

# Assertiveness Questionnaire

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## Overview

### What This Questionnaire Measures

In the context of education, assertiveness allows students to seek assistance, look for educational opportunities, and resist peer pressure. Students who are assertive can express themselves in a self-assured and direct manner. Researchers and educators consider assertiveness to be an essential skill for adolescents, as it can help them engage in effective interpersonal behaviors that contribute to their academic success and social development (Buell & Snyder, 1981; Lane, Wehby, & Cooley, 2006).

The Assertiveness Questionnaire is designed to measure a student's proficiency in the two essential components of assertiveness, which are:

1. Even when it's difficult, express my wants, needs, and thoughts.
2. Even when it's difficult, respect what others want, need, and think.

### How This Questionnaire Is Accessed

Teachers can launch questionnaires and view both individual and aggregate student results by visiting <http://ResearchCollaborationSurveys.org>, creating an account, and following the instructions provided on the website. This website is free and available to all educators. Once students have completed the questionnaires, teachers can see graphed results for individual students as well as in aggregate. Teachers can also download a raw data file in MS Excel.

### How This Questionnaire Is Completed

Teachers make the questionnaire available to students by providing the URL to the survey site and a survey code. Students then enter the survey code and a student number assigned by the teacher. Students complete the questionnaire by self-rating items on a 5-point, Likert-type scale. This scale ranges from 1 (*Not very like me*) to 5 (*Very like me*). The results are automatically graphed for students and available to them once they complete the questionnaire. This enables them to immediately reflect on results.

The following example items represent each of the two essential components:

- *I express my opinions, even if others disagree with me.* (Express Wants)
- *I listen to other people's opinions, even if I disagree with them.* (Respect Others)

The items on the questionnaire are written at a ninth grade reading level, per the Flesch-Kincaid<sup>1</sup> readability score. Accommodations should be provided when appropriate and can include reading the items aloud, explaining the items, and having a scribe fill in the response option.

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<sup>1</sup> Kincaid, J.P., Fishburne, R.P., Rogers, R.L., & Chissom, B.S. (1975). Derivation of new readability formulas (automated readability index, fog count, and flesch reading ease formula) for Navy enlisted personnel. Research Branch Report 8-75. Chief of Naval Technical Training: Naval Air Station Memphis.

## How to Use the Results

Assertiveness Questionnaire results can be used by both teachers and students. To ease interpretation, results are displayed on a 100-point scale. These scores can be interpreted similar to grades (e.g., 70-79 is a C). Results by essential component support reflection on relative strengths and areas for improvement.

Students can use the questionnaire results to gain an understanding of the differences between assertive, aggressive, and passive behaviors. They can use their individual results from the questionnaire to address assertive behaviors that they can cultivate or strengthen.

Teachers can enhance their instructional practices by determining which characteristics of assertive, aggressive, or passive behavior are most prevalent in their students, and then reinforcing the importance of assertiveness. After combining this targeted instruction with guided practice and independent practice, teachers can continually re-administer the Assertiveness Questionnaire and alter their instruction accordingly. This allows teachers to engage in a process of data-driven decision making in order to increase their students' fundamental ability to confidently express their wants, needs, and opinions while respecting other students, even when the situation or topic is difficult. Numerous resources for teaching assertiveness are available at <http://CCCFramework.org/Resources.html>.

## Technical Information

The Assertiveness Questionnaire was developed in 2015 by Research Collaboration (<http://ResearchCollaboration.org>). An extensive review of related research resulted in the identification of two components that are essential for successfully applying assertiveness. Following this literature review, it was determined that assertiveness requires individuals to express their wants and needs, and to respect what others want and need, even when it's difficult.

The questionnaire is currently being beta-tested with high school and middle school students.


# Questionnaire

## Assertiveness Questionnaire

Please **CHECK ONE** response that best describes you. Be honest, since the information will be used to help you in school and also help you become more prepared for college and careers. There are no right or wrong answers!

**Student ID** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

	Not very like me  Very like me				
	1	2	3	4	5
1. I stand up to my friends if they are doing something I don't feel comfortable doing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I speak up when someone is not respecting my personal boundaries like "no cheating off my homework" or "I don't let friends borrow money."	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I often have a hard time saying "No."	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I express my opinions, even if others disagree with me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. When an argument is over, I often wish I would have said what was really on my mind.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. I tend to just go along with what everyone else wants instead of stating my own thoughts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. I sometimes avoid asking questions for fear of sounding stupid.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. I tend to bottle up my emotions rather than talk about my feelings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. If I disagree with my teacher, I talk to him or her about it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. If a person has borrowed money (or a game, clothes, or something else of value) and is overdue in returning it, I talk to the person about it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. I'm usually able to tell people how I'm feeling.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. If I don't like the way someone is being treated, I speak up about it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. I speak up about things I really care about.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. I am careful to avoid hurting other people's feelings, even when I feel that I have been wronged.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. I have a hard time controlling my emotions when I disagree with someone.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. I avoid attacking someone's intelligence when I disagree with their ideas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. I listen to other people's opinions, even if I disagree with them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. In disagreements, I make sure that I understand other points of view.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. In discussions, I communicate that I am listening through body language (nodding my head, avoiding rolling my eyes).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. Even in an argument, I don't interrupt the other person.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>