PART I

CREATING A POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT

CONFIDENCE BUILDING

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES®

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GIVING AND EARNING RESPECT

1 LESSON

AGENDA

- Starter
- Whom Do You Respect?
- What Does It Mean?
- This One Says
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students will identify people whom they respect and the reasons they respect them.

Students will define “respect.”

Students will analyze the concept of self-respect.

Students will evaluate their own levels of self-respect.

Materials Needed

- One dictionary (Parts II and III)
- Folders, one for each student (Part III)
- Markers, old magazines, tape, and other art materials (Part III)

Starter *(3 minutes)*

Prompt students to think about the concept of respect by asking questions such as the following:

- What does it mean to disrespect somebody? (It means to be rude or to put them down.)
- Imagine that you overhear someone talking about you, and the person is saying that she respects your opinion. How would this make you feel? (I'd feel proud, complimented, embarrassed.)

Write the following questions on the board: "Who do you think deserves respect? Why?" Explain to students that they will be able to answer these questions by the end of this class.

Part I Whom Do You Respect? *(15 minutes)*

Purpose: Students explore the concept of respect by identifying people they respect and listing reasons why they respect them.

1. Students identify people they respect.

Ask students to consider and answer the first question you've written: "Who do you think deserves respect?" Note that their answers may include people they know personally or people they only know about (e.g., celebrities, athletes).

2. Students list and discuss the reasons why they respect these people.

Ask students to list the reasons why they respect these people. Encourage them to consider each person separately and to list the different reasons why they respect each one.

Invite volunteers to name one of the people they have listed and to explain the reasons why they respect that person. If students seem unwilling to volunteer, consider prompting them by first naming someone you respect, and listing the reasons why you respect that person.

Ask volunteers to write students' responses on the board. After everyone has responded, ask the class to consider whether there are any people or reasons for respect that they would like to add.

3. Students evaluate their criteria for respect.

Briefly evaluate the list as a class. Invite volunteers to circle or draw stars next to those reasons for respect that they consider the most important. Facilitate a brief discussion about why students believe those reasons are the most important. Conclude with a brief summary of the discussion.

Part II What Does It Mean? *(15 minutes)*

Purpose: Students will develop definitions of “respect” and “self-respect.”

1. Students develop a definition of respect.

Ask a volunteer to look up the definition of the word respect as it is given in the dictionary. If more than one definition is provided, ask students to decide which definition is most useful.

Ask the class to compare the dictionary definition of respect with the list they created on the board. Ask them whether they believe that the dictionary definition takes into account those characteristics they have listed on the board as reasons why people deserve respect.

As part of this discussion, ask students to consider whether friendship is listed on the board as a reason to respect someone. Lead students to conclude that a person may deserve respect even if they are not a friend.

Tell students to consider what they have discussed and listed on the board, and then create their own specific definitions of respect.

2. Students draw some conclusions about the concept of respect.

As a class, create a final definition of respect. Write this definition on the board. Explain that respect isn’t a concrete trait, like eye color, but more of a feeling that’s open to personal interpretation. Elicit from students that this is why individuals can create their own definitions of respect—it can mean something different to each person. Unlike eye color, which a person is born with and can’t change, respect is something a person can earn. Each person knows what it takes to earn respect, because they know what they respect in others.

3. Students consider the concept of self-respect.

Ask students to review the class definition of respect and to think about any other people who can be added to their lists. Prompt them to consider whether these people demonstrate the traits included in the definition of respect and, if so, whether these people should be added to their lists.

Explain again that if people know what they respect in a person, they know what traits they need to have in order to respect themselves. Tell students to think of it as a circle: If people respect themselves, it’s easier for them to be the kind of people they want to be. If they’re being the kind of people they want to be, it’s easier for them to respect themselves. (You may wish to draw a simple circle diagram on the board to illustrate this point.)

Finally, if individuals act like the kind of people they can respect—if they have self-respect—they will often find themselves respected by others.

Facilitate a discussion with the class about the difference between self-respect and bragging. Be sure students understand that thinking about their strengths isn't bragging about them; it's just considering the traits they have, like their eye color.

4. Students consider adding a respect rule to the class guidelines.

If class guidelines were developed during the previous module, ask students if they feel that the issue of respect should be addressed in the guidelines. If so, facilitate a brainstorming session to generate a respect rule that can be added to the guidelines (e.g., if you put someone down, you must say two positive things about that person).

Part III This One Says *(15 minutes)*

Purpose: Students create folders decorated with descriptions of the personal traits that they believe make them worthy of respect.

1. Students listen to directions.

Distribute one folder to each student. Place markers, magazines, tape, and other art materials you may have in a central place.

As you give the following directions, demonstrate them by writing your own name on a folder and choosing a word for the first letter of your name:

- Choose markers in colors you like, and write your name vertically down the left front side of the folder.
- For each letter of your name, choose a word beginning with that letter that describes you in some way. Choose words that tell what your strengths are, what interests you, or what you value. You can cut words from magazines, look up words in the dictionary, or print the words in any way you like.
- Draw a picture to decorate the back of your folder, or cut one out of a magazine. Choose any picture you like. Remember to choose a picture that says something about you.

2. Students create their folders.

Circulate the room while students are working. Discuss students' word and picture choices, and show appreciation for individual efforts.

3. Students begin using their folders.

Tell students that they will be using their folders to collect their work during the course. Ask students to place in their folders the "Cloud Nine" activity sheet, which they completed during their work on the *Getting Started* module. If you wish to periodically review the folders for assessment purposes, explain this to students. Assure them that you will not share anything in their folders with anyone else.

Conclusion *(3 minutes)*

Ask students to define “respect” and “self-respect.” Have them explain how someone might earn their respect. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- Respect can be earned.
- If you know what traits you respect in other people, you know what traits you need to demonstrate in order to respect yourself.
- People who respect themselves often find that others respect them for the same reasons.

Student Assessment

1. Define “respect.”
2. Name someone who has earned your respect. List three reasons why this person has earned your respect.
3. Why is it important to respect yourself?

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Using Quotations

"The dignity the world awards you is in exact proportion to the dignity you award yourself."

Ask volunteers to describe how self-respect can help an individual change the attitude of others.

Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

Have students write a radio announcement describing their most recent accomplishments (e.g., cleaning their room, passing a test). These announcements should be 75 words or less, be written in the third person, and include their names and congratulations. Have students trade papers and practice reading them out loud. Have students share a few each day before class, or start a schoolwide trend over the PA.

Writing in Your Journal

Have students choose a word or picture from their folders and write about an incident that supports this description of themselves. Have students share their stories with a partner. Tell them to brainstorm synonyms for the attributes discussed. (Students can list these synonyms on the inside of their folders.)

Using Technology

Play Aretha Franklin's 1967 hit "Respect." Have students discuss whether the lyrics are still relevant today. Have students bring in songs that address the issue of respect. Have students compare and contrast their songs with Aretha Franklin's song. Ask, "Which images are positive? Which are negative? How do they compare with the class definition of respect?"

Homework

Have students research and write reports on people who had confidence in themselves long before others believed in them. Help them come up with a list of possibilities (e.g., scientists with untraditional ideas, people who succeeded despite being stereotyped). Have students give oral reports on such people—with props or costumes, if desired—as if these were autobiographies.

Additional Resources

Read “Fill ’er Up” by Lindamichellebaron out loud, making sure that students understand the meanings of “ego,” “erupt,” and “corrupt.” Discuss the poem as a class.

FILL 'ER UP

BY LINDAMICHELLEBARON

Fill my ego,
Here's the cup.
I said, fill my ego.
I drink that up.

I'll smile,
and pose, and dimple up,
but just fill my ego.
Here's the cup.

I'll talk
and let my laugh erupt,
but just fill my ego.
That's what's up.

Say sweet words
that won't corrupt
but just fill my ego.
Fill it up.

I said, fill my ego.
Fill it up.
That's right, fill my ego,
that's what's up.
Hey now, fill my ego,
here's the cup.
Come on, fill my ego.
I drink that up.

From *Rhythm & Dues* by Lindamichellebaron. Reprinted with permission of the author.

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IDENTIFYING STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

2 LESSON

AGENDA

- Starter
- People Bingo
- Some of Both
- Make Them Work for You
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students will recognize that each individual has personal strengths.

Students will identify their individual strengths and weaknesses.

Students will identify ways in which they can use their weaknesses to their advantage.

Materials Needed

- Two copies of the “Bingo” activity sheet for each student (Parts I and II)

Starter *(3 minutes)*

Ask for a volunteer to play a quick game of catch. Tell the volunteer that they may use only one hand to catch. Gently toss a balled-up piece of paper to the student. Then, ask them the following questions:

- Which hand did you use to catch the paper?
- Why did you use this hand rather than the other one? (If the student replies that they are right- or left-handed, ask what this means.)
- If one of your hands is dominant, or stronger, does this mean that your other hand is useless or worthless? Why or why not?

Remind students that everyone has strengths. Point out that everyone also has some weaknesses; however, just like the less dominant hand, weaknesses do not need to be obstacles. Tell students that they will identify their individual strengths and will explore the relationship between strengths and weaknesses.

Part I People Bingo *(15 minutes)*

Purpose: Students recognize their individual strengths by playing a game involving group interaction.

1. Students listen to the game's directions.

Distribute copies of the "Bingo" activity sheet, and allow time for students to review it. Then, give the following directions:

- Move around the room and ask each of your classmates to sign their name in a square that describes one of their strengths. For example, if a square reads "knows how to swim," find a classmate who knows how to swim and ask them to sign that square.
- Your goal is to get bingo. That means that you must fill five squares in a row with names. Completed rows may read across, down, or diagonally.
- A person's name cannot be in any winning row more than once.
- When you have filled a row with signatures, call out, "Bingo!"
- If you sign your name to something, you may be asked to prove it.
- You have five minutes to play.

2. Students play the game.

Tell students to begin, allowing them to move freely around the room. After five minutes, quickly poll the class to see how many students are just one square away from bingo. Decide whether to allow an additional minute or two before ending the game.

3. Students discuss the activity.

Ask students if they found it difficult to get signatures for the various squares. As volunteers respond, encourage them to support their responses with details and examples. Allow students to challenge one another. For example, if a student has signed their name to the square that reads “speaks more than one language,” the student may be asked to say a few words in another tongue. This often allows students a chance to show off their strengths, and further encourages the class to build trust and a positive rapport.

Summarize the discussion by observing that the activity sheet has 24 different squares on it, each listing a different skill or strength. Point out that everyone has strengths, which is why each student was able to sign their name to at least one square.

In the event a student claims that they felt unable to sign any square on the sheet, remind the class that it’s impossible to measure all of the skills and strengths that people have—the sheet listed only 24, which is a small number. If pressed, tell the student that they kept the commitment to be in class today, and that keeping commitments is a very valuable strength.

Part II Some of Both *(10 minutes)*

Purpose: Students will identify their individual strengths and weaknesses.

1. Students identify their personal strengths.

Distribute new copies of the “Bingo” activity sheet. Ask students to reread each square and to consider whether it lists one of their strengths or traits. If so, have them write their name in the square. If not, ask them to put an X across the square.

Point out that students have begun to identify personal strengths. Allow time for students to add additional squares across the bottom of the chart, indicating other strengths or skills they have.

2. Students identify their personal weaknesses.

Explain that even the most talented, respected people have weaknesses or areas in which they don’t excel. Share a weakness of your own with the class; perhaps you are not a great speller, you can’t carry a tune, or you have trouble memorizing things. Write your example on the board.

Invite volunteers to provide examples of their personal weaknesses. Write their responses on the board. If students have difficulty offering examples, refer them to the boxes they left blank on the second “Bingo” activity sheet. The list of weaknesses needs to include only a few examples.

Tell students to use the backs of their activity sheets to list some of their weaknesses.

Part III Make Them Work for You *(5 minutes)*

Purpose: Students identify ways to use weaknesses to their advantage.

1. Students explore how to turn weaknesses into strengths.

Refer to the list on the board, and challenge students to convert these weaknesses into strengths. Model the thinking process for them by addressing your own example first. For example, you might say, “I’m a poor speller, so I have to proofread carefully. But when I proofread, I usually catch other mistakes, too. This makes my writing stronger than it might be if I were a good speller.”

Ensure that students understand the technique of changing one's attitudes in order to convert a weakness into a strength. Explain that this technique will be useful throughout their lives. Provide examples of situations in which converting a weakness into a strength is especially useful (e.g., when being teased, during an interview).

2. Students continue brainstorming in small groups.

Encourage students to brainstorm ways that one of the weaknesses listed on the board can be restated as a strength. If students cannot reasonably convert a weakness, focus the discussion on identifying ways to overcome it.

When the brainstorming session is complete, divide the class into groups of four or five. Explain that within each group, students should brainstorm ways to convert the weaknesses each student has listed on the back of their activity sheet. Remind students that if they cannot find ways to convert a weakness into a strength, they should brainstorm ways to overcome it.

Suggest that each group appoint a volunteer to take notes on the strategies created to address their individual weaknesses.

3. Students share their strategies.

Invite a volunteer from each group to share some strategies that the group developed. Be sure to affirm students’ efforts and to encourage supporting ideas from other students.

Conclude the discussion by pointing out that knowing what you’re not good at is actually a real strength. Successful people focus on doing what they do best, and make sure to work with others who are strong in the areas in which they are weak. That way, everyone is doing what they do best.

Give examples of this strategy, such as the following:

- Actors often work with business advisors who are paid to manage their finances efficiently.
- Athletes work with coaches who are talented at strategizing.
- Doctors specialize in a particular area and work with other specialists to treat patients most effectively.

Conclusion *(2 minutes)*

Ask students if this process was easy or difficult. Ask them to name a few of their classmates' strengths. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- Everyone has strengths. It's important to identify your own strengths so that you can focus on using them.
- Everyone also has weaknesses. It's important to identify your weaknesses so you can create strategies for overcoming them or using them to your advantage.
- Successful, respected people can always identify both their strengths and their weaknesses. It's what enables them to focus on doing what they do best, and to work with others who have strengths in areas in which they are weak.

Student Assessment

1. Why is it important to be aware of your own strengths?
2. List three of your personal strengths (or three things that you are good at).
3. What are some ways you can turn a weakness into a strength?

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Using Quotations

"Once we know our weaknesses they cease to do us any harm."

Have students rewrite this piece of wisdom in their own words, as if passing it on to a friend or classmate.

Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

Have volunteers who excel at jumping rope "perform" the poem "Jumping Double Dutch" (activity sheet #3) for the class. Help students use their bingo cards to divide the class into other groups of experts. Have each group write and perform a poem, chant, or cheer to celebrate their area of expertise.

Writing in Your Journal

Have students write a one-minute sales pitch or want ad (100 words or less) describing their skills, interests, and experiences. Remind students to use lively, positive language. Have students share their first drafts with a partner for feedback before presenting their pitches/ads to the class.

Using Technology

Have students create business cards on a computer, choosing a logo and slogan that characterize their strengths. (Specify in advance if it's okay for them to include phone numbers/emails.) Have students share their work in small groups, explaining their choices of words and designs.

Homework

Have students interview an adult they admire about something they considers a weakness, and how they have compensated for it or used it as an advantage. Have students summarize their findings in a paragraph. Have the class discuss what they've learned. Create a chart of strategies for compensating for weaknesses.

Additional Resources

Have students read *Freak the Mighty,* by Rodman Philbrick, or watch the movie based on the novel (*The Mighty*). Discuss the relationship between the main characters—oversized, learning disabled Max and physically disabled, genius Kevin. Have students list the strengths of each young man, and describe how they helped each other compensate for their respective weaknesses.

JUMPING DOUBLE DUTCH

BY LINDAMICHELLEBARON

We can double dutch turn,
turning jumps into dance.
Our steps are serious.
We don't make them up by chance.

Some think jumping is a game.
Jumping rope is more than that.
Watch us tumble fast and agile,
jumping sidewalk acrobats.

We can double dutch dance.
We can double dutch sing.
We can double dutch do about anything.

Double ten, twenty, thirty…
keeping count to the beat.
If you want to see us miss, if I were you,
I'd take a seat.

From *The Sun Is On* by Lindamichellebaron. Reprinted with permission of the author.

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BINGO

Is good at math	Always works hard	Likes to join in activities	Can organize anything	Can write computer code
Speaks more than one language	Tells great stories and jokes	Is a good speller	Plays a team sport	Likes to read
Knows how to swim	Can play a musical instrument		Has a good memory	Is good at building or making things
Likes to make charts and graphs	Likes to figure out how things work	Likes to write	Likes to be in plays	Likes to help others
Is a good cook	Keeps a personal diary or journal	Likes to design posters and murals	Is a good artist	Is a great dancer

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STAYING HEALTHY

3
LESSON

AGENDA

- SESSION 1
  - Starter
  - Getting Ahead
  - Creating Energy
- SESSION 2
  - Review
  - Creating More Energy
  - Take Action!
  - Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students will recognize that diet, sleep, and exercise affect their efforts to achieve a goal.

Students will discuss how a balanced diet affects their health and well-being.

Students will discuss how exercise and sleep affect their health and well-being.

Students will create weekly plans for eating well, sleeping regularly, and exercising.

Materials Needed

- Session 1: One copy of the “Getting Ahead (A)” and “Getting Ahead (B)” activity sheets cut into

squares, for a total of 32 squares (Part I)

- Session 1: A cap, hat, or small basket to hold the squares (Part I)
- Session 1: One copy of the “MyPlate” activity sheet for each student (Part II)
- Session 2: One copy of the “My Action Plan” activity sheet for each student (Part III)

SESSION 1

Starter *(4 minutes)*

Give students the following scenario:

> Sammy bought a car. It's an expensive car, very well made, a top-of-the-line machine. Sammy says that the car runs so well that it doesn't need any care. He never washes it, doesn't add oil, and tries to drive it everywhere without adding any gas. When he does add gas, he buys the cheapest brand, so the car runs well for a few miles, but over time, the gunk from the cheap gas starts to build up in the engine.

Ask, "What do you think will happen to the car?" (It will break down.)

Say, "A car is a machine, and without proper care, the machine breaks down. What do you think happens when the machine is well taken care of?" (It runs well.)

Tell students that the human body runs exactly the same way. If you take good care of it, it will run very well for a long time. If not, it breaks down.

Explain that in today's session, students will learn how to keep their bodies running well.

Part I Getting Ahead *(30 minutes)*

Purpose: Students identify how diet, sleep, and exercise affect their efforts to achieve a goal.

1. Students play a game that emphasizes the importance of healthy living.

Before class, cut the two "Getting Ahead" activity sheets into individual squares. Place all the squares into a cap or basket and mix them up. If you have more than 32 students, ask some students to assist you by distributing and collecting squares, or by working together as an observation team. Observation teams can track progress, keep time, and generally act as referees.

Walk from one wall of your room to the opposite wall, counting your steps to determine how many it takes to cross the room. Decide on which side of the room you wish to have students line up.

Explain that the goal of the game is for students to reach the wall on the other side of the room.

Tell students to line up against one wall. Have them pick a square from the cap or basket, read the square aloud, and take the number of steps indicated.

Once each student has drawn and read a square, give the following directions:

- Raise your hand if you had a square that said you ate cookies or a candy bar, or that you drank soda or coffee. All those with their hands up must now take five steps backward.
- Raise your hand if you had a square that said you stayed up late—regardless of the reason. All those with their hands up must now take three steps backward.

Invite students to pick another square. When the squares are gone, collect them in the cap and continue the game. After all students have had a second turn, repeat the directions for taking steps backward. Continue in this manner until most students have reached the other side of the room.

2. Students make observations about the game.

Ask questions such as the following to help students generate observations about the game:

- What types of things helped people cross the room quickly? (They were helped by eating good food, getting a full night's sleep, and getting some exercise.)
- What types of things slowed people down? (They were slowed down by eating cookies and candy, drinking soda and coffee, staying up late, and sitting around watching TV.)
- Why do you think these behaviors might keep people from getting ahead in real life?

Explain that foods high in sugar (such as cookies, candy, and soda) or caffeine (such as soda and coffee) give a burst of energy, which the body quickly uses up. When this happens, the person feels a drop in energy—they actually end up feeling tired and lethargic.

Ask students to give examples of how sleep and exercise might affect a person's level of energy, mood, and performance.

Explain that eating and sleeping well, along with physical activity, are the factors that enable people to look and feel their best, because these things create energy.

Part II Creating Energy *(15 minutes)*

Purpose: Students learn what constitutes a balanced diet and how it affects their health.

1. Students analyze the benefits of a balanced diet.

Introduce the concept of a balanced diet by asking questions such as the following:

- Does the food you eat affect your energy level and your ability to do things well? (Yes.)
- What does it mean to have a balanced diet? (A balanced diet means eating different kinds of foods in proper quantities.)
- What are some benefits of eating a balanced diet? (Eating a balanced diet allows you to think better; gives your body the nutrients it needs to work and grow, so that your brain can do its job; helps you to look your best; keeps your skin healthy; and makes your hair and bones stronger.)

2. Students learn about important food groups.

Distribute copies of the "MyPlate" activity sheet. Ask volunteers to explain why they think this chart is in the shape of a plate. (Students should mention that the design shows them what their own meals should look like.) Then, briefly discuss each section of the chart:

- Grains: Breads, cereals, rice, and pasta are foods that are high in proteins and carbohydrates. Proteins and carbohydrates are important for creating energy. Half of the grains we eat should be whole (e.g., whole-grain bread).
- Fruits and Vegetables: Vegetables and fruits are high in vitamins and nutrients. They help the body fight infections and diseases. Fruits are also a source of sugar, which gives the body energy when eaten in small amounts. Notice how much space these two sections take up. This means that half of your plate should be filled with fruits and vegetables.
- Protein: Meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts are important sources of proteins, which are considered the building blocks of the body.
- Dairy: The small blue cup above the plate represents fat-free and low-fat dairy products—like yogurt, milk, and cheese—which are high in vitamins and an important nutrient called calcium. Calcium helps bones, teeth, and nails grow strong. We should have at least one cup of dairy with each meal. People who are lactose intolerant can have lactose-free dairy or calcium-fortified soy milk.

Note that foods high in sugar and fat aren't on the plate. It is important to eat these foods sparingly, because they slow the body down. Sugary foods include soda and candy. Foods that are high in fats and oils include potato chips, french fries, hamburgers, and fried chicken. Eating too many of these kinds of foods can affect your skin and your body in unhealthy ways.

Point out that the purpose of the "MyPlate" chart is to show what kinds of foods people should eat and—most importantly—in what amounts. Following this chart ensures a balanced diet.

3. Students reflect on the foods they eat.

Ask students to list on a sheet of paper what they ate yesterday for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. They should also list snacks they may have eaten.

Ask students to compare their lists of foods with those listed on the “MyPlate” chart, and to place a check mark in each category for each food they ate from that category.

Have students analyze their check marks and determine from which food groups they ate too much and the groups from which they need to eat more. Encourage them to make notes in each section of the “MyPlate” chart.

Tell students to save their activity sheets for use in the next class.

SESSION 2

Part I Review *(8 minutes)*

Hold up a copy of the “MyPlate” activity sheet, and ask volunteers to briefly explain what it is and why it is important. (The chart reflects a balanced diet because it shows what we should have in each meal, including foods that should be eaten and in what amounts.)

Remind students of the following:

- The foods they eat affect their energy levels and their ability to do things well.
- Two other factors can affect their energy levels and their ability to do things well: exercise and sleep.

Part II Creating More Energy *(20 minutes)*

Purpose: Students identify how exercise and sleep affect their health and well-being.

1. Students analyze the benefits of exercise.

Ask students the following questions about exercise:

- What does exercise do to your level of energy and the flow of oxygen to your brain? (Exercise increases your energy. It increases the flow of oxygen to your brain, which makes your mind work more effectively.)
- What does exercise do for your bodily tissues and organs, including muscles and bones? (Exercise strengthens muscles, bones, and other bodily tissues and organs.)
- Does the body work better if it is used more? (Yes. The body is like a machine that works better if it works more.)
- Have you ever noticed that if you are angry or upset about something, going out and doing something often makes you feel better? Why do you think this is? (Exercise relieves the body of tension and stress.)

2. Students brainstorm a list of physical activities.

Begin a discussion about exercise by asking students to describe the kinds of exercise or physical activities they enjoy. List responses on the board. As more examples are listed, encourage students to stretch their thinking. Remind students that exercise does not have to be a sport. They can climb the stairs instead of taking an elevator, or walk or ride a bike instead of riding in a car.

Explain that young people should exercise for 60 minutes most days of the week, whether they walk, run, dance, skateboard, etc.

Leave the list of activities on the board. Students will refer to them during the activity in Part III of this session.

Invite students to stand up and stretch. Lead them in some bending and stretching exercises to get oxygen flowing and to relieve tension and stress. Invite students to share some exercises they know and lead the class in those exercises.

3. Students recognize the importance of sleep.

Take a quick poll to determine how long most students sleep each night. Ask for a show of hands from those who sleep about ten hours each night, then from those who sleep nine, eight, seven, or six hours. If these hours seem to reflect the majority of the class, make the observation that most students seem to sleep between six and ten hours per night.

Point out that young people usually need about ten hours of sleep each night, but this can vary from person to person. Ask students to identify techniques for getting a good night's sleep. Prompt students to respond by asking questions such as the following:

- Is the body resting when it is digesting food? (Your body cannot rest when it is busy digesting food. Don't eat heavily before going to sleep.)
- Is it easy or hard to fall asleep when you have a lot on your mind? (It's hard, so you should relax before going to sleep. If you have a lot on your mind, write in your journal. Do whatever will help you feel that you've done all you can today—you'll have tomorrow to tackle more.)
- Do light and noise stimulate your mind? (Your mind won't be able to relax if you continue to stimulate it; if your mind is awake, so is your body. Sleep in a quiet, dark room.)

4. Students role-play and reflect.

Ask volunteers to demonstrate how they'd act in the following situations if they didn't get enough sleep the night before. Read each situation, and then have a volunteer act it out:

- Leave the room, and then come back in and take a seat as though this is your last class of a long school day.
- The elevator is out of service, and you must walk up to the fifth floor.
- Your parent wants you to clean your room.

After each role play, have students describe the energy level, mood, and level of performance demonstrated by the volunteer.

Point out that after a full day of work in school and at home, and activities with friends and family, our bodies need time to rest and mend. This is especially important when our bodies are going through periods of change and growth. Point out that when you have had little sleep you are more likely to be irritable. Ask students if they are more likely to get into an argument or a fight when they are irritable.

Part III Take Action! *(20 minutes)*

Purpose: Students create individual plans for eating well, sleeping regularly, and exercising.

1. Students create customized food plans.

Have students visit www.eatthismuch.com and enter the appropriate information to create their own customized daily food plans. Have students print out or take note of their results.

When they are finished, distribute copies of the “My Action Plan” activity sheet, and divide the class into groups of four or five students. Explain that students will spend about 10 minutes brainstorming in groups before working individually to fill out the activity sheet. Suggest that members of each group do the following:

- Make lists of foods they like to eat.
- Compare their lists with their customized daily food plans to see how their favorite foods fit into the plans.
- Make a list of the physical activities they like to do.
- Refer to the list of activities on the board for suggestions.

2. Students make individual action plans.

Tell students to fill out their copies of the “My Action Plan” activity sheet. Suggest that they use pencils to write so they can adjust their plans as the week progresses. Encourage students to create lists of foods for breakfast, lunch, and snacks so that they can choose appropriate foods from the lists for each meal. The goal is to create a balanced diet. Suggest that students leave the dinner menus open and fill them in at the end of each day.

Remind students that if they want to be in charge of themselves, they need to take charge. Also remind them that the daily choices they make about food, exercise, and sleep will impact their ability to be and do their best. Circulate around the room as students work, offering assistance and encouragement as needed.

Conclusion *(2 minutes)*

Ask students how often they will review their action plans. Have students describe how to live a healthy lifestyle. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- When you are healthy, you look, feel, think, and do your best.
- The food you eat affects your energy level and your health.
- Exercise increases your energy, strengthens your body, and relieves stress.
- Sleep is essential to good health. The amount of sleep you get affects your mood, energy level, and performance.

Student Assessment

SESSION 1

1. List three reasons why it is a good idea to avoid eating foods with too much caffeine or sugar.
2. What are the five food groups? What does each food group give the body?
3. What does it mean to have a balanced diet? Why is it important to have a balanced diet?

SESSION 2

1. List three positive effects that exercise has on your health.
2. Aside from playing a sport, list four ways you can exercise.
3. List three results of not getting enough sleep.
4. List three things you can do to help yourself sleep well.

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Using Quotations

“Tell me what you eat, and I will tell you what you are.”

Have students draw themselves as if they literally appear to be what they eat.

Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

For one week, have students keep track of the amount of exercise they get each day, the number of hours they sleep each night, and the kinds of foods they eat. Have them create graphs showing this information. Have students compare their bar graphs with their personal journals to look for correlations between performance and health habits.

Writing in Your Journal

Have students keep a daily journal for one week. This journal should include entries about school, friends, and/or home. Students should also note if each day was good or bad. Have students compare their entries with their exercise, sleep, and diet graphs. Discuss the correlations as a group.

Using Technology

Have students prepare a healthy dish that’s a family favorite or reflects their cultural heritage. Have them bring the dishes in to share with the class. Have students type recipes on a computer and organize them by food group to create a class recipe book.

Homework

Have students research various forms of exercise. They should include noncompetitive exercise from other cultures, like yoga and tai chi. Have students share their research with the class, teach a new exercise, and/or provide information about after-school athletic programs.

Additional Resources

Have students read page 122 of *Jump Starters,* by Linda Nason McElherne. Have students turn a part of their action plans into a cinquain (five-line) poem. Have students share their poems.

GETTING AHEAD (A)

I drank a cola/ soda. **5 Steps**	I ate potato chips. **2 Steps**	I drank an energy drink. **5 Steps**	I ate cookies. **4 Steps**
I ate string beans. **7 Steps**	I ate rice & beans. **12 Steps**	I ate peanut butter & jelly. **9 Steps**	I drank orange juice. **7 Steps**
I ate a ham & cheese sandwich. **9 Steps**	I ate an apple. **7 Steps**	I drank a glass of milk. **8 Steps**	I ate whole-grain bread. **7 Steps**
I ate a baked potato. **8 Steps**	I ate a bowl of vegetable soup. **11 Steps**	I ate ice cream. **4 Steps**	I ate a banana. **7 Steps**

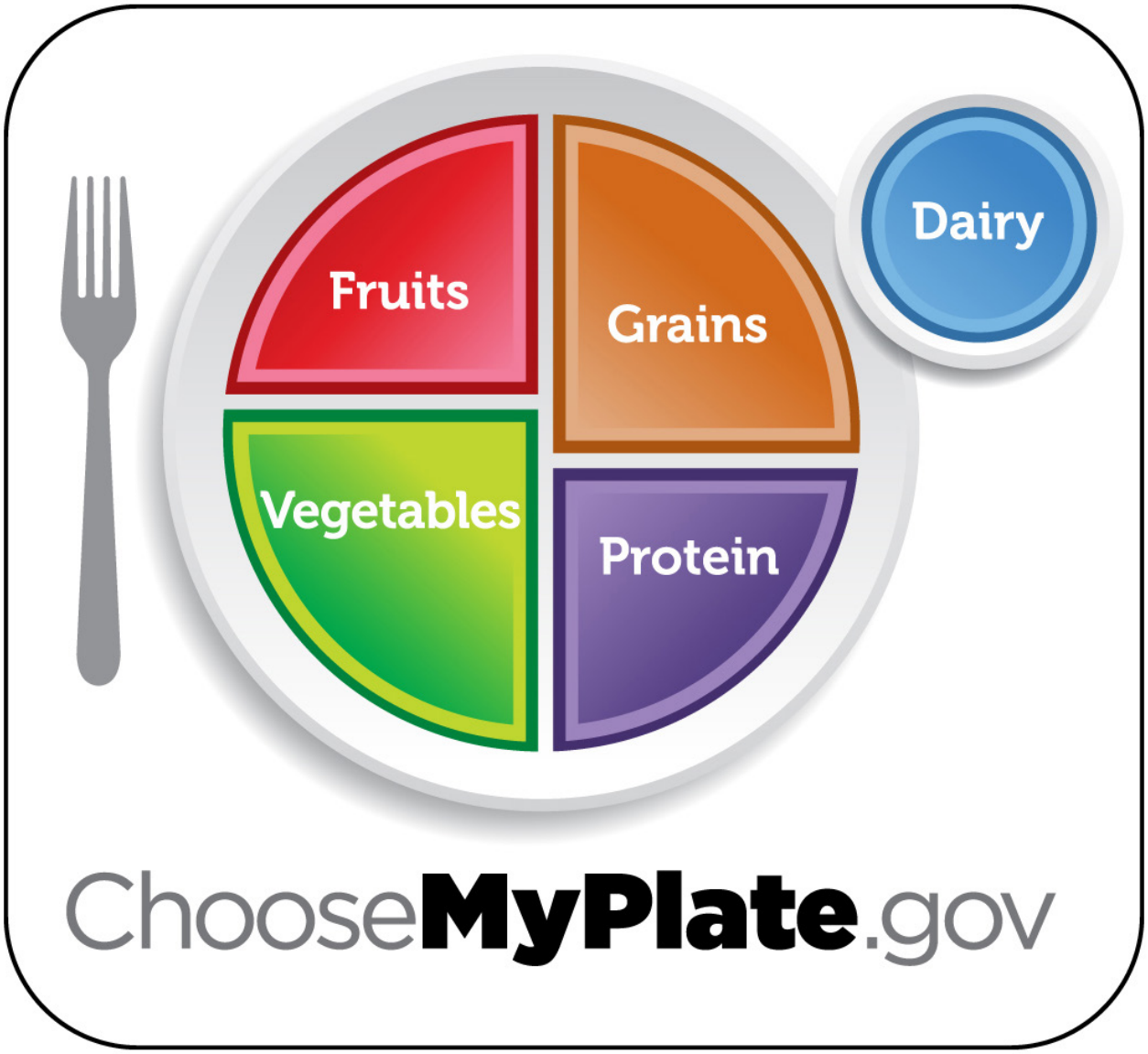
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GETTING AHEAD (B)

I stayed up late gaming. **5 Steps**	I rode my bike after school. **8 Steps**	I watched TV after school. **0 Steps**	I went to bed early. **10 Steps**
I played a game outdoors. **10 Steps**	I stayed up late doing homework. **5 Steps**	I ran a mile. **8 Steps**	I stayed up late talking on the phone. **5 Steps**
I did my home-work right after school. **10 Steps**	I walked instead of riding in a car. **8 Steps**	I stayed up late for no reason. **5 Steps**	I raked leaves. **8 Steps**
I ate broccoli. **8 Steps**	I ate a balanced dinner. **10 Steps**	I ate a candy bar. **3 Steps**	I ate a hamburger. **5 Steps**

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MYPLATE



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My Action Plan

Wake-up time: _____

Bedtime: _____

Breakfast

Cereal, milk, banana, orange juice

Monday
Tuesday
Wednesday
Thursday
Friday
Saturday
Sunday

Lunch

Monday
Tuesday
Wednesday
Thursday
Friday
Saturday
Sunday

Snacks

Dinner

Monday
Tuesday
Wednesday
Thursday
Friday
Saturday
Sunday

Exercise

Monday
Tuesday
Wednesday
Thursday
Friday
Saturday
Sunday

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CLARIFYING VALUES

4 LESSON

AGENDA

- Starter
- This or That
- Mission to Mars
- Being True to Yourself
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students will analyze how their values influence the decisions they make.

Students will identify the people, possessions, activities, and future plans they value.

Students will demonstrate how their values influence their decision making.

Materials Needed

- One sheet of paper for each student (Part II)
- One copy of the “Mission to Mars” activity sheet (Part II)
- One role-play scenario card for each group of three to four students (Part III)

Starter *(3 minutes)*

With a sense of urgency, tell students that they have 30 seconds to choose one person and one possession they would take with them to a deserted island. They can assume that their basic needs, such as food, water, and shelter, will be met.

When 30 seconds have elapsed, ask volunteers which person and possession they chose. Encourage students to explain why they made their particular choices.

After volunteers have responded, explain that different individuals value different things. Tell students that knowing what they value will help them make decisions and plans that they are comfortable with.

Tell students that today they're going to spend some time identifying what they value.

Part I This or That *(5 minutes)*

Purpose: Students analyze how their values influence the decisions they make.

1. Students listen to instructions.

Explain to students that they will be presented with a series of choices. Depending on what they choose and where you point, they should either stand up or remain seated.

Demonstrate how this will work by saying, "For example, I will ask if you would rather have X (point up, meaning stand up) or Y (point down, meaning remain seated)."

2. Students play a game involving choices.

Beginning with simple choices and moving to more difficult ones, ask students a series of questions such as the following:

- Would you rather wear clothes with patterns or without patterns?
- Would you rather be on stage or in the audience?
- Would you rather be an athlete or an artist?
- Would you rather spend time with your family or with your friends?
- Would you rather do something with others or work on something alone?
- Would you rather be healthy but poor, or terminally ill but very rich?

3. Students reflect on their choices.

Ask students if they thought the choices became more difficult toward the end. Invite volunteers to give examples of choices that they found difficult to make. Encourage them to explain why these choices were difficult, and to describe how they finally made a decision.

Point out that people make decisions every day. Many decisions are easy to make and seem unimportant. But sometimes the decisions are more difficult, and they require more thought. Explain that what is important to us, or what we value, influences the decisions and choices we make.

Tell students that for this reason, it's necessary for each person to know what they consider to be important. Knowing what we value allows us to make decisions and choices with which we are most comfortable.

Part II Mission to Mars *(30 minutes)*

Purpose: Students identify people, possessions, activities, and future plans they value.

1. Students identify people and things that are important to them.

Give each student a sheet of paper. Demonstrate how to fold, crease, and cut the paper to make 16 squares. First, fold the paper in half from top to bottom, and crease it. Now, fold and crease it from side to side. Then, fold and crease it again from top to bottom, and finally again from side to side. Unfold the paper, and use a ruler or the side of your desk to tear along the crease lines.

Using the 16 squares, students should write a word or two to identify the following:

- Three favorite activities
- Five important people in their lives
- Three goals they have for the future
- Three favorite possessions
- Two things they would like to own someday

Each person, thing, activity, or goal should be written on a separate square.

Tell students to keep the squares in separate stacks on their desks, but to combine the possessions into one stack. In other words, they should have four stacks: activities, people, goals, and possessions.

2. Students listen to an imaginary story and identify whom and what they value most.

Explain to students that you are going to read a story. After you read each part of the story, they will be asked to make a decision. They will have 10 to 15 seconds to make the decision. All decisions are final. Discarded squares must be crumpled or torn up.

Read the “Mission to Mars” activity sheet aloud to students. After each part, pause for 10 or 15 seconds before announcing that time is up.

Then, continue to read the story.

3. Students reflect on their decisions.

Prompt students to think about and evaluate the decisions they made by asking:

- How did you feel about the decisions you made? Why?
- Which were the hardest ones for you to make?
- Would it have been easier if someone else had made the decisions for you? Why or why not?
- Was anyone surprised by the squares they had left at the end? Do these squares reflect what’s really important to you?
- If you were to play this game again, would you choose to have different squares at the end? Raise your hand if you would.
- If you were to play this game again, would you change some of the things you wrote on your squares? Raise your hand if you would.

End this activity by explaining that we all value different people and things for different reasons; each person lives by different personal rules. Tell students that while it’s important to respect the values and rules of others, it’s difficult to be the person you want to be and to respect yourself unless you live according to your own values and rules.

Part III Being True to Yourself *(10 minutes)*

Purpose: Students demonstrate how their values influence their decision making.

1. Students role-play situations in small groups.

Divide the class into groups of three or four. Explain that each group will role-play a situation involving peer pressure. Tell students that each group must select one person to play the main character. The rest of the group will then try to convince the main character to do something that they don't want to do.

Give each group a notecard with one of the following scenarios:

- Amy loves playing basketball. Two days before a big game, her friends try to convince her to skip practice, and go instead to see a popular new movie.
- Darien made plans to hang out with his best friend. Darien's other friends want him to ditch his best friend and hang out with them.
- Serena's favorite possession is a tablet that her older brother gave to her. It's engraved with the words "Best sister ever!" Her friends want her to trade in the tablet to get the latest model.
- Alan has a dream of making the honor roll. His friends try to convince him that studying is not important.

Tell students that they have five minutes to work. Circulate among the groups, listening and observing as students role-play their scenarios.

2. Students reflect on their experiences.

Ask those students who played a main character if it was hard not to be swayed by their classmates. As students respond, ask them if they would rather have been on the other side of the role play. Invite other students to describe how it felt to try to convince the main characters to do something they didn't want to do.

Acknowledge that being true to yourself is not always easy to do. Explain that when you have a clear understanding of what you value, it becomes easier to be true to yourself. Tell students that this program will help them learn more about their values and their goals, and give them practice in being true to themselves.

Conclusion *(2 minutes)*

Ask students to define “values.” Have them describe how their values affect the way they choose to live their lives. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- The things you value influence everything you do.
- Decide on what you value, and make choices and decisions based on that.
- Be respectful of what others value, but always make your own choices.
- Your decisions may be tough, but if you stay true to yourself and what you value, you’ll feel good about whatever you decide.

Student Assessment

1. Define “personal values.”
2. Why would someone make a decision that goes against what they value? What problems couldthis cause?
3. Describe a decision you have made in your life, and explain how this decision relates to your personal values.

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Using Quotations

"The best things in life aren't things."

Ask students if they agree or disagree with this quote. As a class, discuss how valuing only material goods leads to an unhappy life.

Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

Have students bring in an object that's important to them. Encourage them to think about objects that reveal something about themselves. Have students explain the importance of their objects in small groups. As a whole class, categorize the objects that students value (e.g., possessions, family relationships).

Writing in Your Journal

Have students write a letter to someone they value (e.g., a friend, a family member, a public figure), telling this person what they mean to them. Have students discuss why these people are important to them.

Using Technology

Have students use the internet to locate the mission statements of several corporations and organizations. You may want to assign a few familiar ones (e.g., Girl Scouts, McDonald's, the NBA). Have students analyze the different mission statements and generate a list of company values. What similarities are found? Do all companies stay true to their mission statements?

Homework

Distribute the "Mission to Mars" activity sheet and have students play the game again, once with a partner and once with someone not in the class. Have students share their observations with the class. Did the results change the second time around? How did their friends' and family members' answers compare with their own? Were they surprised by anything they observed?

Additional Resources

Have students read "Raymond's Run," a short story by Toni Cade Bambara printed in *America Street: A Multicultural Anthology of Stories*. Have students discuss Hazel's values. How do her values compare with their own?

MISSION TO MARS

1. You have volunteered to undergo training to journey into space and take part in an effort to make Mars habitable. You will need to dramatically change your daily routine to begin training for the mission. You have to give up one of your favorite activities to prepare.

2. Because of the mission, you will be away from your normal life for some time. You must lose one of your goals.

3. There is a limited amount of room on the spacecraft that will take you to Mars. You must give up one of your possessions.

4. The engineers have redesigned the spacecraft in order to make it safer, but there is less extra space now. You have to give up another possession.

5. You are given news that in order to make the most out of the mission, you will be on Mars longer and must undergo even more training for the mission. You lose one of your goals and must give up an activity. And because of how busy you are now, two important people disappear from your life since you are no longer able to maintain relationships as easily.

6. As stress mounts for the impending mission, you find it even harder to make time for the people you care about. Discard two squares containing important people.

7. As you prepare to embark, it becomes more and more clear that the mission will take up decades of your life. You must discard three of your remaining squares. Which will they be?

8. You have returned from the mission and will live out the rest of your life with only this person, possession, goal, or activity.

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AVOIDING STEREOTYPES

5 LESSON

AGENDA

- Starter
- Not All Exactly the Same
- What Stereotypes Do
- Getting It Right
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students define “stereotyping.”

Students analyze the effects of applying stereotypes to people.

Students identify ways to avoid stereotyping others.

Materials Needed

- Pen and one index card for each student (Part II)
- One copy of the “Perceptions” activity sheet for each student (Part III)

Starter *(3 minutes)*

Begin class by casually holding a whiteboard eraser as you ask students to raise their hands if they agree with this statement: “Erasers are [say the color of the eraser you are holding].” Ask students who do not have their hands raised to explain why they disagree with the statement. Guide students to conclude that not all erasers are used to clean whiteboards. Some are used to clean pencil markings off paper. These erasers are made of a different material and come in many colors.

Say, “Your response depended on what kind of eraser you thought I was talking about—it depended on your perception of what an eraser is. I influenced your perception by holding a whiteboard eraser. Today, we’re going to talk about people’s perceptions of one another and how they are formed.”

Part I Not All Exactly the Same *(10 minutes)*

Purpose: Students consider an analogy in order to understand the concept of stereotyping.

1. Students describe a common object.

Invite students to describe a pencil. (You may choose another common object, such as an apple, a banana, a folder, or a notebook.) Write students’ responses on the board. Focus on general descriptive words and phrases, such as “long,” “skinny,” “lead point at one end,” “eraser at the other end,” and so on. If students describe specific characteristics, such as color or material, list these as well.

2. Students challenge their descriptions.

Ask students to hold up their own pencils. Choose a distinctive one, such as a mechanical pencil, and ask the student holding it to stand up and show it to everyone. Ask whether this pencil fits the description on the board or whether anything should be added or changed in order to make the description more exact.

Follow this same procedure with other pencils that differ from the description in some way. When you’ve done this a number of times, invite students to draw conclusions about this exercise. Affirm responses that point out the following:

- There are obviously many different kinds of pencils.
- It is difficult to come up with one description that covers the individual characteristics of every single pencil.

3. Students recognize the concept of stereotyping.

Reinforce that as more examples and information became available, the class recognized that there were many differences among individual members of the same group. That made it hard to come up with one description or definition that fit them all.

Ask students to develop a description that could include all of the pencils. Afterward, emphasize that students had to come up with a very broad and general list of things that did not include the specific or individual characteristics of every member of the group. Tell students that such a description or definition is an example of a stereotype.

Part II What Stereotypes Do *(25 minutes)*

Purpose: Students confront and dispel stereotypes about various groups of people.

1. Students examine stereotypes.

Give each student a pen and an index card. Ask students to create a list of at least three stereotypes about various groups of people that they have read or heard about, or have seen. Let students know that their cards will remain anonymous, and that they do not have to agree with the stereotypes they write. Remind students to use appropriate language.

Have students write the stereotypes on their index cards in the following format: “I’ve heard that [group of people] are all [stereotype].”

Ask students for their index cards once they have completed their lists. Collect and shuffle the index cards; then, randomly distribute one to every student.

Allow students a few minutes to read their new cards silently.

While this is a serious and sensitive topic, expect the class to laugh when appropriate, as well as to experience the various feelings and hurt that these stereotypes can evoke in people.

Ask students to take turns reading the stereotypes aloud to the class.

2. Students identify labels as stereotypes.

When students have finished reading their index cards, ask:

- How did the stereotypes we read make you feel?
- Do you think the stereotypes we read are true?
- Do you think some people treat each other differently because of stereotypes like these?

Point out that using labels for someone can be dangerous, because you're not really responding to the person—you're only responding to a label, or a stereotype.

Explain that stereotypes result from trying to understand a very complex world by focusing on general similarities among people—like the class's description of the pencils. Stereotypes cause problems because they make you overlook the differences among people.

3. Students recognize problems with stereotypes.

Ask students to raise their hands if they have ever been treated a certain way because of a stereotype. Then, ask for a show of hands from people who have treated someone else a certain way because of a stereotype. Pause briefly before making the following points:

- People sometimes use stereotypes to make judgments about another person without finding out who the other person really is.
- Believing stereotypes fools people into thinking that they know what someone else is like just because the person looks a certain way, does a certain thing, or hangs out with certain people.
- Stereotypes can also stop people from forming an accurate opinion, as they don't take time to learn the facts.

4. Students find ways to avoid stereotypes.

Challenge students to offer suggestions that can help us avoid stereotyping others. Prompt students to generate a list of suggestions, such as the following:

- Don't make a judgment about a person or a situation until you have the facts.
- Focus on individuals and their strengths and interests.
- Make an effort to get to know other people, and let them get to know you.
- Remember that if you think you know someone because they fit a general category or description, then you may be stereotyping the person. Everyone is unique, even if they have a lot in common with a larger group.

Challenge students to offer suggestions on how to avoid being stereotyped by others. Prompt students to generate a list of suggestions, such as the following:

- Focus on your strengths and interests, and make them stand out so that they are what people notice about you.
- Volunteer information about yourself.
- Volunteer to do things or talk with people you don't know very well.

Part III Getting It Right *(10 minutes)*

Purpose: Students analyze the importance of gathering information before making judgments about people.

1. Set up the activity.

Divide the class into groups of four. Ask each group of students to arrange themselves in alphabetical order by their first names. The student whose name is closest to the letter A will be the group leader.

2. Students write their perceptions.

Explain that all students are to write one fact about themselves on a piece of paper and hand it to the leader. Caution students to write something about themselves that they are comfortable sharing with the group.

Distribute copies of the “Perceptions” activity sheet. Explain that each group’s leader will read aloud the facts one by one, while the rest of the group uses the worksheet to write their guesses about which classmate is described by that fact.

3. Students check their perceptions.

Ask the group leaders to read the facts again. This time, students should indicate which facts they submitted. Students can then complete their activity sheets.

When students have completed their activity sheets, facilitate a class discussion about the accuracy of students’ perceptions. Use questions such as the following to prompt the discussion:

- Did you correctly match the facts to your fellow students?
- How did you feel when you guessed incorrectly?
- How did it feel when someone guessed incorrectly about you?
- Can you think of a situation in which guessing incorrectly could be embarrassing?
- Did anyone answer “I don’t know” for the person being described?

Point out that unless students really knew the people they were guessing about, they probably weren’t sure which facts were true about which people. Explain that when they’re not familiar with a person, admitting that they don’t know all of the facts is better than making a guess based on a label or on other incomplete information.

Conclusion *(2 minutes)*

Ask students to explain the effects of stereotyping. Ask them to identify ways to avoid stereotyping others. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- Stereotypes often give people false perceptions of one another.
- Never rely on stereotypes to make judgments about people or situations.
- To avoid stereotyping others, take the time to find out the facts.
- To avoid being stereotyped, focus attention on yourself as an individual.

Student Assessment

1. Define "stereotype."
2. List three reasons why stereotypes can be harmful.
3. List three things you can do to avoid using stereotypes.

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Using Quotations

"What we see depends mainly on what we look for."

Divide the class into small groups. Assign different groups the belief that dogs make better pets than cats, and vice versa. Have students list reasons to support their assigned points of view. Have the class share their reasons and discuss characteristics that are open to interpretation (such as "independent" or "needs lots of exercise"). Relate this to how our beliefs about others are open to interpretation.

Using Technology

Search www.youtube.com for videos about the stereotypes different groups have faced in the United States. Some of the videos may contain images of violence or strong language; be sure to screen videos for appropriateness before showing them. Show the videos to the class. Then, discuss the impact that stereotypes had on the people shown.

Writing in Your Journal

Have students write about an encounter with someone who's not in their "group." (This could include a person of a different age, race, ethnicity, or gender.) Have volunteers share their work.

Using Technology

Have students exchange emails with pen pals from another region or country. One possible source is www.epals.com. Registration requires a teacher or supervisory adult. The site includes safety tips. Have the class create a before-and-after chart comparing their ideas about a place before and after they got to know some of its residents.

Homework

Have students watch a TV program or movie showing interactions between people of different cultures. Have students write a one-paragraph summary or review, with emphasis on how the programaddressed stereotypes.

Additional Resources

Show students the following video: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ulh0DnFUGsk. Ask volunteers to share something about themselves that doesn't adhere to gender stereotypes.

PERCEPTIONS

I think the fact describes _____

because _____

Was I correct? ❒ *Yes* ❒ *No*

The fact actually describes _____

I think the fact describes _____

because _____

Was I correct? ❒ *Yes* ❒ *No*

The fact actually describes _____

I think the fact describes _____

because _____

Was I correct? ❒ *Yes* ❒ *No*

The fact actually describes _____

I think the fact describes _____

because _____

Was I correct? ❒ *Yes* ❒ *No*

The fact actually describes _____

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DEVELOPING PERSONAL POWER

6 LESSON

AGENDA

- Starter
- Short End of the Pencil
- It Comes in Many Sizes and Shapes
- Power Symbols
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students will discover that they have the power to effect outcomes in their lives.

Students recognize that power lies in the decisions they make.

Students create personal symbols that remind them of their personal power.

Materials Needed

- Drawing paper, colored construction paper, colored markers, scissors, tape, paste, old magazines, and any other art materials you may have (Part III)

Starter *(3 minutes)*

Draw a horizontal line on the board. Divide the line into 10 segments and number each segment. Under the first division, write the word “None.” Under the center division (number 5), write the word “Some.” Under the last division (number 10), write the word “Lots.”

Referring to the line on the board, tell students to write down a number that represents the amount of power that they feel they have to do the following:

- Be in school on time
- Wear what they want
- Change someone’s mind about something
- Get good grades

After students have added up their numbers, explain the meaning of the score:

- A score above 20 means that you feel you have a considerable amount of personal power.
- A score below 20 means that you underestimate your personal power.

Explain that this lesson will focus on personal power—the power that an individual has to make choices or act.

Part I Short End of the Pencil *(15 minutes)*

Purpose: Students recognize that they have the power to effect outcomes in their lives.

1. Students listen to instructions.

Explain that students will work in pairs to conduct an experiment. Each pair of students must work with only one writing implement and one piece of paper. Ask students to find partners. Then, give the following instructions:

- You cannot talk to your partner from this point on.
- You must work with your partner, without talking, to draw a picture of an animal.
- Both partners must hold the pencil while drawing—one can hold the pencil at the top and the other can hold it at the bottom.
- You have two minutes to work.

2. Students work on a collaborative drawing.

Tell students to begin. Move around the room as students work, observing each pair's interactions and ensuring that no one is talking.

When time is up, invite pairs of students to hold up their drawings and describe what they drew. Just for fun, keep track of how many partners disagreed about the kind of animal they drew, and make an observation about this before moving on.

3. Students reflect on their experiences.

Encourage students to discuss the experiment, describing the aspects of it they found to be difficult and how they managed to work with their partners. Praise students who solved the communication problem by writing notes to each other.

Focus the discussion on individual decisions by asking questions such as the following:

- Was there a point in the experiment when you decided whether or not to cooperate?
- Did your decision have an effect on the outcome of the experiment for you and your partner?
- Could you have decided the other way? Would it have mattered?

Summarize the discussion by pointing out that each student had the power to make the experiment succeed or fail, because they each had the power to make a decision about cooperating. Tell students that people often have more power than they realize.

Part II It Comes in Many Sizes and Shapes *(15 minutes)*

Purpose: Students recognize that despite the forms power takes, true power always lies in the decisions they make.

1. Students explore different forms of power.

Prompt students to think about what gives people power by asking questions such as the following. Encourage students to explain their answers.

- Do you think money gives people power?
- Do you think beauty gives people power?
- What about physical size or age?
- Does education give people power?
- What other things give people power?

Have students brainstorm a list of the sources of power. Write their responses on the board. Afterward, take a quick poll of the class, item by item, noting how many agree that any particular item actually gives people power. Place a star beside the items most students agree on. Note that it seems as though power can come in many different forms.

2. Students consider people who have power.

Continue the discussion by inviting students to name two or three people who have more power than they do. Students will most likely name teachers, principals, older siblings, and parents/guardians. Invite students to give specific examples of how these people have more power.

3. Students trace the source of true power.

Explore each example given by making statements and asking questions to show students that they themselves hold the true power. For example, if a student believes that a teacher has power because they can make students stay after school, make the following points in sequence:

- The teacher does not have to make a student stay after school.
- The teacher has to make a decision about it.
- To get to that point, a student must have made a decision first.
- What decision must the student have made? (*The student must have decided to break a rule, the consequence of which is staying after school.*)

As you discuss other examples, encourage students to follow a similar path of logic to trace the source of power back to their own decisions.

Ask students if they think that the ability to make choices is a kind of power. As students agree, add this to the list on the board and circle it. Tell students that they will spend time later in this course learning about how to make better decisions.

Part III Power Symbols *(15 minutes)*

Purpose: Students create symbols that remind them of their personal power.

1. Students discuss the meaning of symbols.

Briefly discuss the meaning of symbols with students, checking to make sure that they understand how symbols stand for or represent something special to people. Explain that they will now think about and create a symbol that reminds them of their personal power.

Invite students to give examples of symbols that everyone understands, such as the American flag and how it uses stars and stripes to symbolize the states in the union. To prompt their thinking, draw an international symbol or a familiar street sign on the board. You may also give a familiar hand signal. Encourage students to think of as many different symbols as they can.

2. Students create personal symbols.

Invite students to choose whatever art materials they would like to use in their personal symbols. Point out that they may draw, cut and paste, or use a combination of techniques to construct their symbols. Explain that students may either borrow a symbol or create a unique one that has special meaning for them.

Circulate among students as they work, offering encouragement and support. If students seem interested, display their symbols in the room for a while before having students add them to their folders.

Conclusion *(2 minutes)*

Have students describe the kind of power they have. Ask them how often they have the opportunity to use that power. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- Personal power lies in the choices that you make.
- Your choices will have an effect on your own life and often the lives of others.
- You alone are responsible for how you use your power.

Student Assessment

1. List three things in your life over which you have power.
2. List three things that can give you power. How are these things within or not within your control?
3. Describe a situation in which you have exercised power. Explain what kind of power you exercised.

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Using Quotations

"We must concentrate on what we can do, and erase 'can't,' 'won't,' and 'don't think so' from our vocabulary."

Ask students to keep track of self-deprecating comments overheard in class during the week. Have students brainstorm ways to turn these comments into positive statements (e.g., "I'm so dumb" becomes "if I keep at this, I'll get it").

Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

Have students take a walk around the neighborhood and observe their surroundings. (You may also have them make these observations a part of their daily routines.) Have students discuss what they like best about their neighborhoods and what they'd like to change. Have students brainstorm ways they can influence their communities. Discuss how effecting change can help them feel powerful.

Writing in Your Journal

Have students write a paragraph about what they'd change if they had the power of a superhero. How would they make their homes, school, or friendships different? Have volunteers share one change they'd like to make. Have other students suggest the first step toward making this possible.

Core Content Curriculum Connection

Wrap up a history, science, or literature lesson by charting what would have happened if a key player had made a different choice every time they had a chance to do so. For example, discuss what might have happened if early American settlers had chosen to stay in Europe. Have students make similar charts in small groups.

Homework

Have students create lists comparing the amount of personal power they have now to the power they had when they were younger. Have students share their work. Discuss how personal power can be taken away if not used responsibly.

Additional Resources

Have students read “Life Doesn’t Frighten Me” by Maya Angelou. Have students discuss how this poem reflects the use of personal power.