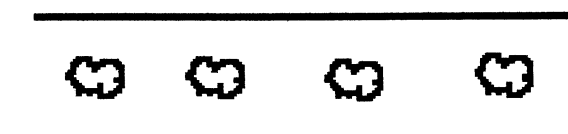
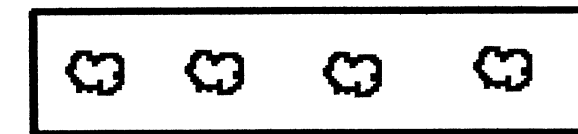
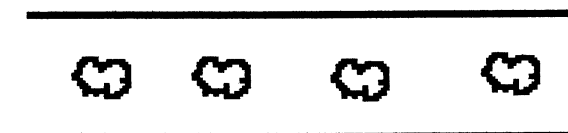
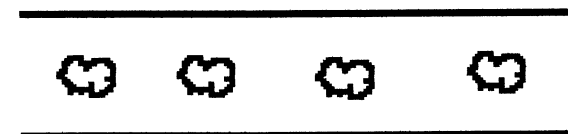
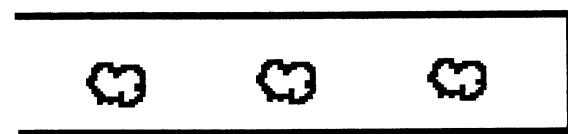
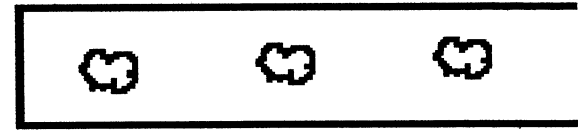
- Why was it so frightening for Keven to call Jessica?
- Have you ever experienced such a situation?
- How is the best way to handle phone calls?
- What can you talk about to ease the tension?

THE AVENUES OF ADOLESCENT ATTRACTIONS

Getting Acquainted	Conversations during classes or in the hall, glances, smiles.
Friendships	Sharing common activities or friends, writing notes, friendly shoves, hits, or pushes. Common work places or community groups.
Phone Calls	Silly calls, or calls for information about a school project or another friend. An occasional prank-call.
Socializing with Groups	Sharing gossip, hugging, working on school activities or projects, going to the movies, malls, or to another person's home to watch movies or eat.
Group Dating	Groups of 3 or more girls and 3 or more boys, meeting for specific activities-- movies, dinner, sports activities, etc. Pairing off does not occur; group members are simply friends.
Double Dating	Two girls and two boys who have paired off go together for an activity of any kind. A romantic attraction is involved.
Pairing / Single Dating	One girl and one boy who have paired off go together for an activity of any kind. The couple know each other well, and want to spend time alone.



Name _____ Period _____ Date _____



AVENUE OF ADOLESCENT ATTRACTIONS

THE PARTY

by Chris Moore

Have you ever been at a party, dance, or at the mall when you saw a certain someone that you definitely wanted to get to know better? But, you didn't know how to approach this person and make the first move? This was the dilemma that my grandmother found herself in years ago when she first laid eyes on my grandfather.

Bill Beaulieu (pronounced bowl-your) was a handsome Frenchman from Quebec. As he strolled into the office where my grandmother worked, all of the women in the room had their eyes on his six-foot something frame, black hair, and dark eyes. He approached my grandmother's desk and asked, "Is Mr. Smith in?" She was very self-conscious as she looked into his eyes. "Yes," she stammered. "Is he expecting you?"

"I believe so," replied Bill.

"May I tell him who is here?" asked my grandmother.

"Yes. Tell him that Bill Beaulieu is here."

Pushing the intercom button my grandmother said, "Mr. Smith, a Mr. Beaulieu is here to meet with you."

"Great!" said the voice on the other line. "Send him in."

"Mr. Beaulieu, Mr. Smith will see you now. Go right through that door," directed my grandmother.

As he made his way to Mr. Smith's office, all eyes followed him. When the door closed behind him, the secretaries started talking about him and how cute he was. They wondered if he was married, etc.

For several days, Bill met with Mr. Smith, coming predictably into the office in the mornings. Grandmother knew that she would have to move quickly if she had any chance at all of meeting this gentleman on a more personal level before the other ladies in the office did. She devised a plan. She was going to invite him to a party that she was going to give. The only twist in the plan was the fact that he would be the only one invited to the party!

The next morning my grandmother made sure that she looked her very best. The door to the office opened and in stepped the handsome Frenchman. He approached her desk and asked the usual, "Is Mr. Smith in?" As she looked into those gorgeous dark

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eyes, her courage melted. She knew that she had to go through with it--It was now or never. Taking a deep breath she said, "Mr. Beaulieu, I was wondering if you would like to come to a party that I am giving on Friday." He looked down at her and smiled. "I would love to," he replied.

They exchanged addresses, telephone numbers, etc., and he then went into Mr. Smith's office. The other ladies in the office were so upset. "That's not fair!" exclaimed one secretary. Grandmother couldn't believe what she had done. She also couldn't believe that he had accepted. She was ecstatic!

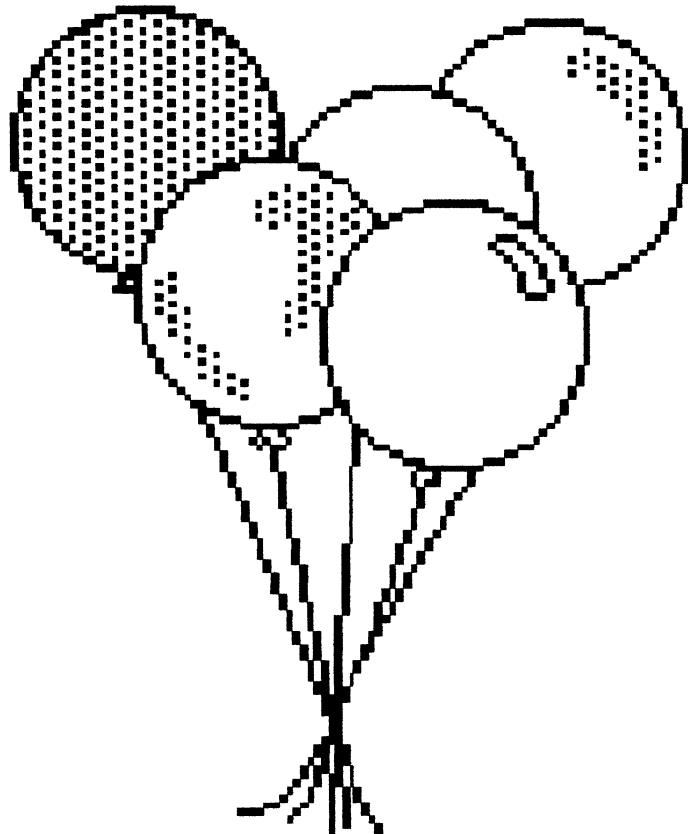
Friday, the big evening came. Bill rang the doorbell. Grandmother opened the door. He stepped inside and noticed that no one was there.

"Am I too early or too late?" he asked.

"Oh!" said grandma, "All of the other guests canceled and I lost your phone number. I have all of this food. Won't you please stay?"

"I would love to!" he replied.

And the rest is history!



WANT TO BUY A CORVETTE?

Three college girls felt sure their romantic lives had come to a complete standstill--they were not interested in the boys in their social circle as more than friends. Sitting around watching videos one night, Susan spoke up.

"What can we do to meet some interesting guys?" The others suggested dragging State Street, blind dates, or hanging out at the mall. All the ideas met with either, "The kind of guys we would like to meet wouldn't be there," or "That would be too risky," or "All the guys there are Geeks."

"Well then, what are we going to do? Die of old age before we have an interesting date?" volunteered Stephanie. "We need a new approach to meet some guys that are exciting and interested in the things we like."

"What do we like that cool guys like?" asked Kelli. "I want a guy that likes sports, the symphony, and hot cars."

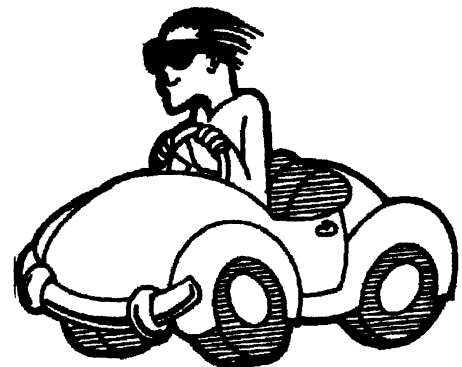
"Good luck, or better still, why not place an add in the personals?" answered Susan.

"Wait a minute! You've given me a great idea!" Kelli cried. "Let's place an advertisement to sell a bright red, loaded Corvette--one with all the options. We'll have lots of guys calling that have good taste in cars, and enough money to afford one--this is a great idea!"

"Aren't you forgetting one minor detail? We don't have a Corvette to sell?" said Susan.

"That doesn't matter," Kelli explained. "We'll take all the calls and invite the guys over to look at it, and when they get here explain that we just sold it a few minutes ago. Then we'll invite them to stay for a soda!" She continued, "That way we can get to know them a little and decide if we'd like to see them again."

The girls did place the ad and as they anticipated, they had many calls on the Corvette. Some of the gentlemen who came to see the car saw through their little plan and were not too amused. Others were more fun loving and the girls made some new friends.



Name _____ Period _____ Date _____

"SUREFIRE WAYS TO MEET A MATE"

Directions: Mark the following suggestions True or False depending upon whether or not they will help you get a date or a mate.

1. _____ Get a copy of the Romance Chain Letter. It has been going since 1904. Make four copies of this and give it to four of your friends. After you give it to them, drink a cup of water and think of the girl/guy you like A LOT. In four days, that person will say something important to you!
2. _____ Swallow the heart of a wild duck.
3. _____ On the last night in April, wash a handkerchief and hang it over a rosebush. When it dries in the morning, the initials of your true love will appear in the wrinkles.
4. _____ Hard-boil an egg, cut it in half, discard the yolk, and fill the egg halves with salt. Sit on something you have never sat on before, eat the egg, and walk to bed backward. You will dream of your future mate.
5. _____ Peel an apple without breaking the peel, swing the peel around your head three times, and throw it over your shoulder. When it lands, it will form your true love's first initial.
6. _____ Offer your "special someone" lemonade or cider containing a teaspoon of your own powdered fingernails.
7. _____ Offer your "love" a double-fudge sundae. Chocolate is rich in phenylethylamine, which scientists say accounts for people in love acting so erratically and impulsively.
8. _____ Count 50 white horses and one white mule. The next person you shake hands with will be the one you marry.
9. _____ Measure your love's forearms. If they are similar to the size of your own, you will have a happy future together. If they are not similar, run! You will have nothing but unhappiness together.

SOMETHING TO CROW ABOUT...

by Chris Moore

I had just moved into an old farm house that had lots of ground with lots of weeds. Amongst the weeds stood an old chicken coop. It was in pretty good repair, considering that it was weathered and had not been used for a number of years. As the realtor showed us the coop before we purchased the property, she noted that the portal for the chickens as still in tact. Trying to improve her chances for a sale, she said, "You could even start your own chicken farm!" That advice was great, but who knew anything about chickens?

As a house warming gift, the realtor gave us a single hen to help us on our way to the flock of chickens. The hen was more of a pet than anything else. She did lay one to two eggs a day for which I was grateful.

One day as I went out to gather her eggs, I noticed that "Henny" as she was lovingly called, looked different. Her waddles were longer (those are the red things that hang down from her chin) and her top comb was larger and more pronounced. I passed off the strange appearance as a figment of my imagination. A few days later, I heard crowing in the back yard. I looked out thinking that maybe that enthusiastic realtor had brought us a rooster. There stood Henny like a diva from the opera crowing to her little hearts content. I summoned my husband and told him that either someone had switched birds or there is more here than meets the eye.

We began to do some research and discovered that chickens are flock birds. That means that they have to live with other chickens or their life is not complete. If a hen is alone, she will attract other chickens to her by growing long top combs and waddles like a rooster. She will also start crowing to attract other chickens to begin a new flock.

Our chicken wasn't so dumb after all! She was lonely and needed companionship. We felt sorry for her and took her to a farmer down the street so she could have a productive life producing eggs and chickens. I am afraid that our dream as chicken farmers was never realized; however, this event surely gave us something to crow about!



TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION SOMETHING TO CROW ABOUT...

What the chicken needed was companionship. Chickens are flock animals that need other birds to complete their existence. They will take the steps necessary to meet the need of being a part of the flock. Humans are exactly the same--we need others. One of the worst forms of punishment is solitary confinement. You may remember the story of Robinson Crusoe and how one of the best days of his lonely existence on the remote island was the day he met his native friend, Friday.

All of us need to feel as if we are valued and can give and receive love. In psychology, this is known as the three "A's" of emotional needs: acceptance, approval, and affection. When both individuals in a relationship have these needs fulfilled, the relationship becomes stronger.

Dating provides a way by which the three "A's" can be met. We can feel companionship when we are dating. Dating also provides ways by which we can prepare to select a mate for marriage. The more people we date, the greater the base we have to know what type of individual we would like for a mate.

Dating is an important step in the developmental task process. It helps us to develop mature relationships with others and prepare for marriage and family life.

Just like the chicken in the story, humans need others, too. We need to feel we have value, belong to something (family, friends, groups, etc.), and are loved and can give love. In the quest to meet these emotional needs, dating becomes an important part of the process. We need to feel as if we are valued by a member of the opposite sex and that we have approval from them. Certainly our need to give and receive affection is very pronounced during the dating years. These are natural responses that our body gives so that we can attract the "flock" just as Henny did. Dating creates the situation or environment in which are emotional needs can be met.

