

Introduction

Dear Parent:

As our world becomes smaller through globalization and advancing technology, parents and educators the world over share concerns about raising the younger generation. Family breakdown, sexual immorality, substance abuse, media influences, and youth's challenging of authority and tradition are just a few of the widespread concerns. Teachers in the United States report that students of today are less respectful toward their elders, one another, and themselves than they were just a few years ago. This makes them harder to discipline and teach.¹ As traditional religious, civic, and family values come into question in our rapidly changing world, adults sometimes feel they are swimming upstream in a culture saturated with images of violence, sexual license, and material ease.

An alliance between educators and parents for the moral good of the young is essential to combat these negative trends. Many societies have considered moral education to be part of education's mission in partnership with and in continuation of the parents' moral instruction of their children. Plato of ancient Greece said, "As soon as the child can understand what is said, mother and father exert themselves to make the child as good as possible, at each word and action teaching and showing that this is right and that wrong, this honorable and that dishonorable... At a later stage they send him to teachers and tell them to attend to his conduct far more than to his reading and writing."²

In China, learning was tied to the great moral philosophy of the sage Confucius. Students were to memorize and learn writing skills from the Confucian classics by copying such phrases as "Idleness when young regrets before long" and "Where there is a will, there is a way."

The founders of major universities in the United States—Harvard College, for example—wanted to train leaders for a more civilized and virtuous society. Two founding fathers of America, Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin, believed that education was supposed to contribute to the moral character of society—to raise up people of virtue so that freedom would always be tempered by responsibility. They thought the schools had a large part to play in the raising of good citizens.³

This book is designed to help the teacher educate for character by providing lesson plans accompanying the chapters of *Discovering the Real Me*, a character education curriculum based upon universally admired moral principles. *Discovering the Real Me* is a dynamic curriculum for which international feedback is sought and welcomed. We hope that each culture in which *Discovering the Real Me* is used will make its own unique contributions in knowledge, methods, stories, and legends.

¹ Alcestis Oberg, "Values Education Wins Supporters," *USA Today*, April 19, 2000, p. 27A.

² Protagoras 325 c-e.

³ *Cultivating Heart and Character: Educating for Life's Most Essential Goals*, eds. Devine, Seuk, and Wilson (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: Character Development Publishing, 2000) p. 14.

In countries around the world, Western culture and media have had a strong influence on youth, and that is one of the reasons why young people are turning away from traditional morals and ethics in their native cultures. One of the goals of *Discovering the Real Me* is to support traditional morals and ethics in different cultures, while acknowledging that we live in a plural world and need to be part of that world.

Happily, there are character strengths or virtues that are admired around the world. No society honors liars, cowards, cheaters, or killers. Every society admires the sacrificial, the noble, the brave, the strong, the honest, the true. Likewise, no parent would object to his or her child being taught honesty, bravery, integrity, and respect in school—all of which lead to a life of morality.

Students are not the only ones who benefit from a program of character education. Teachers who educate for character find their teaching experience more pleasant and fruitful, with fewer discipline problems. It lends their teaching new life and purpose and helps them feel fulfilled in their teaching mission. Educating the young in how to be good human beings, in addition to teaching them academic knowledge, helps re-ignite teachers' original enthusiasm for going into the field of education.

We hope this book will make your teaching task easier, more enjoyable, and more meaningful. We hope that it will enable you to touch the hearts and lives of the young people you serve with messages that will enhance and improve their chances for successful and meaningful lives.

1. A Balanced Education

A museum exhibit in London displays piles of salt, potassium, carbon, etcetera, alongside a container of water. Underneath, there is a caption that reads, “THIS IS A HUMAN BEING.” Yes, materially speaking, these are the components of a human being. Yet most people would argue that there is something more to being human.

The human mind aspires to truth, beauty, goodness, virtue, and love. Finding or realizing these things gives us a deep sense of fulfillment as well as happiness and joy. Without these things, life is ashen indeed.

At the same time, we have material desires and needs coming from our physical selves—the part of us that is indeed salt, potassium, carbon, water, etcetera. We like to eat tasty food. We want to be physically healthy. We seek shelter to protect us from the elements and provide us with a comfortable place to live. We value money and the things that it can buy. We seek a mate. Fulfilling these physically based desires brings us physical happiness.

Throughout human history, people have pursued both the physical and spiritual aspects of understanding. Through science, we have come to understand the nature of our physical universe more and more, leading to technological advances that have enhanced the quality of our material life. Religion and philosophy have given us a deeper understanding of the internal or spiritual aspect of life, addressing fundamental questions such as the meaning of life, the way of goodness, the existence and nature of God, human relationships, and so on. Science on the one hand, and religion and philosophy on the other, have both been involved in the pursuit of human understanding.

In the 20th century, education throughout the world came to take on more of a scientific and technical character. In the process, the more traditional concept of education, which stressed the development of a person’s character in preparation for life, became more and more marginalized. Daniel Goleman, researcher and author of the groundbreaking book *Emotional Intelligence*, wrote, “Our schools and our culture fixate on academic abilities, ignoring emotional intelligence, a set of traits—some might call it character—that also matters immensely for our personal destiny.”⁴

Our tendency has been to focus on developing knowledge, skills, and creative talents while neglecting the more fundamental dimensions of educating people to become good. The result of this overemphasis has been the education of people with high levels of professional abilities who do not possess moral standards commensurate with their influence and responsibility. Thus, we have computer specialists using their knowledge to create viruses whose sole purpose is to destroy the workings of thousands of computers, or creative artists who use their talents to propagate sexual exploitation and violence.

The challenge for education in the 21st century is to correct the current imbalance. To neglect doing so is actually dangerous. As our power to control and manipulate our physical universe grows, the need to channel that power through morality grows too.

Historian Arnold Toynbee put it like this: “The greater our material power, the greater our need for spiritual insight and virtue to use our power for good and not for evil... We

⁴ Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence* (New York: Bantam, 1995), p. 36.

have never been adequate spiritually for handling our material power; and today the morality gap is...greater than it has ever been in any previous age.”⁵

It is not a far stretch to realize that technical knowledge without the guidance of morality is dangerous. Knowledge of how to make nuclear weapons in the hands of immoral killers would be a disaster for humanity. Medical expertise in the hands of torturers refines their methods to a horrific degree.

One headmaster, having experienced the Nazi concentration camps during the Second World War, summed up this point in a letter he wrote to his new teachers each year:

*My eyes saw what no man should witness: gas chambers built by learned engineers, children poisoned by learned physicians, infants killed by trained nurses, women and babies shot and burned by high school and college graduates. So, I am suspicious of education. ... My request is: help your students become human. Your efforts must never produce learned monsters, skilled psychopaths, educated Eichmanns. Reading, writing, arithmetic are important only if they serve to make our children more human.*⁶

Whether the knowledge and skills imparted by conventional education are used for the benefit or to the detriment of society depends primarily on the heart and conscience of the educated person. Therefore, character education is not only desirable; it is absolutely necessary.

Heart and Conscience—the Core of Character

The deepest motivation for moral striving arises from the heart—in particular, the heart is the source of the fundamental impulse for relatedness. It is what motivates a person to yearn for the joy of loving and being loved, the satisfaction of valuing and being valued. Love and relatedness describe a human need no less strong than the need for food or shelter. Indeed, people often are willing to give up both of these for the sake of love.

Love in its true sense is inherently moral. It requires altruistic action: giving, serving, and sacrificing one’s self for the sake of one’s beloved. Love is also inherently ethical, because it can be realized only in a relationship with another human being.

The beginning point of education lies with the cultivation of the child’s heart by providing experiences of love. This enhances the child’s feeling of security and worth, making a solid foundation for subsequent growth and development. Because the heart is the core of human character, the ability to give and receive love is the ultimate manifestation of true maturity, over and above academic knowledge.

Along with heart, the development of a strong conscience is also an important aspect of building good character. Whereas the heart is the source of love, we may view the conscience as an internal compass guiding one’s love in the direction of goodness.

⁵ Arnold Toynbee, *Civilization on Trial* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1948).

⁶ Haim Ginott, *Between Teacher and Child* (New York: Avon, 1976).

Parents, teachers, and other mentors serve as important guides and role models for the development of a child's conscience. The school can provide a supportive atmosphere by creating a moral community in which students, teachers, and school administrators are working together in harmony and with mutual respect. The school would benefit also from instilling in each student a sense of shared responsibility for creating a moral culture.

The Three Basic Goals of Life and Education

This curriculum is developed around the idea that there are Three Basic Goals of Life and Education. Bearing these goals in mind shapes education to fulfill its deepest purpose: to produce well-rounded, capable, and benevolent people who are a boon to society and to themselves.

Developing a mature heart and character is the first basic goal of life and of education. Yet it is not an end in itself. Ultimately, the goal of developing heart and character is to produce a person capable of altruistically loving others. A person mature in virtue is a person capable of beneficial and loving relationships, which are further contexts for fostering human development and growth. To help people develop loving relationships, especially in the context of a family, is the second basic goal of life and education.

As people develop their knowledge, skills, and technical expertise, they have the potential to be of enormous benefit to the larger society. With their maturity and sense of social responsibility, such people can balance their natural desire for personal success with the larger purpose of serving their society. A strong conscience and a well-developed capacity to love make for an ennobling contribution to the human community. Making a contribution to society is the third basic goal of life and education.

The pursuit and fulfillment of these three life goals—1) **becoming a person of mature character** 2) **establishing loving relationships and family**, and 3) **making a contribution to society**—point the way to valuable and productive lives. By designing our educational system with these three goals in mind, we can help young people to find true satisfaction and fulfillment in life while realizing their full potential as human beings.

The *Discovering the Real Me* curriculum and teaching manuals emphasize the development of heart and conscience within the context of attaining the three basic life goals. Educating children to be better and happier human beings is the essential goal of education, even as they learn the technical expertise needed to serve our world to the best of their abilities. *Discovering the Real Me* seeks to correct the imbalance in current education by devoting special attention to the development of the inner human being—the core of which is heart and conscience.

2. Teaching Methods

This section includes a number of methodologies for teaching the *Discovering the Real Me* material. Each teacher has his or her own teaching style and may not feel comfortable using all of our suggestions. We provide this information in order to help you, the teacher, get started. You are encouraged to use and adapt these recommendations as you see fit.

Interactive Methodology

The general approach recommended for teaching the course *Discovering the Real Me* is one that encourages the maximum degree of interaction between teacher and students. Because the focus of the course is on developing the students' character, it is best if students become agents in their own learning and development. Encourage your children to speak up, to express their ideas, emotions, and opinions and to participate actively. The desirable outcome is that students think and discuss in such a way that any moral conclusions they come to about right and wrong are their own.

Yet, in guiding the learning process, you remain the authority. To be effective, it is best to guide your children according to the clear moral framework laid out in the book. Otherwise, you run the risk of the class believing that all viewpoints are equally valid.

Group and Individual Projects

Both group and individual projects are useful in teaching character. While group projects are a good way to teach students to work together, individual projects encourage personal creativity and interest in a topic. In assigning projects, it is well to take student interest into consideration. You may even want to allow your children to choose or design some projects themselves. This way they will be much more creative and enthusiastic about their work.

Cooperative Learning

Over the past one or two decades, “**cooperative learning**” has become very popular in many Western school systems. It has formed its own society—the International Association for the Study of Cooperation in Education, and has its own practitioner-oriented magazine—*Cooperative Learning*. Hundreds of studies have been conducted that demonstrate the effectiveness and applicability of cooperative learning on all levels.

Cooperative learning is a **team approach to learning**, involving students working together to accomplish a shared task. Through this method, students can learn social as well as scholastic skills. It is an approach that is oriented toward the students' interests and teaches them responsibility for the results of the learning process.

The traditional method of education emphasizes the subject content. In cooperative learning, the study process is primary. It says to the teacher: “Take what you would normally teach, teach it through cooperative learning for at least part of the day or period, and you'll be teaching virtues and academics at the same time.” Cooperative learning can

be utilized in teaching almost any kind of subject, whether it is ethics, literature, math, science, or sports.

Here are some of the specific benefits of cooperative learning:

1. It teaches the value of cooperation

It teaches students that it's a good thing to help each other. Studies show that the opportunity to be a contributing member of a benevolent peer group promotes caring about fellow group members, develops more altruistic attitudes, and encourages pro-social behavior.

2. It builds a sense of community in the classroom

Interaction helps students to get to know and understand each other better. One effect of this is to reduce interpersonal conflicts. Cooperative learning has been found to foster greater acceptance of classmates who are physically challenged or from different ethnic or racial backgrounds.

3. It tempers the negative aspects of competition that often pervade classrooms

Often, the spirit of destructive competition, rather than cooperation, dominates the school or classroom atmosphere.

4. It improves academic achievement, self-esteem, and attitude toward school

By encouraging student participation and interaction, cooperative learning has been shown to dramatically improve academic achievement, self-esteem, and a positive attitude toward school among all students, but especially for chronic underachievers.

5. It teaches life skills

Cooperative learning teaches students some of life's most important skills, including learning to listen, taking the viewpoint of others, respecting others, patience, tolerance, communicating effectively, solving conflicts, and working together to achieve a common goal.

Some Types of Cooperative Learning

□□□ *Learning partners.* This is the easiest and least threatening way to begin cooperative learning. It is a building block for other, more complex forms of cooperation.

□□□ *Small group projects.* Students work together in groups of four to six on a single project. The emphasis is on cooperative processes such as group problem-solving, creativity, and team research.

Guidelines for Group Discussions

1. Set a Non-relativistic Context for Discussion

Adolescents may adopt the attitude that everyone is entitled to his or her own opinion, asking, “Who’s to say what’s right?” This may lead them to adopt a relativistic attitude toward morality. Group discussion provides students with the opportunity to affirm students’ rights to their own viewpoints while challenging them to consider the existence of a clear sense of ethics and morality that applies to everyone. Challenging students’ relativistic thinking requires teaching them the following general criteria that apply to any moral issue:

- Does a given action respect the rights of those it affects?
- Would I want to be treated in such a way? (test of reversibility)
- What if everyone acted that way? (test of universality)
- Does the action bring objective benefit to individuals and society?

2. Challenge Students’ Thinking, Concepts, and Assumptions

As you know, you can challenge students’ thinking through the questions you ask. Even young children can be helped to grasp objective ethical criteria if the teacher’s questions are formulated well. You might want to consider, “What questions will I pose if students take such-and-such a position?” For example, if the teacher is discussing with the class whether it is unethical to steal or shoplift, here are some questions he or she could formulate prior to the actual discussion:

- Imagine that you were the owner of a shop. How would you feel if someone stole from you?
- How does stealing affect people who don't steal?
- Is stealing wrong for someone who has enough money to buy what he or she wants and not wrong for someone who does not have enough money? If so, does that mean that stealing is only wrong depending on the person’s situation?
- What would happen if every person in society stole whatever he or she wanted?
- If you think stealing is all right when you don't like the owner of a shop or if you think the shop is too expensive, does that mean that people have the individual right to decide when it is okay to steal?
- When you do things such as stealing, do you feel corrupt inside?
- What problems does stealing create for a society?

Some of these questions could be raised in an initial discussion; others could be made as part of a writing assignment; still others could be posed as part of a subsequent discussion of the issue.

3. Require sincerity and careful thinking

There is nothing more frustrating for a teacher than when students do not treat an issue seriously. Discussing moral issues may challenge some students' own personal behavior, and they may rebel because of this. It would be best if you make it clear before any discussion that students are expected to keep a serious attitude.

Also, you might want to reflect on what format for moral reflection and discussion best helps students to think carefully and critically. There is a big difference, for example, between a loose, open-ended approach that simply invites students to voice their opinions and an approach that requires them to engage in research and/or systematic ethical analysis before taking up a position. To encourage continuing thought, you might also give students some thought-provoking reading on the topic and ask them to write an essay in response.

Additional Points in Support of Moral Reflection and Discussion

1. Relate to the existing curriculum.

- Use examples from literature to teach virtues: e.g., what moral choices do the characters in a particular story have? How would the story change if they made one choice over another?
- Use examples from history or social studies to ask moral questions: e.g., what have been the effects of prejudice and discrimination in history?
- Ask your children to ponder how scientific fraud—scientists faking their data—undermines people's life and health?

2. Discuss hypothetical moral dilemmas as a way of diagnosing and developing students' moral reasoning.

3. Draw out dilemmas that students themselves may be facing.

- Design decision-making activities that encourage conscientious reflection.
- Use role-playing to help students take and understand a point of view different from their own.
- Help students develop moral self-knowledge through personal ethics journals and character improvement activities.

Role-Playing

During role-playing, students assume the roles of various characters and act out a brief episode resembling real life that involves a problem. Those assuming a role use their own words, attitude, thoughts, and feelings in the role-play. The role-playing process involves four basic steps:

1. A specific problem is identified. It could be, for example, a conflict between a student and his/her parents, or between two students.
2. After the problem is described, roles must be established and assigned to various students. We recommend that the parent seek out volunteers to play the roles.
3. The actual role-playing takes place and should be brief. The same situation may be repeated several times with different students in order to demonstrate that there are often several solutions to a single problem.
4. A debriefing and discussion follow, focusing on the behavior itself or the actions taken rather than on the student who played the role, emphasizing how he or she addressed or solved the problem that was the focus of the role play. If your children did not solve the problem effectively, you can suggest alternative approaches.

Role-playing allows the student, in a safe context, to understand and learn ways of coping with various types of difficult situations. It encourages seeing situations from different points of view and applying innovative solutions.

This technique demonstrates to students that very often conflicts are the result of misunderstandings between different parties. It shows the importance of listening carefully, of controlling one's emotions, and of recognizing prejudices and biases that one might have. Experiencing what it is like to be in another person's shoes can help to foster greater empathy and mutual understanding. Role-playing has the effect of muting ridicule and put-downs, which are so often a part of the school environment.

Journal Writing

In addition to the spaces provided for written reflections and responses in the students' textbooks, you may want to have students keep journals in which they can explore the topics introduced more thoroughly. Journal writing (and drawing) is a tool for encouraging the student's personal growth. The exercises at the end of many of the chapters in the student textbook are designed to take students to places inside themselves that they may have rarely visited. The exercises can help them to:

- express their feelings and thoughts
- sort out the seemingly random experiences in their lives
- make more conscious choices and decisions
- define and implement desired changes
- get a clearer picture of their creative potential and how to use it
- change negative thought and behavior patterns
- discover new and different parts of themselves and learn how these parts can relate to each other harmoniously
- investigate their life purpose and find deeper meaning in their lives
- envision a better future and discover what their particular contribution to that future might be

The journal is a place where they can let their inner selves come out. The pages become a mirror for seeing themselves more clearly. Starting with self-communication in private, they then can develop their ability to communicate with others. Being clear with themselves opens the way for being clearer with others.

Clarify to students that, as with life, the more they put into their journal, the more they will get out of it. It is good to encourage them not to restrict themselves to the assigned exercises but to feel free to explore and experiment on their own.

Some students may be hesitant because they think they have no talent for writing or drawing. It is good to emphasize that no special talent or training is needed to do these exercises. The goal is not to make art or literature but to explore their inner world. They are not drawing or writing to please anyone else or to get anyone's approval. Their journal is by them and for them. Assure them that while writing assignments will be checked by the teacher to make sure they have been done, sharing the contents of writing assignments will be voluntary.

To help students feel more comfortable and confident with journal writing, you may want to do a sample journal exercise together with them at the beginning of the course.

Experiential Learning

This is a concept with a long history in educational theory, but which has been given new impetus in recent times in reaction to the excessive emphasis on cognitive learning in the 20th century. Most theories of education, even in character education, have stressed the development of a person's reasoning faculties and intellect. We, too, acknowledge the importance of learning to think logically, rationally, analytically, and critically. However, as we have already stated, the development of one's heart and conscience is more important in order to deeply internalize moral and ethical values. This requires the active engagement of the student in relationships with other people and the surrounding environment, in which both the mind and body can be involved.

We can understand the value of experiential learning if we consider the way a person learns to drive a car. One aspect, of course, involves studying and memorizing a driver's manual. However, this by itself is not sufficient to qualify one to receive a driver's license. What is ultimately necessary is real driving experience. Only through actual experience behind the wheel of a car does a person come to really comprehend the contents of the manual.

As Kathy Winings states in her book *Building Character through Service Learning*: "When the 'experience' outside the classroom was structured meaningfully, and carefully integrated with the classroom, it could become an excellent teaching tool. Learning involves more than absorbing data and information. For profound learning to take place, the student needs to not only understand the academic aspects of the question, but also to see how this knowledge is relevant to his/her life."⁷

Experiential learning seeks to integrate the cognitive with the active and thus lend greater meaning to both. For character education to be effective, virtues need to come out of the realm of the abstract and enter the realm of practice. Through experiencing virtues in action, the student naturally absorbs them into his or her character. Educator David Kolb states that constructive experiential learning requires four basic steps: 1) the

⁷ Kathy Winings. *Building Character through Service Learning* (Chapel Hill, NC: Character Development Publishing, 2002), p. 16.

experience itself; 2) reflection on the experience; 3) synthesis and abstract conceptualization; and 4) testing the learned concepts in other situations.⁸

What kind of experiences are we talking about? The best are those that are structured to serve others. In the United States, such programs have come to be known as “service learning” and can take any number of forms, such as:

- Big brother/big sister programs
- Tutoring younger children
- Visiting or working in a nursing home, hospital, homeless shelter, or orphanage
- Doing jobs for elderly people living alone
- Providing meals for homebound senior citizens
- Food or clothing drive
- Cleanup activity: park, streets, graffiti
- Planting trees, flowers, vegetable garden
- Painting murals to beautify the neighborhood
- Letter-writing or petition campaign on some public issue
- Serving a religious, civic, or service organization
- Fundraising for a worthy cause

Such activities afford students the opportunity to step beyond the boundaries of their previous experience. They experience the joy of living for the sake of others.

The reflection step is important to the student internalizing the experience. This helps to keep service from becoming simply a passing phenomenon. To stimulate reflection, you may want to Encourage your children to ask themselves the following questions:

- How did I feel before the activity compared to how I feel now?
- How did it help me to become a better person?
- What did I learn from the experience?
- What obstacles did I have to overcome?
- How did the activity benefit others?
- How do I feel about helping others now?

Overcoming obstacles, both internally and externally, in one’s heart, mind, and body, has been shown to be essential to achieving lasting personal growth. The student also needs to experience the substantial beneficial effect of his or her action on the recipient of the service. This gives a profound stimulus to offer oneself for other altruistic activities in the future.

Through reflection, the student can begin to comprehend the internal value of the experience and synthesize this with previous experiences that have shaped his or her attitudes and character. New conceptualizations of living can take form in the student’s mind and heart, which then can be tested in other areas of life. If the experience of planting trees and flowers in a neighborhood park has sensitized the student to the value of creating a beautiful environment, he or she may be stimulated to plant flowers near

⁸ David Kolb, *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1984).

home or to take better care of his or her own room or area. By experiencing the effect of caring for or feeding the elderly, the student can be naturally stimulated to show greater care and concern for those in need.

Through experiential programs such as service learning, students will be encouraged and challenged to adopt a lifestyle at variance with the self-centered and consumer-oriented one advocated by much of modern culture. Hopefully, the experiences gained through such programs will stimulate the natural goodness residing within each person and become precious memories that will nourish the development of his or her overall character.

General Recommendations

To conclude this section, we would like to offer you some general recommendations for teaching character education. As a conscientious educator, you are probably already doing some, most, or all of these.

Act as a caregiver, model, and mentor, treating students with love and respect, setting a good example, supporting pro-social behavior, and correcting hurtful actions.

Create a moral community, helping students know each other, respect and care about each other, and feel that they are valued members in the group.

Practice moral discipline, using the creation and enforcement of rules as opportunities to foster moral reasoning, self-control, and a generalized respect for others.

Create a democratic environment, involving students in decision-making and shared responsibility for making the classroom a good place to be and to learn.

Teach values through the curriculum, using academic subjects as a vehicle for examining ethical issues. (This is simultaneously a school-wide strategy when the curriculum addresses cross-grade concerns such as substance abuse prevention or sex education.)

Encourage moral reflection through reading, writing, discussion, decision-making exercises, and debate.

Teach conflict resolution so that students have the capacity and commitment to solve conflicts in fair, nonviolent ways.

Foster caring, using inspiring role models and opportunities for school and community service to help students learn to care by giving care.

Create a positive moral culture, developing a total family environment (through the leadership of the parents) that supports and amplifies the values taught.

Recruit parents and the community as partners in character education, supporting parents as the child's first moral teachers; encouraging parents to support the school in its efforts to foster good values; and seeking the help of the community (e.g., churches, businesses, and the media) in reinforcing the values you are trying to teach.

3. Course Requirements and Expectations

As you know, the best way to get what you want from your students is to inform them clearly about your expectations. In the beginning lesson, you may want to say to your children something along the following lines:

This course is designed and intended for you. This means that your participation and involvement in classroom and group activities related to the class are extremely important. This class will be what you, as students, make it. The course is designed to be interactive, which means that many times you will be asked to work together with your classmates in order to complete an assignment. The aim is for you to learn to work effectively with other people, as well as learning to respect the opinions of others (which may not be the same as yours). The skills that you will learn as you work cooperatively with others will prepare you in your relations with all kinds of people in the future. The most successful people in the world are those who know how to listen and respect others from all walks of life.

Grading

The issue of giving grades in such a course as *Discovering the Real Me* needs to be addressed by the school, keeping in mind the ultimate goal—the character development of students. The traditional form of grading students according to their cognitive knowledge can lead to a situation in which students invest themselves simply for the sake of getting good grades. Obviously, such an approach would distort the very meaning of the course. It would be better if the course accepts only those students who want to participate for the sake of their own character development, without such external stimuli as formal grading. In the majority of cases, however, this will be unrealistic. Also, students—and parents—usually want some way to measure how well they are doing. One possibility is to use an intermediate method such as self-grading.

Students need to know how they will be evaluated. For this kind of course, written examinations alone are not sufficient. In some cases the teacher may decide that students do not need to take written tests at all. Students should also be evaluated according to their participation and general behavior, as well as insights and personal character changes. A lot of this will be self-reported.

The problem of unsatisfactory grades needs to be discussed separately. Experience indicates that grades given in moral/ethical courses should only be positive. For those students who don't study hard enough, we recommend not giving any grade at all. Instead, they are encouraged to invest more in the course so that in the future they can receive a positive grade.

Introduction

Read the Introduction in their student books together and then give a brief overview of this Introduction. Mention that the Introduction gives an overall picture of the book and how it will serve to prepare them for life beyond school. Ask your children if they ever think of life beyond school. What do they imagine it will be like? What do they envision themselves doing? What kind of persons do they think they will become?

Point out that the book, and indeed the theme of the series *Discovering the Real Me*, revolves around three basic life goals. Explain that experts agree that three basic life goals lead to a well-rounded and satisfying human life. These three basic life goals are:

1. To become a fully mature and responsible individual
2. To develop loving relationships, especially in a family
3. To make a positive contribution to society

You might write these three goals on a paper and invite your children to debate whether the attainment of these three goals would make a person happy.

Do your children want to be mature? Point out that children say things like, “I’m not six—I’m six and a half!” and young teenagers want nothing more than to be taken for being older than they are and to be treated like grownups and allowed more and more freedom and independence. This would seem to show that there is a “will to maturity” in people.

Ask your children if they think a person can be happy without at least some emotional attachments in life in the form of loving relationships. Is anyone happy being completely alone and detached from other people? In fact, isolated people are often less happy and less healthy than those who have multiple friendships and ties of kinship.

Explain that they will find, as they experience life in society, that they will want to know that they are making a contribution to the world. Maybe right now they feel that basic life goal as a desire to be well-known or famous—to make their mark by winning Olympic Gold or discovering the cure for cancer. Add that most people do not become famous, but they do get great satisfaction out of knowing that they contributed something good and useful to the world. Add that it is ideal if, in making a positive contribution to society, a person is justly and amply rewarded for his or her efforts in a material sense so as to be able to provide for one’s self and one’s family.

Briefly review the structural information in the Introduction. Mention that the first seven chapters focus on issues related to the first life goal (the growth of the individual human being into maturity); the next six chapters focus on issues related to the second life goal (loving relationships and family); and the last four chapters cover the third life goal (what contribution a person can make to his or her community, society, and the world).

After this brief introduction, move right into the first session on Chapter 1.

Chapter 1: Our Emotional Life

Lesson Plan Objectives

Cognitive - Students will be more aware of the force of emotions in human life. Students will recognize that positive human emotions are stronger than negative human emotions. They will understand that it is possible to control one's emotions.

Affective - Students will be grateful that positive emotions are stronger than negative ones. Students will want to cultivate more positive emotions in their lives. Students will want to let reason guide their emotions.

Behavioral - Students will identify and describe different emotions. Students will apply the rule that, in matters of love, it is better to follow the head rather than the heart.

Session 1

Materials Needed: Photos, movie or magazine pictures or posters of people showing a variety of emotions

Read Chapter 1. From now on, the chapters are to be read ahead of time, as homework.

Mention that this chapter is about human emotional life. Note that emotions affect us physically, as the chapter points out. Ask your children to name some ways in which pleasure, fear, and anger—the three main human emotions named in the chapter—express themselves physically in a person.

Mention that, according to experts, pleasure is much stronger than fear and anger. Explain that this is good news for world peace! If negative feelings of fear and anger can be overcome by positive feelings, then there is definitely hope that people one day can live together in peace.

Explain that happy families experience more positive emotions, or pleasures, together than they do negative emotions. Families have to make effort to spend enjoyable times together in order to build up experiences of good feelings.

Emphasize that when we speak of positive emotions or pleasure, we are not just speaking of passing pleasures of the flesh. We are speaking primarily of pleasures of the mind and heart, which may be related to a physical experience but are not just the physical experience itself.

Point out the list of positive feelings in their student books:

1. Religious feelings: the joy of coming closer to God.
2. Altruistic feelings: the result (or cause) of helping others.
3. Feelings of companionship; an emotional attitude toward those we feel close to and comfortable with.
4. Feelings of satisfaction: the result of successfully completing a task.
5. Feelings of exhilaration: the result of successfully overcoming barriers, dangers, or difficulties.
6. Romantic feelings: an attraction to someone of the opposite sex, involving tenderness.
7. Feelings of intellectual excitement: the stimulation of learning something new, discovering a new theory, inventing a new machine, or solving a complicated intellectual puzzle.
8. Aesthetic feelings: appreciating the beauty of nature or art.
9. Sexual feelings: when in an intimate physical relationship.

Pass out, or mount on a poster board, the pictures or photos or magazine cutouts you have brought to class. Using these photos, ask your children to do the Exercises: “Identifying Human Emotion” in their student books. The pictures will aid your children in answering questions 1 and 3.

Exercises: “Identifying Human Emotion”

1. Look at a picture that expresses a strong emotional experience and try to describe the emotions felt by those in the picture.
2. Think of the most positive emotional experience of your childhood. What was its cause? How do you feel today when you think about it?
3. Observe the people around you and try to identify the kinds of feelings they are experiencing—positive or negative. Which ones do you see more often?

Encourage your children to read and do the Reflection Exercise: “Checking Our Emotions” before the next session.

Reflection Exercise: “Checking Our Emotions”

During the week, record all the situations in which you experienced strong emotions. Find the words that most accurately characterize those feelings. At the end of the week look through your notes and identify those emotions that were most dominant. Are you satisfied with the result, or would you like to change something in yourself?

End the session by saying that emotions are a major force in human life and relationships, and we do well to understand more about them.

Session 2

Start by explaining that the class will continue to focus on human emotions today.

Ask your children if they believe people can control their emotions or if there are some emotions too powerful to control. Mention that love is often considered an emotion that is hard to control. Ask your children to name or sing love songs about being “crazy” about someone, or “losing my mind” about someone or “losing control” over someone. This can be a lot of fun!

After they have discussed this, mention that anger also is often considered an almost uncontrollable emotion. Yet scientists have discovered that positive emotions—like compassion and forgiveness—can blot out and melt away anger.

Explain that the rational mind can control even intense emotions. Point out, for instance, that most of us have felt hatred at one point and wanted to “murder” someone. Yet the rational, reasonable mind told us, “No, the consequences of that would be too great. I would go to jail. My family and future would be ruined.” Or our rational and reasonable mind might tell us, “That isn’t right—no matter what the other person has done to me, I won’t do so great a wrong myself.”

Have them imagine for a moment that they gave in to their passionate anger or hatred and actually murdered someone. What would the rest of their lives be like because of that one moment of lack of control?

Point out that in matters of love, it is also very important to control emotions with our rationality, because love—like anger—is hard to control and also can have lifelong impact.

Read the story in their student books “Lucy Learns a Lesson.”

Lucy Learns a Lesson

Lucy was absolutely crazy about Anton. He was so cute! And funny and nice. The wonderful thing was, Anton seemed to feel the same way about her. She was on “cloud nine.” The couple met constantly throughout the school day and said they were boyfriend and girlfriend.

But something puzzled Lucy. Anton could never see her on weekends. Anton told her he was busy with his family on weekends.

Soon, though, friends started mentioning that they had seen Anton on the weekend with a blonde girl named Marietta from another school. They saw him in the park with her, at the movies, and window-shopping downtown together. They couldn't be sure, but they thought the couple had been holding hands.

Anton got mad when Lucy brought it up. He said that Marietta was a friend of one of his cousins. "You're just jealous!" he accused her.

Upset, Lucy turned to her aunt for advice. She really wanted to believe Anton. Maybe he and Marietta weren't holding hands. Maybe they were just in a group of cousins together. Was she just being jealous, like Anton said?

When she heard that several of Lucy's classmates had seen Anton with Marietta on several different occasions, Lucy's aunt said it didn't sound to her like Anton was being completely truthful. Why did he never ask Lucy along on these group outings with his cousins if it was okay for Marietta, who was also no relation, to be there? Lucy's aunt advised Lucy to cool off her relationship with Anton a bit and take a good, hard look at the situation.

It was painful, but Lucy explained to Anton that she needed some time and distance from their relationship. She did not accuse him but said she needed to work some things out on her own. If she was too jealous, like he said, she needed some time to work through that.

Lucy went through several lonely and painful months, but when things got too bad, she went to talk to her aunt. Her aunt strengthened her by saying things like, "You need to protect your heart," and "Don't let him play you along."

It turned out Anton had been secretly going steady with Marietta for a long time, all during the time he was "boyfriend and girlfriend" with Lucy. The only reason he hung around with Lucy at school was because Marietta went to a different school.

Lucy was glad she had listened to her aunt. The voice of reason had won over her emotions. It was painful to "lose" Anton, but Lucy had the pride of knowing that she had ended with dignity a situation that was unfair to her.

When you are finished rereading the story, ask them if this is a very unusual situation or if it has happened to them or to someone they know. Mention that such things are

actually quite common. What if Lucy had been having sex with Anton—or had become pregnant with his child, thinking that he loved her alone and would marry her? How much harder and more painful the whole situation would have been—and it was already painful enough!

Emphasize again that, in matters of love, it is far better to lead with the head rather than the heart until trust and commitment have been established. The advice of elders is also important, for they are seeing clearly, without emotion, and with the wisdom of their years. Lucy is blinded by infatuation with Anton, but her aunt can see clearly. With her aunt's reason guiding her, Lucy is able to get out of a bad situation with less pain and loneliness than she would have felt if she had let the relationship go on any longer or become more physically intimate.

Discuss the Questions for Reflection in their student books. They may refer back to the chapter in order to find the correct answers.

Questions for Reflection

1. What are the three basic human emotions?
2. What are some of the positive feelings we may experience in life?
3. How are negative emotions expressed in family life?
4. What feelings provide for family happiness?
5. Can our minds control our feelings? Give an example.
6. How can sexual relations lead to negative emotions?
7. What is the best way to practice for true love in marriage?

Assign the reading of Chapter 2 as homework for the next session.

Chapter 2: Being You

Lesson Plan Objectives

Cognitive - Students will understand the importance of a good self-image. Students will have tools for constructing a better self-image.

Affective - Students will feel affirmed in their own value. Students will gain self-confidence.

Behavioral - Students will state affirmations. Students will quiz themselves on their self-image before and after stating affirmations. Students will describe a situation in which low self-esteem and a poor self-image caused a person to pass up an opportunity.

Session 1

Solicit your children's opinions about Michael as they experienced him in the chapter they read, "Being You." Do they know anyone like Michael? (Possibly themselves?)

Explain that this chapter shows that the way people *think* about themselves is very important to how they *feel* about themselves and to how others respond to them as well. Do students believe this to be true? Are there are pitfalls to this idea? (Note: Some criminals have very high self-esteem, and some good people have very low self-esteem.)

Explain that, in general, people feel much happier when they have a good self-image or when they improve their self-image. Michael's Uncle Louis mentions that he became kinder to himself, but he also became kinder to other people.

Quote him: "Because I thought I was a rather unkind person, I started doing things for others, even in small ways. I volunteered to help people in need. Sometimes I didn't feel like doing it, but I pushed myself to do it anyway. I even gave small gifts to people, for no other reason than to surprise them and make them happy. Doing this helped me a lot to feel better about myself."

Point out that being kind to others and to one's self is a good way to strengthen a fragile self-image and experience higher self-esteem. Another way is to make goals, like Uncle Louis did, and achieve them. Becoming good at something—playing the guitar, making model cars, studying math or astronomy—builds a good self-image and higher self-esteem also.

So does exercise. Stand up and march in place for a few minutes. After they sit down, ask them if their self-esteem experienced a boost. Certainly, their energy and attention did!

Mention that some people strengthen their self-image through affirmations. There is an affirmation in their student books:

“You are a child of the universe, no less than the trees and the stars; you have a right to be here.”

Direct your children’s attention to this quote and have them repeat it to themselves silently several times.

Ask your children to do the Exercise: “How Do You See Yourself?” in their student books.

Exercise: “How Do You See Yourself?”

How do you see yourself: as lovable, unlovable, or somewhere in between?		
lovable	a b c d e	unlovable
likable	()	unlikable
attractive	()	unattractive
overweight	()	underweight
punctual	()	tardy
careful	()	careless
friendly	()	unfriendly
talented	()	untalented
accepted	()	rejected
diligent	()	lazy
loyal	()	disloyal
kind	()	unkind
sincere	()	insincere
Where do you need to change? Number them in their order of importance to you.		

Encourage your children to invest in improving the parts of themselves they now see in a negative light.

Now write the following list of affirmations on a paper:

- I am a good person.
- I have many fine qualities.
- I like me.

- I have wonderful things in my heart.
- I have beauty inside me.
- I have helped others in my life.
- Others have liked and loved me.
- I am a good influence on my world.

Ask your children to take a few moments to repeat each of these affirmations silently three times. Then ask them to retake the Exercise: “How Do You See Yourself?” Were their answers more positive this time?

Session 2

Ask someone in the class to review the main points of the chapter in their student books and also the last session. Discuss the Questions for Reflection in their student books. They can refer back to the chapter to refresh their memories.

Questions for Reflection

1. What is Michael’s character like? Why do you think he is this way?
2. What is Louis’s character like? Was he always that way?
3. How did Louis change himself?
4. What do you think of Louis’s advice to Michael?
5. What is self-esteem?
6. What makes a person valuable?
7. If your closest friend or relative suddenly became poor or unpopular, would you still feel the same way about that person?
8. How do self-esteem and self-respect influence everything a person does?
9. Does a person with a high sense of self-esteem usually treat others with respect? Why?
10. How can a sense of self-respect help a person develop his/her personality?

When you are done with the Questions for Reflection, Ask your children to share with one another about people they really like, describing the person to the others in as much detail as possible. Ask them to reflect upon what they like about these people and why, and to share that with the others. When the discussions are finished, ask your children how many of them chose a person who projected a positive self-image — confidence and self-assurance. Emphasize that a positive self-image makes a person more likable.

Ask your children to do the Reflection Exercise: “Passing Up an Opportunity” in their student books.

Reflection Exercise: “Passing Up an Opportunity”

Write a small story describing a situation in which a person passes up a good opportunity because of lack of self-confidence or because he or she is afraid of failing.

When they are finished, Ask your children how the person in their story could have built up his or her self-image and self-esteem enough to take the good opportunity in front of him or her. What could he or she have done to prepare for the challenge?

Assign the reading of Chapter 3 as homework for the next session.

Chapter 3: Me and My Shadow

Lesson Plan Objectives

Cognitive - Students will recognize that there are two sides to human nature: good and bad. Students will be more aware of the fact that the more they “feed” or encourage the good or the bad side, the stronger it will become. Students will understand the causal relationship between interacting with media that depict violence and real life conflict.

Affective - Students will want to “feed” their better side through cultivating positive thoughts and feelings, doing good deeds, serving others, putting others ahead of the self, and controlling the media influences they allow into their minds.

Behavioral - Students will describe and discuss ways to avoid fanning the flames of conflict and resentment. Students will imagine and describe themselves interacting with the world without their “shadow” side. Students will identify and list “shadow” characteristics they would like to change into something “bright.” Students will chart their progress.

Session 1

Ask your children if they have ever felt a conflict within themselves. For instance, ask them to imagine seeing an elderly lady struggling to get her groceries into her home. Most people would feel they should help the old lady. At the same time, a lot of thoughts might come into their minds that would stop them from helping her—thoughts like, “Oh, she’s nearly finished now,” or “She would probably rather do it herself,” or “That would take too much of my time,” or “I’m tired today—I don’t want to strain myself.” Ask students, “When we think those kinds of thoughts, whom are we thinking of?” Affirm that we are thinking of ourselves.

Say that self-centered thinking may lead people to avoid doing a good deed, and it may also lead to justifying misdeeds, such as crimes: “I need this money more than the store owner does, so I’ll take it. He’ll never miss it” is one example. “She dressed that way, so she wanted me to kiss her” is another example. “He yelled at me, so I had a right to put a scratch on his car.” Point out that such thinking does not take into account the feelings and rights of others. It puts the self at the center of everything.

Mention that this conflict between being self-centered and being considerate of others is a very strong one. Say that it takes place inside each individual, inside each family, community, and nation. It is not easy to act so as to benefit others rather than the self.

Emphasize that when we do act for the benefit of others rather than ourselves, we experience joy, and everything goes better. Point out that it is well worth the sacrifice, although it may not seem so in the moment.

Point out that the chapter emphasizes strengthening our unselfish selves with good thoughts and influences. Ask your children to give examples from the chapter about what to do and what not to do to strengthen our unselfish selves.

Mention that “feeding” the selfish or the unselfish side of our natures is shown strongly in the story “Two Wolves—A Native American Story about the Power of Thought.” Reread this story in their student texts:

Two Wolves--a Native American Story about the Power of Thought

An old grandfather, whose grandson came to him with anger at a schoolmate who had done him an injustice, said, “Let me tell you a story, Grandson. I, too, at times, have felt a great hate for those who have taken so much, with no sorrow for what they do. But hate wears you down, and does not hurt your enemy. It is like taking poison and wishing your enemy would die of it. I have struggled with these feelings many times.”

He continued, “It is as if there are two wolves inside me. One is good and does no harm. He lives in harmony with all around him and does not take offense when no offense was intended. He will fight only when it is right to do so, and in the right way.

But the other wolf is full of anger. The slightest thing will set him into a fit of temper. He fights everyone, all the time, for no reason. He cannot think because his anger and hate are so great. It is hard to live with these two wolves inside me, for both of them try to dominate my spirit.”

The boy looked intently into his Grandfather's eyes and asked, “Which one wins, Grandfather?”

The grandfather solemnly replied, “The one I feed.”

Ask your children to remember a recent conflict in their lives. Did feeding the “bad wolf” with negative, hate-filled, resentful thoughts keep the conflict going? Does keeping a mental list of all the bad things the other person has done feed the bad wolf or the good wolf? Ask your children for suggestions as to how to feed the good wolf when they are in conflict with someone.

Write on a paper: “Hate wears you down, and does not hurt your enemy. It is like taking poison and wishing your enemy would die of it.”

Ask your children to discuss and debate this question: “Does hating someone hurt the other person? Does it hurt you more?”

Reread “Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde” in their student books. Mention that this is a very imaginative literary representation of what we all feel inside: that we have a good nature and a bad nature—“Me and My Shadow”—and that they are opposed to one another.

Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde

Robert Louis Stevenson's famous story *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* tells vividly of inner conflict, or as Stevenson puts it: "the perennial war" between the good and evil selves.

Gentle Dr. Jekyll, a doctor, scientist, and humanitarian, struggles with sins he does not name, sometimes indulging himself in them. He begins to notice in himself two different natures, both of which are a strong part of him: "I was no more myself when I laid aside restraint and plunged in shame, than when I labored in the eye of day, at the furtherance of knowledge or the relief of sorrow and suffering." Both sinner and saint are inside him, part of him. He concludes that "man is not one, but truly two" and devises in his laboratory a potion that at last will separate the evil nature within him from the good. The evil side comes out in the form of a man he names Mr. Hyde.

When Dr. Jekyll first is taken over by Mr. Hyde's personality, he says, "I knew myself, at the first breath of this new life, to be more wicked, tenfold more wicked, sold a slave to my original evil; and the thought, in that moment, braced and delighted me like wine."

Although he inhabits Dr. Jekyll's body, Hyde does not physically resemble the good doctor. Rather, "evil was written broadly and plainly on the face... Evil besides (which I still believe to be the lethal side of man) had left on that body an imprint of deformity and decay."

"I had now two characters as well as two appearances," wrote Jekyll. "One was wholly evil... inherently malign and villainous; his every act and thought centered on self; drinking pleasure... from any degree of torture to another; relentless like a man of stone." Hyde is all the evil concentrated in Dr. Jekyll's soul expressed fully for the first time.

Dr. Jekyll labors by day to make scientific discoveries that will help humanity; he treats patients; he even works to undo any evil Hyde has done in the night. His goodness and service to others comfort him, but he begins to notice something. The more he is let out to do whatever he wants, the more powerful Hyde is becoming inside him. He begins "to spy a danger that, if this were much prolonged, the balance of my nature might be permanently overthrown... and the character of Edward Hyde become irrevocably mine. Where in the beginning, the difficulty had been to throw off the body of Jekyll, it had of late gradually but decidedly transferred itself to the other side. All things therefore seemed to point to this: that I was slowly losing hold of my original and better self and becoming slowly incorporated with my second and worse."

Jekyll decides to take the potion no more, and he enjoys a period of peace and joy with his conscience approving of him once again. But after a time, "I began to be tortured with throes and longings, as Hyde struggled after freedom." At last, in a moment of weakness, he gives in and drinks the potion again. Hyde is none the weaker for being kept inside so long. "My devil had long been caged, he came out roaring."

This time Hyde commits a brutal murder. Jekyll is firmer in his resolve never to take the potion again. However, he does indulge himself in some sinning, similar to what he had done before he began drinking the potion. Now this alone is enough to transform him into Hyde. At last, knowing that murderous Hyde, his most evil self, has won the battle and is now the stronger of the two, Jekyll commits suicide to end Hyde's crimes.

Now ask your children to imagine that they have Dr. Jekyll's potion, only that it has the power to bring out their good side alone. Ask them to think about how they would act, addressing real situations of conflict in their lives, once they have drunk this “good nature” potion. Encourage them to try to act that way.

Session 2

Remind your children that you have been discussing “Me and My Shadow,” or the good side of people and the bad side—the two wolves, or Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Ask your children to answer the Questions for Reflection in their student books.

Questions for Reflection

1. What is your “shadow” side like?
2. What is your “bright” side like?
3. How does each side affect your relations with others?
4. Why is it important to be careful what we allow into our minds?
5. What does it mean to put yourself “in the shoes of another”?
6. How can this help us to strengthen our good side?
7. How does selfishness separate us from others?
8. How does this prevent us from experiencing true happiness?
9. Have you ever experienced a deep joy through helping someone? Describe it.

Now ask your children to look over the Exercise: “Challenge for the Week” in their student books. Ask them to complete the portion of the exercise (writing down five character traits and choosing one to focus on improving, and then writing down plans and ideas for changing this character trait) and to work on changing their “shadow side” into something brighter.

Exercise: “Challenge for the Week”

Write down five character traits that you least like about yourself (for example, disloyalty, laziness, lying, etc.). Choose one of these “shadow” traits to focus on during this week. Make a promise to yourself to watch and deal with this particular aspect of your “shadow.” Write down your ideas and plans for changing this shadow into

something bright. Check yourself at the end of the week to see how you did. This is a good way to help you become aware of and change undesirable aspects of your character.

Direct your children's attention to the Reflection Exercise: "Controlling Myself" and explain that you will be checking their answers in one week's time, once they have had time to work on some aspect of their "shadow side." (Remember to follow up on this!)

Reflection Exercise: "Controlling Myself"

After completing the previous exercise, reflect on the following:

1. Why, if I dislike a certain kind of attitude or behavior in others, do I find it in myself?
2. How successful was I in controlling my undesirable behavior?
3. Why do I find it so difficult to control my own thinking and behavior?
4. What kind of person do I really want to be?

Explain that you are now going to do a short session on how the media influence the shadow side of the self. Do they know that scientists have proven that watching violent movies or TV shows makes children more violent in the way they act with others?

Provide the following information:

The National Institute of Mental Health issued a major report in 1982 that showed that watching violent television shows helps to cause violent behavior in real life.

Dr. Leonard D. Eron, professor of psychology and senior research scientist, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan, in 1999 testified before a Senate subcommittee: "Since 1960, a body of evidence coming from both laboratory research and survey studies based on real life experience has confirmed that there is a causative relation between the observation of aggression and violence on television and subsequent aggressive and violent behavior on the part of the observer."⁹

Dr. Eron noted that between 1957 and 1990, several overall analyses of all the available data showed the same thing. He said that four major professional associations have recommended that television stations lower the level of violence in their programming for the good of society: The American Medical Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Child Psychiatry and the American Psychological Association. Dr. Eron himself studied young children over a period of ten years: from age eight to age eighteen. Children who had watched more violent programs at age eight ended up being more violent in real life by the time they were eighteen.

⁹ Leonard D. Eron, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology and Senior Research Scientist, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan, "Effects of Television Violence on Children", Testimony before the Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation Regarding Safe Harbor Hours in TV Programming, Senator Ernest Hollings, Chair, May 18, 1999.

Also, children and teenagers who watch violent shows become less sensitive to violence. They can shrug it off more easily—including real-life violence.

Ask your children what that might mean if they witnessed someone else becoming violent toward a third person. If the witness doesn't have much of a response to violence, what will the witness do or not do in the situation to save the person who is about to become a victim?

Scientists have also found causal links between listening to music with violent words and playing violent video games to getting into more fights and problems with others, because the person tends to interpret the others' words and actions as being more aggressive than they are.

Explain that all this is to illustrate the point that what we put into our minds affects whether our good and unselfish nature is awakened and fed or whether our bad and selfish nature is awakened and fed.

The inner wolf we feed will be the one that dominates our lives. Ask your children which wolf they want to dominate their lives. Which one should they feed?

Assign the reading of Chapter 4 as homework for the next session.

Chapter 4: The Thief and the Mask

Lesson Plan Objectives

Cognitive - Students will understand that people can change through their actions.

Affective - Students will want to take good actions in order to become better people.

Behavioral - Students will debate whether a person can change for the better through his or her actions. Students will describe ways in which they have changed as a result of their actions.

Session 1

Ask your children what they thought of the story “The Thief and the Mask” in their student books. Have your child retell the story and have the others join in to supply important details that he or she might have left out:

There once lived a wise king with a beautiful daughter. The time came for her to be married, and he wanted her to have a variety of choices. So he advertised for prospective suitors to present themselves at the palace for selection. There were just two requirements: the men had to have a good character (the king's preference) and be good looking (the princess's choice).

Among the people who saw the advertisement was a thief. Although he had once been handsome, his life of robbery and lying had marked his face. Lines of deceit and betrayal had disfigured his looks. But his natural cunning was aroused by the idea of competing for the princess's hand.

“I can find a way,” he thought, “to beat out the others.” Secretly he visited a famous maker of masks and had one made that transformed his face back to the innocence of his youth.

With the help of the mask, the thief progressed rapidly through the early rounds of selection. At first, he would come home and laugh at how easily he had deceived the king's advisers.

“How foolish they are!” he told himself as he looked at his real face in the mirror each night.

After a few weeks, however, he realized that matters were getting out of hand. He had become one of the twenty final candidates, all of whom had their pictures published in the newspapers. Reporters began standing outside his door and asking him questions about his private life, which, of course, he was most reluctant to talk about! He pretended to be humble, saying that he expected to be eliminated and that his personal life was unimportant. He could no longer take off his mask as he lived in terror that his true identity would be revealed.

The day came when he was notified that he had been selected to be one of the three final candidates. Realizing that if his true identity were discovered he surely would be executed, he decided to leave the country the following morning. But as he came out of

his house, he was greeted by two soldiers sent by the king to be his bodyguards. It was too late!

On the final day of the contest, the thief walked to the castle for what he was sure would be the last time. He hoped desperately that he would lose to one of the other candidates, but it was not to be. The princess had already made up her mind. She talked to the other candidates just long enough to be polite. Then she took him by the arm and told her father, *"This is the one!"*

In a last attempt to avoid disclosure, the thief took the king aside.

"Your Majesty," he said, "I am honored, but I need time to prepare for such a huge responsibility. Can the wedding be delayed by one year?"

The king said yes. Of course, the thief's real intent was to run away as soon as he could. However, this proved to be impossible. He was now the second most famous man in the kingdom. Crowds surrounded his house, hoping for a glimpse of the future king. He had to do many charitable works and help the poor in his position as a nobleman. He had to be virtuous and honorable, as a future king would have to be. For a whole year he lived as a noble person on the surface, all the time squirming inside at the knowledge of his own corruption.

Finally, the day came for the royal wedding. Certain that he would be found out and have to face death, the thief went to the palace with a heavy heart. When the princess came to greet him, he asked to be with her for a short time alone.

As they went into a small room, she thought, *"Maybe now he will kiss me!"* Instead, he threw himself at her feet.

"Your Royal Highness," he cried, "I have a terrible confession to make. Can you forgive me!" And he told her the whole story of his deception: how he was not a handsome prince at all, but an ugly thief. When he had finished, there was a long moment of silence. Finally, the princess spoke.

"I'll forgive you," she said, "but only on one condition. Take off your mask and show me who you really are!"

It was the most he could do to bring his hands to his face. Trembling with shame and fear, he pulled the mask off and turned to face the princess.

"You monster!" she shouted, and slapped him in the face.

"Yes, yes, I know," he mumbled.

"What kind of stupid trick is this?" shouted the princess again. "What are you trying to do to me?"

"What do you mean?"

"Take this!" she said, and gave him a mirror. He looked—and looked again. Then, he looked at the mask and into the mirror again. The faces were identical!

By living as a good and righteous man for an entire year, he had changed. Since his actions had been good, he had become good without noticing it. There was no doubt: he had changed.

Fortunately, the princess was now beginning to see the funny side of the whole affair.

"Come on!" she said "Let's pretend this never happened." And the new couple went off to see the king. Many years later, after they had become the new king and queen, people considered the former thief the wisest and kindest king they had ever had.

Ask your children if they think it is possible for a bad person to become good by doing good deeds. Let them offer their opinions.

Write on a paper the quote from Aristotle that is in their student books: “We become just by doing just acts, temperate by doing temperate acts, brave by doing brave acts.”

Ask your children to debate whether they think this statement is true or not. Divided into sides: those who believe the statement is true and those who believe the statement is false. Allow several rounds of arguments.

State that the position of this chapter is that people can indeed change. Ask your children to do the Reflection Exercise: “Circumstances and Internal Change” in order to explore this point further.

Reflection Exercise: “Circumstances and Internal Change”

Can you think of an experience in which you changed in some way as a result of the way you responded to or dealt with a situation? Did you change for the better or for the worse? Why did it happen? Specifically, how did your actions lead to an internal change?

Session 2

Remind your children of the last session on people's ability to change. Refer them to the parts of the chapter that talk about people adapting to change, such as people in Nazi Germany, who did things they normally would not do when the regime in power encouraged them to do bad things to other people. Refer them to the part that talks about people in India making noble sacrifices as they followed Mahatma Gandhi—sacrifices they would not have been able to make had they not had him influencing them.

Discuss the Questions for Reflection in their student books.

Questions for Reflection

1. Do you believe it is possible for a person to change his or her character, or is a person destined to be a certain way?
2. Can you think of some examples of people who were changed by their circumstances?
3. Why do some people seem to be unable to change?
4. What do you think are the positive and negative aspects of adapting one's character to circumstances?
5. How does a person feel when he or she tries to adapt to an environment that feels unnatural to him or her?
6. Is it possible, as in the story in this lesson, to go into a situation with an evil motivation and find some sincerity and truth along the way?

If you can gather a group of children, have them do the Exercise: “The Trial”. Then ask them to share their arguments in favor of the thief’s conviction or in favor of finding him innocent. You could hold a mock trial with volunteers acting out the parts of the thief, the king, the princess, and lawyers on both sides. The rest of the group could be a jury, deciding the thief’s fate.

Exercise: “The Trial”

Imagine that in the above story, instead of forgiving and accepting the thief right away, the princess decided the thief must stand trial for deceiving her and the king. What do you think are the arguments in favor of his conviction? In favor of finding him innocent? How would your story end?

Assign the reading of Chapter 5 as homework for the next session.

Chapter 5: Searching for Meaning

Lesson Plan Objectives

Cognitive - Students will understand that human beings naturally search for meaning in their lives. Students will explore different interpretations of the meaning of human life. Students will consider the possibility that there is meaning in suffering.

Affective - Students will be more thoughtful about life. Students will acknowledge their own need for meaning.

Behavioral - Students will describe their lives and the meaning of their lives from a perspective of the end-of-life. Students will draw and interpret their lives five years ago, in the present, and in the future.

Session 1

Start by saying that many people think that if they had money, fame, beauty, and success, they would be happy. Ask your children if they think those things would make them happy.

Then point to the example of superstar Madonna, who had all those things and yet eventually turned to a very strict form of religion in order to find meaning in her life. The story of Madonna's search for meaning in life is told in their student books:

“Madonna and the Meaning of Life”

Madonna is the best-selling female recording artist ever. Her albums have sold more than 130 million copies. Rich, famous, beautiful, Madonna has been able to have anything she wants. She owns a British country estate of 1,132 acres that she paid nine million British pounds for. That is only one of her houses; she owns several more. She is very famous, has starred in movies, is married to a film director, and has even published books. She has won numerous awards. Men all over the world have desired her.

This woman who seemed to have everything has now, after decades of self-indulgence, turned to a strict form of religion.

Her religious teacher said, “In her case more than in others, she has already achieved all the things that others assume would make them happy--fame, money, success. The difference is that she absolutely knows that those things do not fulfill her. She felt that something was missing, and she looked for it.

“Madonna and the Meaning of Life” by Shiri Lev-Ari, Haaretz.com., Sept. 29, 2004

Direct your children's attention to what Madonna's religious teacher said: that Madonna had all the things that people think will make them happy and found out that there was more to life than all that. Reading out loud the quote from her religious teacher would be helpful.

Refer them to the list of famous people's views of the meaning of life in their student books. Hold a vote on each of the meanings on the list and see which one most appeals:

- Life is a road to domination: "*Veni, vidi, vici — I came, I saw, I conquered.*" — Julius Caesar, Roman emperor
- Life is a drama: "*All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players.*" — William Shakespeare, 16th century English playwright
- Life is a journey toward God: "*Thou hast created us for Thyself, and our heart is not quiet until it finds rest in Thee.*" — Augustine, early Christian saint
- Life is doing something good: "*If there is any meaning and purpose in life, then this meaning and purpose are not in our own happiness, but in something much greater. You need to do goodness!*" — Anton Chekhov, 19th century Russian writer
- Life is love: "*We live in this world only if we love.*" — Rabindranath Tagore, Indian poet of late 19th-early 20th century
- Life is always new: "*Human life should always be like this river that is in front of me: all the time one and the same bed, but every moment there is fresh water in it.*" — Henry David Thoreau, 19th century American thinker
- Life is work: "*Work is liberating us from three great evils: boredom, vice, and poverty.*" — Voltaire, 18th century French philosopher
- Life is duty: "*The greatest pleasure in life is knowing that you have fulfilled your duty.*" — William Hazlitt, early 20th century English essayist and literary critic
- Life is suffering: Buddha
- Life is a path to death: "*All men are brothers, and the same end awaits them all — death.*" — Albert Camus, 20th century French existentialist
- Life is creativity: "*There is hardly any bigger joy than the joy of creating.*" — Nikolai Gogol, 19th century Russian writer

Explain that meaning is important to human beings. People always search for answers to why things happen. Why is there war? Why did those people commit that crime? Why is the sky blue instead of green? Why is there suffering? Why am I so drawn to people who end up hurting me?

Mention that seeing something meaningful in suffering and setbacks makes life more bearable. Finding meaning in everyday life—feeling a sense of purpose and direction—fills people with energy and good cheer. People without purpose are sad indeed.

Have your children do the Reflection Exercise: “End of Life” in their student books. Have them imagine a career, family, relationship with the community, and accomplishments.

Reflection Exercise: “End of Life”

Imagine you are approaching the end of your life. As you look back, what meaning do you see in the events of your life? What was your life for? Do you feel satisfaction or regret? Why?

Session 2

Remind your children of the last lesson on meaning. Direct their attention once more to the list of famous people's statements about the meaning of life. Discuss the Questions for Reflection in their student books.

Questions for Reflection

1. With which of the famous people's statements about life do you agree?
2. Are there some you don't like?
3. What is your definition of the meaning of life?
4. What does this definition say about you and how you see yourself?
5. Why is it important to search for meaning in life?
6. Why do you think many people simply pursue pleasure or money and seem to avoid the search for meaning?
7. Is there meaning in suffering?
8. Can you find meaning in the events of your own life so far?
9. How would an optimist see the meaning of life as opposed to a pessimist?
10. Which are you?

Now open the next part of the discussion by saying, “As we grow up, our understanding of life and its meaning changes. Five years ago, you might have thought of life very differently than you do now. You might have thought you were alive just to have fun—to eat and run and play—yes, even though you had to go to school—and to get presents and be loved by your family. But now you are facing many more issues of the meaning of life—what you will do, what you will be, whom you will marry—these are all becoming important questions.”

Ask your children to do the Exercise: “Mirror Image” in their student books. Have them draw the three panels on a piece of paper and fill them in with their thoughts.

Exercise: “Mirror Image”

Imagine a three-panel mirror in front of you. The central panel reflects you today; the left-hand panel as you were five years ago; and the right-hand panel as you will be ten years from now. Look at yourself five years ago. What were your beliefs and outlook on

life then? Now look at yourself today. How have those beliefs and outlook changed? What caused the change? Now look at yourself ten years from now. How do you imagine you might change in the next ten years? What might cause these changes?

To close, Encourage your children to search for meaning in all that they do. Mention that serving and helping others—doing things unselfishly—always gives more meaning to any activity.

Assign the reading of Chapter 6 as homework for the next session.

Chapter 6: Happiness

Lesson Plan Objectives

Cognitive - Students will understand that love for the sake of others—not money, knowledge, or power—is the key to happiness. Students will recognize that achieving happiness involves overcoming difficulties. Students will understand the concept of breaking a large undertaking down into manageable parts.

Affective - Students will feel determined to strive to lead lives of altruistic love. Students will feel encouraged to overcome obstacles in their lives.

Behavioral - Students will describe difficulties they have faced in their own lives. Students will distinguish between good and bad choices when faced with obstacles. Students will state, when asked, encouraging maxims.

Session 1

Mention that this chapter is a little more poetic and inspirational than some of the other chapters. In it, life is likened to a waterfall and a river, bringing many challenges. The conclusion is that happiness comes from truly loving others.

Write on a paper: Money, Knowledge, Power

Ask your children to close their eyes and dream for a moment of each of these things. Say, “You have a lot of money now. What are you going to do with it? What will your life look like from now on?” Ask them to share what they imagine their life would be like if they had a lot of money.

Now ask them to imagine themselves having a lot of knowledge. How will they use their knowledge? Where will their knowledge bring them to? The Nobel Prize? International fame for discovering of the cure for cancer? Worldwide acclaim for learning how to neutralize nuclear bombs? Again, ask them to share their dreams of having a great deal of knowledge.

Now have them imagine they have a great deal of power. At their word, the world moves. They can influence whole nations to do their bidding. They can make and wreck people’s careers. If they want a building built, the building is built. Ask them to share what life would be like with a great deal of power.

Explain that they probably smiled in their thoughts and dreams of having these desirable things. Their thoughts and dreams probably made them feel happy. But is any one of these three important things enough to make a person totally happy? What if the person is

lonely? What if the person has a bad marriage? What if the person's children hate him or her and no one wants to be friends with him or her? Will money, knowledge, or power ever be able to replace the simple joys of being with good friends?

Explain that the answer is no. Point out that, as the chapter says, true love is the greatest happiness. According to the book, true love means giving to others.

Write on a paper this quote from the chapter:

“In the end, our happiness will depend on how much love we have given to others.”

Ask your children to offer their opinions and ideas as to whether this is true or not. Ask them to share with the class about the times that they experienced happiness through giving their time, strength, resources, or attention to someone who needed it.

Point out the quotation in their student books “I Shall Not Pass This Way Again...” Ask your children to read the quotation out loud. Then ask what “way” is the person referring to?

I Shall Not Pass This Way Again...

“I expect to pass through this world but once. Any good thing, therefore, that I can do or any kindness I can show to any fellow human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer nor neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.”

Stephen Grellet, 1773-1855
French-born Quaker minister

Next, discuss the Questions for Reflection in their student books. They may refer back to the chapter to get the answers if they need to.

Questions for Reflection

1. Is anyone completely happy?
2. What do you think of the ideas that money, knowledge and power alone do not bring happiness?
3. How can we break down the walls that exist between people?
4. What does it mean to unite your mind and body? Why is this so important?
5. Is it true that “only by giving can we receive”?
6. What does it mean to live generously? Give some examples.
7. Is the image of our life as water accurate?

Session 2

Remind your children of Chapter 6: Happiness, and that its conclusion was that happiness comes from true love—doing good and kind things for others.

Explain that that chapter also compares life to water running down from a mountaintop or a river flowing toward the mainstream or ocean. The text points out that once students graduate from school, they will be like small streams running their own course. There will be many obstacles, conflicts, and challenging moments. The text advises young people to tackle life's problems with a spirit of adventure and not to be defeated by obstacles.

Ask your children to share any boating, canoeing, or other experiences with water they have had that taught them something about life. Mention that, like life, water is very beautiful but it can be quite fearsome. Have any students gone white water rafting? Shot the rapids in a canoe? Been on a large ocean-going vessel? Stood in a freezing cold, pounding waterfall? Dove off a high cliff or from a high board? Explain that succeeding in life will require something of a spirit of adventure!

Ask your children to do the Reflection Exercise: “Your Personal Life.”

Reflection Exercise: “Your Personal Life”

Think of difficult situations that you have faced in your life. How did you deal with them? Did you tend to avoid them, or did you confront them and overcome the difficulties? Did this bring you happiness?

Explain that often the greatest obstacles in life are inside a person. In facing a task, a person may feel, “I can’t do it; why try?” or “People will laugh at me if I try this and fail,” or “I’ll do it next week (or next month or next year!),” or “It’s just too hard. I can’t face it.”

Write on a paper: “The longest journey begins with the first step.” Then write, “Getting started is halfway there.”

Discuss these points with your children. Explain that beginning a task is the hardest part of it. If young people learn to remind themselves of this and realize that once they get started, a task will go better, they will be more willing to start succeeding!

Mention that if a task is too frightening or daunting, it is good to break it into “manageable steps.”

Give the example that they have been given a twenty-page research paper to write in biology. It is due in four weeks. They may be tempted to just put it aside and forget about it (even though it is bothering them in the backs of their minds) and then tackle it at the

last possible moment. However, this is scarier and less effective than tackling it a little bit at a time.

Write on a paper: “How do you eat an elephant?” Say out loud, “One bite at a time!”

To overcome the obstacle of the biology research paper, they could break it down into three week-long tasks. For instance, the first week they could choose a topic, go to the library, and gather the books, index cards, papers, internet information, and instructions all in one place. The next week they could read all the materials they have gathered and take notes on them. The third week they could type up the information they have and begin to organize it under different headings and notice where they need more research. The fourth week they could rewrite what they have typed up, add in any new information, and polish it into final form.

Explain that another way to break up a big, overwhelming task is for the person to give him- or herself little rewards for doing parts of it. Say someone’s father has asked a student to trim a 100-foot hedge over the weekend. It’s a three-hour job, and the child keeps putting it off and putting it off, thinking, “It’s too hot,” “I’m too tired,” “My muscles are already sore,” “My favorite show is on now.” Instead of taking the whole task on at once, the student could say, “First, I’ll get the hedge clippers out of the basement and put them near the hedge. Then I need to call my friend to arrange to go to the movie tonight. After my phone call, I’ll work for an hour, and then I can get a drink of ice-cold juice and take a break. Then I’ll work for another hour until lunch. After lunch, I’ll put in another hour, looking forward to a refreshing shower after that.”

Have students do the Exercise: “Facing Obstacles” in their student books.

Exercise: “Facing obstacles”

Consider the following situation: You are taking a literature class in which you have to write a report on your readings every two weeks. You find this difficult and uninteresting. After a while you stop doing it. Then you start skipping the class every once in a while. For this you get cited for detention after school for one week. From this point, what do you do? Choice 1: Not go to detention, which gets you suspended for a week. You are now one step away from expulsion. Choice 2: Go to detention. You decide to change your attitude and start doing the work.

What would be the long-term results of each of these decisions? Draw up a scenario for each one.

At the end of class, remind your children that a good way to overcome obstacles is to break them down into manageable steps and reward themselves for partial accomplishments along the way.

Mention that Chapter 7 will be read together, so they need not read it for homework.

Chapter 7: Choose Your Destiny

Lesson Plan Objectives

Cognitive - Students will understand that choices have consequences. Students will gain tools to make more responsible choices and decisions.

Affective - Students will want to make the choices that lead to the best outcomes in the stories and in their lives.

Behavioral - Students will apply four criteria in hypothetical situations to make good choices. Students will describe dilemmas in their own lives in which they had to make a decision. Students will compare their decision in the past with one they would make in the present, using the four criteria.

Session 1

Explain to your children that, as the chapter points out in the first paragraph, life is full of choices. The choices we make bring about different consequences or results. Your children will be reading short stories in groups and following the different results of the various choices offered.

Mention that there are three stories: the lucky lottery, the freedom fighter, and the party. For this session, try to gather a group of children if you don't already have a group. (If not, just do it alone with your child.)

Have your children begin reading each story together. Whenever a choice comes up, they should mark in their books (lightly, in pencil) the choice they would make. Then those who agree on a choice break into a smaller group to follow up on their choices. If they are offered more choices, they break into yet smaller groups to follow up on their choices, which they mark lightly in their student books. (The "freedom fighter" story is the most complex.) When they are finished, have them share with one another the thread of what happened according to their choices, reading aloud to one another their circled choices in order. This is so the groups can see the effect different choices have on the outcome of a person's life.

Do this again several times until each child has heard each story and learned of all the different possible outcomes for each one.

Ask your children for reactions to this. Hopefully, they will be amused and also find it thought-provoking. Emphasize that life offers many choices and that some choices are life-changing; others less so. Some choices can be taken back and corrected; others cannot. Ask them if they think it is good to make wise choices in life.

Discuss the Questions for Reflection in their student books.

Questions for Reflection

1. In the story “The party,” besides the choices given, how else could the sixteen-year-old boy have handled the situation?
2. In one ending of the story (#13), the girl becomes pregnant. Do you think the boy would have acted differently if he had taken this possibility seriously and considered the effect on the girl’s life?
3. If Mike had thought about his best friend’s situation rather than what he wanted to do, would it have changed his behavior?
4. In which ending did the boy consider the feelings of others? In which did he not?
5. Why is it that we often allow decisions to happen to us rather than taking a more aggressive role in determining our choice?
6. Why do we often find it so difficult to foresee the results of our decisions?
7. What does it mean to say that hindsight is “20-20” (in other words, 100% perfect)?
8. What does it mean to “rationalize” your actions?
9. What can we do to better foresee the impact our decisions and actions may have on ourselves and others?
10. In each of the stories, what are the moral and ethical issues involved?

Session 2

Remind your children of the last session and the different directions their choices in the stories led to. An interesting poem about choices is “The Road Not Taken” by Robert Frost. Perhaps you could read this poem aloud to your children or write it on the poster board, possibly so it is there for them to read.

The Road Not Taken

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.

Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

This poem likens life's choices to a path in a wood. Ask your children if their experience with the stories leads them to understand why Frost says, "knowing how way leads on to way, I doubted if I should ever come back."

Point out that the poet says he took a long time to look at the paths and choose, trying to see ahead to where they might lead. It is good to weigh up the possible results and consequences of our choices and decisions. The poet's thoughtfulness—"long I stood"—probably helped him make the best choice. On what basis did Frost seem to make his decision?

Ask your children why Frost says he will be telling about this "with a sigh." Explain that a sigh may mean regret over the choice made (it turned out to be the wrong one), or it may mean simply that we cannot have something—whenever we make a choice, other choices must be sacrificed. This can be as inconsequential as deciding to go the long way around to the shop rather than taking the short way, in order to get more fresh air—or it may be as consequential as deciding whom to marry. When we make a choice, other choices must be sacrificed—choices that may have strong good points we wish we could also have but cannot, if we are going to have the superior good points the other choice offers. That is another reason why it is important to make good choices—so that we have fewer regrets.

Have students consider the choices in the Exercise: "Moral Decision-Making Steps."

Exercise: "Moral Decision-Making Steps"

Applying the following four steps in deciding how you would act in each of the three dilemmas A, B and C:

1. Determine what the dilemma is.
2. Decide what moral and ethical issues are involved (e.g., honesty, respect, responsibility, tolerance).
3. Think about how your actions will affect other people, either directly or indirectly.
4. Make your decision.

A. You are taking the final exam in science class. You notice that your best friend is cheating, but no one else notices. Do you say anything to your teacher?

B. Your mom asks you to stay home and take care of your little brother. She feels very sick, and your dad will not be home until late. You had made plans to go out with a friend, something you have been looking forward to doing. What do you do?

C. You are blamed for stealing money from someone at school. You know and can prove who really stole the money. You also know that the person's family is very poor. Do you tell the principal who really stole the money? Would it matter if this person was your friend?

Ask your children to explain their answers and how they arrived at them and what they think the consequences would be.

Ask your children to do the Reflection Exercise: "Your Dilemma."

Reflection Exercise: "Your Dilemma"

Think of a dilemma that you have had to face in your own life. How did you deal with it? Did it turn out successfully or in failure? Knowing the four decision-making steps above, would you handle the situation differently if it presented itself again?

Assign the reading of Chapter 8 for the next session.

Chapter 8: Commitment and Loyalty

Lesson Plan Objectives

Cognitive - Students will understand the importance of commitment and loyalty in sustaining relationships.

Affective - Students will be determined to practice commitment and loyalty in their relationships.

Behavioral - Students will distinguish between loyal and disloyal, committed and uncommitted behavior when presented with scenarios. Students will describe the role of commitment in their own lives. Students will observe a committed and loyal couple and report on their interactions.

Session 1

Start by reminding students of the last lesson about making choices that affect our destinies. Explain that commitment and loyalty mean we have made some choices—we have chosen certain people, institutions, occupations, goals, or ideals to adhere to—we have chosen certain paths. Choosing to stay with them again and again, in spite of challenges, means we are truly committed and loyal.

Distinguish between blind loyalty and commitment, however. Mention that the text points out that a truly loyal patriot wants his or her country to be good and will work to help the country be good rather than accepting everything the country does as right.

Another example of blind commitment that is given is a family member so committed to “helping” an alcoholic in the family that, in fact, that family member is enabling the alcoholism by taking too much responsibility for the other person’s life.

Ask your children to provide their own examples of blind loyalty or commitment.

Next, ask your children how many of them want good relationships in their lives: good friendships, good family relationships, a happy marriage, and a good relationship with the children they will have in the future. The majority of students, if not all, will raise their hands.

Explain that loyalty and commitment are very necessary to develop relationships properly. While they may be very drawn to certain friends and companions and everything seems to just go along naturally, in every friendship there are times when commitment and loyalty are needed or else the friendship will not last. This is certainly true in marriage, which has been called “the passionate friendship.”

The five scenarios in their student books dealing with loyalty show how loyalty supports good relationships. Go over all five and ask what the results might have been if the person in the scenario had not shown loyalty.

1. A group of your peers are talking about your good friend. You are tempted to join in the mean talk in order to belong to this group. Instead, you say something very supportive about your friend, and then wait for the tone of the conversation to change from negative to positive, or you walk away.
2. Your friend has been sad lately because of his parents' divorce. He's not doing as well as usual on the sports team he plays on, and people in the stands are beginning to murmur against him. You don't want to reveal everything he's confided in you, but you do defend him by letting it be known that he is going through a lot of family problems right now and so isn't playing well. People then become more sympathetic to him.
3. Your parents asked you to be home at ten. A new group of friends urges you to stay with them until ten thirty. They say your parents won't care, but you know your parents have a good reason for you to be home at the time they said. You firmly break away from your friends and show up at home on time.
4. You've been dating Cristina for six months. You've asked her not to date anyone else and promised that you wouldn't either. Good-looking Pamela sends you a note in history class, asking you to go out with her. Cristina and her family are going out of town next weekend—it's a perfect opportunity to go out with Pamela. Still, it could lead to a real mess. Cristina would probably find out, and Pamela would have expectations of you after that. You write Pamela back saying, "Sorry. I'm dating Cristina."

The following scenarios in the student books demonstrate commitment. Go over them and ask your children what the possible results would be of not living up to the commitments in them.

1. You told your parents that if they let your friend stay overnight on Saturday, you would study all day Sunday for your test on Monday. They let you have the friend over. But now, Sunday afternoon, the weather is beautiful and some of your other friends have called and asked you to go to the park with them. Regretfully, you tell them you can't, and you get your studying done.
2. Rhonda asked you to come to her party. Even though Rhonda isn't one of your good friends, you agreed because you didn't have anything else to do that night. Then your best friend calls up and excitedly tells you that his dad got tickets for a professional soccer match through a raffle at work. It's the same night as Rhonda's party. Ouch! Reluctantly, you tell your friend that you have a previous commitment.
3. The teacher gave you a break on your missing term paper because she believed you that you had done it but left it in another classroom. She gives you permission to go get it but tells you to hurry up, as she has to go somewhere else. As you pass the gym on the

way to your locker, some friends invite you to stop and shoot baskets. You want to, and for a moment you think that you can spare the time if you run all the rest of the way. You shake your head, though, because you owe it to the teacher and yourself to get the paper to her as soon as possible.

4. The coach says if you miss a practice, you can't play in the next game. You are supposed to show your commitment to the team, though, by showing up in uniform and watching the game from the bench. You missed a practice. You don't want to have to show up in uniform and just watch from the bench. You do it, though, to support your team.

Ask your children to do the Reflection Exercise: "My Commitment" in their student books and to take home the Exercise: "Loyal Partners" and bring in their observations for the next session.

Reflection Exercise: "My Commitment"

Reflect on your life so far: Has there ever been someone or something to which you were strongly committed? What did it feel like? Do you still feel the same way, or have things changed? If they have changed, why? When you marry, do you expect to be able to make the same kind of commitment to your spouse? Can you imagine yourself in your old age, still together with your spouse, surrounded by your children and grandchildren?

Exercise: "Loyal Partners"

Find a married couple or longtime friends whom you admire for their special relationship. Spend some time with them, observing the nature of their relationship. How do they treat each other? Do they have disagreements? How do they handle them? Now talk with them and find out about their history together. Were they always so happy together? Did they have times of difficulty? How did they make it through those times? What roles did commitment and loyalty play?

Session 2

Check to see if your children did the Exercise: "Loyal Partners" and ask them to share about the people they observed and spoke to.

Mention that, as they may have observed, loyalty and commitment are closely related to one another, and they are often intertwined. In general, loyalty is more to a person or group of people, and commitment is more to an idea, ideal, belief, or promise. However, the two often overlap in human relations.

For example, a husband may be loyal to his wife because he loves her, and he refuses to go on a date with an attractive woman when he is out of town on business. But what if he

just had a bad fight with his wife before he left for the out-of-town trip? He does not feel, at that moment, that he loves his wife and does not feel loyal toward her. In fact, he's angry, and a part of him would like to get back at her for the mean things she said. However, his commitment to the idea of marriage saves him. He believes in fidelity as a condition of marriage. He honors marriage, so he honors the commitment he made to be faithful to his wife. This commitment saves him and his family from the pain that would follow if he went out with another woman.

Commitment and loyalty have the power to override feelings. Explain that feelings are as changeable as the weather. As young people, they have many hormones working in their bodies very strongly right now. They may feel very happy one moment and then tragically sad the next. People's feelings and moods are affected by many things—hormones, weather, news in the newspaper, finances. Therefore, living life by how you feel in the moment is dangerous. Living life by the principles or virtues of commitment and loyalty enables a person to achieve and enjoy much more in the long run.

Ask your children to take a few moments to reflect on their day so far from the point of view of feelings. Ask them to close their eyes. How did they feel when they first woke up this morning? Did their feelings change over breakfast or after a shower? How did they feel as they packed up their things and came to school? Were things different when they first saw their friends or classmates? Did anything happen—receiving praise from a teacher, learning that they had made the team, getting a low grade or hearing a mean remark from someone in the halls—to affect their mood throughout their school day so far?

Explain that we go through many moods and “ups and downs” throughout a day. We have many different feelings. Sometimes we don't “feel” like doing our homework or listening to a lesson or being nice to anyone. It is the same with adults. Even in the most agreeable jobs, there are days when a person doesn't feel like going to work. Even in a good marriage, there are times when a person doesn't feel like being with his or her spouse. In everyday life in the adult world, loyalty and commitment see people through so that they can receive the rewards and the joys of success in their jobs and personal relationships.

The definition of virtues is “character strengths.” Like any strength, having virtues like commitment and loyalty takes practice, like doing pushups to strengthen one's arms. However, once you are strong in things like commitment and loyalty, you will find that your life goes better all around—and they are especially important for life beyond school.

Discuss the Questions for Reflection in their student books. They may refer back to the chapter to answer more accurately.

Questions for Reflection

1. Do you agree that loyalty and commitment are important in life?
2. What is an example of “blind loyalty”?
3. What is an example of “blind commitment”?
4. In the scenarios about loyalty, did you find yourself surprised at the loyal choices the characters made? Would you have made the same choices?
5. In the scenarios about commitment, did you find yourself surprised at the committed choices the characters made? Would you have made the same choices?
6. What is your reaction to the story “Forged in the Fire of Commitment”? Do you think Sally should have divorced her husband?
7. What are some areas of weakness you have that could hurt your ability to be loyal and committed? What actions can you take to shore up these areas of weakness?
8. What does the expression “You can't have your cake and eat it too” mean in relationship to loyalty and commitment?
9. What does being loyal and committed to a spouse mean giving up?
10. What are some rewards of loyalty and commitment?

Assign the reading of Chapter 9 for the next session.

Chapter 9: Groups and Belonging

Lesson Plan Objectives

Cognitive - Students will understand the advantages of belonging to groups. Students will understand the disadvantages of belonging to groups.

Affective - Students will appreciate the support of belonging to groups. Students will want to belong to beneficial groups.

Behavioral - Students will compare how well an individual, as opposed to a group, does in figuring out a survival situation. Students will categorize good and bad influences of groups on society. Students will describe the kind of group they would like to found.

Session 1

Start by saying that everyone belongs to groups. Some of these groups are by choice; others are more by chance. As the text points out, we enjoy being in some groups and we wish we weren't part of others. Yet there are many advantages to belonging to a group. Ask your children if they have ever heard the expression "Two heads are better than one." You might want to write that saying on a paper. Explain that people form groups because groups are very effective for getting more things done than just one individual can do.

As an example, Ask your children if any of them can lift your dining table. (Don't let them try!) Then ask if a group made up of (name four strong boys in the classroom) could lift your dining table. Affirm that, yes, they could.

Groups provide other kinds of strengths too. There are "support" groups for people who have a certain illness or problem—even for people who want to lose weight! The strength of a group helps people to cope with their problems better than they could by themselves.

To demonstrate that groups are usually better at solving problems than an isolated individual is, tell your children you are going to play a pretend game that military groups use in their training.

First of all, ask them to imagine that they were in a plane crash in some snowy mountains. The pilot and co-pilot are dead, and the plane is in pieces. It is 25 degrees below zero, and this is the middle of the day. At night, it will probably drop down to 40 or more below zero. Explain that most of them are dressed in everyday clothes, such as a person would wear to school, an office, etc. No one is dressed for the freezing outdoors.

Before the plane fell down the hillside, people were able to salvage the following list of items: (Write the list on a paper.)

A ball of steel wool
A small ax
A loaded .45-caliber pistol
A can of Crisco shortening
Newspapers (one per person)
A cigarette lighter (without fluid)
One extra shirt and pair of pants for each survivor
A 20-by-20 foot piece of heavy-duty canvas
A sectional air map made of plastic
One quart of 100-proof whiskey
A compass
Family-sized chocolate bars (one per person)

Ask your children to take a piece of notebook paper and write the numbers one through twelve vertically on their papers. Ask them to rank the list of items according to importance, with number one being the most important, and number twelve being the least important. Give them time to do this.

When they are finished, ask them to keep their lists. If you have a group of children, have them compare their lists and their reasons for their rankings. Through reason and discussion, let the group draw up a master list and choose a representative to tally the consensus as to the ranking of the items in terms of usefulness and why. Remind your children to keep their individual lists to refer to later.

Now mention that you will tell them how wilderness experts Mark Wanvig and Roger Johnson ranked the items and why. Mark Wanvig was a former instructor in survival training for the Reconnaissance School of the 101st Division of the U.S. Army and later an instructor in wilderness survival for four years at the Twin City Institute for Talented Youth as well as conducting wilderness-survival programs. Rger Johnson is an environmental education expert.

(You could put the number one next to the cigarette lighter, two next to the ball of steel wool, etc, so they can see the ranking without you having to rewrite the list on a paper.)

1. Cigarette lighter (without fluid)
2. Ball of steel wool
3. Extra shirt and pants for each survivor
4. Can of Crisco shortening
5. 20 by 20 foot piece of canvas
6. Small ax
7. Family-sized chocolate bars (one per person)
8. Newspapers (one per person)

9. Loaded .45-caliber pistol
10. Quart of 100 proof whiskey
11. Compass
12. Sectional air map made of plastic

Let your children express surprise and any disagreement. Have them compare the lists they made as individuals with the lists they made in their groups. Which was closer to the rankings made by the expert? Mention that in most cases, groups come up with more accurate rankings than individuals alone, as the group involves the exchange of more knowledge than one individual has.

Explain that these are the experts' rationales for the rankings of the items:

1. Cigarette lighter (without fluid) - The main thing the group needs to do is to keep warm. For this, they need a fire. A fire also serves as a signal to people who will start looking for the group when the plane does not land at its destination. Even without fluid, a cigarette lighter can provide a spark with which to set a good fire.
2. Ball of steel wool - A ball of steel wool is the perfect thing to catch sparks and support the making of a flame. It can do this even if it is damp.
3. Extra shirt and pants for each survivor - Obviously, people are going to need all the extra warmth they can get. Cloth is also useful for waving as a signal, bedding up in at night, making tents and string and serving as bandages or tourniquets.
4. Can of Crisco shortening - Since the plane crash survivors must be rescued, a Crisco can lid, polished to a shine with steel wool, is an excellent signaling device. It reflects a lot of light—which can be seen at a great distance. The expert estimates that, with a Crisco can lid alone, the survivors have an 80% chance of being rescued the first day, if they signal with it.

Crisco rubbed on bare skin will protect it from the cold. Melted into oil, it can be used as a fuel. This same oil can be soaked into a piece of cloth and then burned like an oil lamp. The empty can may be used as a cup for drinking water or for melting snow in. Drinking warm water will protect against dehydration and will keep up body heat.

5. 20 x 20 foot piece of canvas - A tent or windscreen could be made from the canvas, if it were stretched between trees or propped up on poles. It could be put underneath the people to keep them off the cold ground. It stands out in the wilderness and so could signal a rescue team.
6. Small ax - The ax can help the survivors chop firewood, cut down tree boughs to put on the ground to protect them from the cold, and cut down branches and smaller trees to construct a tent.

7. Family size chocolate bars (one per person) - Chocolate will provide energy for body heat.

8. Newspapers (one per person) - Newspapers are excellent fire-starters. They also can keep out the wind and cold when they are wrapped around a person underneath his or her clothes. Rolled up, a newspaper can act as a megaphone, for calling to others or for rescuers.

9. Loaded .45-caliber pistol - At first thought, it might seem that a pistol would help the group survive by allowing them to hunt animals. However, it is very hard to aim accurately enough to kill an animal with a pistol. Pistol shots could be used as a signal of distress, however. Three shots fired right after one another are an internationally recognized signal of distress. The pistol can be used as a hammer, too, and the powder from the shells and the spark of the gun could be useful in building a fire.

However, a loaded gun among a group of desperate, frightened, and possibly disoriented survivors of a plane wreck is not really very helpful.

10. Quart of 100-proof whiskey - The whiskey could be used as fuel for the fire or to make torches. An empty bottle can come in handy for storing water. People might think that a good swallow of whiskey will warm them up, however, because whiskey can burn in the throat and chest when swallowed. However, alcohol takes on the temperature it is surrounded by. Alcohol at the temperature described in this scenario would freeze the stomach and esophagus. Alcohol dilates the blood vessels in the skin, resulting in colder blood going to the heart and a decrease in body heat. The person with alcohol in him or her is more likely to freeze to death than someone who has not drunk any alcohol.

11. Compass - A compass might seem like a very handy device to have when people are lost, but, in fact, these survivors' only hope is rescue. If they set out to try to find a town or help, they will likely freeze to death along the way.

12. Sectional air map made of plastic - Once again, a map might seem very helpful, but if it encourages people to take their chances in the wilderness at these temperatures, it could be the instrument of their deaths. It could be sat or laid upon, though, as it is waterproof and would provide some insulation from the cold ground.

Now ask your children a final question about the advantages of being in groups: if they were in this situation, would they rather be there alone, with the rest of the group killed, or would they prefer to have other survivors there with them? Most likely, they would prefer to have others there for support, assistance, and a greater pool of survival knowledge.

Session 2

Write “Group Belonging” as a large heading on a paper. Under it, on the left, write “By Choice” and on the right, write “By Chance.” Ask your children to name various groups to which people belong and whether they belong under the “By Choice” or the “By Chance” category. Some may belong under both.

Discuss the Questions for Reflection in their student books. Explain that doing these questions helps review the chapter. They may refer back to the chapter in order to get their answers.

Questions for Reflection

1. What groups are you part of?
2. Is it important for a person to have already determined his or her values before becoming part of a group? Why or why not?
3. In what ways can a group influence someone in a bad way if he or she has not already decided which actions are good or bad?
4. In what ways may a group influence someone for the better?
5. Can you think of any situations in which a person who is unsure of his or her own values may be persuaded by a group to do something that is wrong?
6. Why do you think socially destructive groups like street gangs and organized crime exist?
7. Can you name a group whose goals you admire?

Mention that no discussion of people in groups can be complete without talking about peer pressure. Ask your children if peer pressure is good or bad. Perhaps many of them will say that it is bad.

Explain that peer pressure is a fact of life and that it can be good or bad. For instance, in a nice neighborhood, people feel a certain amount of peer pressure to keep their houses and lawns well kept. This is not bad. There are times when peer pressure influences us to do the good and right thing. For instance, there are now many more public places that do not allow smoking, such as airplanes. This is good peer pressure. People who did not smoke asked the management to prohibit smoking. They could do this because “secondary smoke”—the smoke other people breathe in while someone is smoking—is even more dangerous than first hand smoke. This is an example of good peer pressure. People who smoke do not do so on airplanes, in certain parts of restaurants, and sometimes in whole buildings.

Of course, we all know that peers can pressure someone into doing things he or she doesn’t really want to do just to fit into the crowd. This can be anything from smoking,

drinking, using drugs, or having sex to just snubbing certain other people or groups of people, even if there is no good reason for it.

Ask your children to do the Exercise: “Group Influence” in their student books.

Exercise: “Group Influence”

Divide a piece of paper vertically. In the right column list the ways in which a group can have a good influence on society and its own members. In the left column, list the ways in which a group can have a harmful influence on society and its own members. Now think of at least five groups that fit each category. Was it easier to come up with five good groups or five harmful ones?

Mention that, as the text says, a group is two or more people. Most groups form around one or two strong and influential individuals. Most religious groups, for instance, look to one person as their founder. This one person must have begun talking to one other person or a few other people until his or her influence spread and spread. Some religions, starting from just one person, have millions of followers! One individual began a huge group!

Ask your children to dream a little and imagine forming their own group. Have them do the Reflection Exercise: “Creating a Group” in their student books.

Reflection Exercise: “Creating a Group”

Imagine that you can create any kind of group you want of which you will be the founder and leader. What kind of group would you create? Who would be the members? What would be the group’s purpose? What kind of activities would you do? How would your group influence those who are not part of the group?

Assign the reading of Chapter 10 as homework for the next session.

Chapter 10: A Motto for Life

Lesson Plan Objectives

Cognitive - Students will understand what a motto is and learn examples of common mottos. Students will understand what a mission statement is and how it directs a person's or a group's actions.

Affective - Students will want to adopt good mottos and mission statements and be guided by them.

Behavioral - Students will name their personal motto. Students will sort their personal motto into one of three categories. Students will distinguish the values implicit in the mission statements of various companies. Students will describe their own mission statement.

Session 1

Ask your children to look at the mottos at the end of the chapter in their student books. Do they know what a motto is? Other words for mottos are "old sayings" or "proverbs." As you read each motto aloud to the students, ask them to volunteer to offer an explanation and an example of each motto:

Some common mottos people use to instruct themselves in living:

Nothing ventured, nothing gained.

Handsome is as handsome does.

If at first you don't succeed, try, try again.

Those who live by the sword die by the sword.

Waste not, want not.

A penny saved is a penny earned.

A friend in need is a friend indeed.

What goes around comes around.

Then ask your children for any other mottos they have ever heard, or that their parents repeat to them, or that they themselves sometimes use to instruct themselves in living. If any are unclear, ask the student to explain.

Mention that people have been living by certain codes for a long time. Even the so-called "law of the jungle" is a sort of code. Ask your children how an "eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" is superior to the law of the jungle. Affirm that it is superior because at

least it offers equal punishment, not harsher punishment, as the “law of the jungle” does. Then write this on a paper:

“An eye for an eye only leaves the whole world blind.”

This saying is attributed to the peacemaker Mohandas (“Mahatma” or “Great Soul”) Gandhi. Ask your children if they agree with this statement. This statement means that it is not good to take revenge upon people.

Ask your children to recite the Golden Rule. Ask: “What is the difference between the Golden Rule and Confucius’s rule of reciprocity?” (Confucius’s rule said, “Don’t do to others what you wouldn’t want them to do to you,” whereas the Golden Rule says, “Do to others what you would have them do to you.”) In essence, the two are the same, but one may be interpreted to be more active than the other. Confucius’s saying seems to tell people to refrain from doing acts; the Golden Rule seems to tell people to do good things.

Mention that the text goes on to say that the highest motto that people have come up with so far is “Love your enemy.” This is the very essence of peacemaking. It is extremely difficult to do. Yet, as the text points out, some people in history have been able to love people who acted as enemies to them. When they did this, they gained tremendous influence, even worldwide influence. It works!

Ask your children to do the Reflection Exercise: “My Motto in Life” in their student books.

Reflection Exercise: “My Motto in Life”

1. What is the guiding motto of your life?
2. Into which category does your outlook on life fit? What are your reasons?
 - Law of the jungle
 - Eye for eye
 - Golden rule
 - Love your enemy

Session 2

Mention that many corporations and organizations have a “mission statement.” A mission statement is an expanded motto. It tells what the corporation or organization stands for, wants to achieve, and believes is important. Sometimes it is very short, like a motto; other times it is a paragraph or two long. The mission statement states the purpose, goal, and vision of the corporation. Behind the few words there are values.

The famous company Wal-Mart, for instance, has as its mission statement: “To give ordinary folks the chance to buy the same things as rich people.”

Write this mission statement on a paper. Ask your children to point out what values are behind this mission statement. (Equality: poor people should have the same things rich people should; human worth: ordinary people count too and should have opportunities to live well and be comfortable, etc.)

Point out that this very successful company did not write as its mission statement: “To make a lot of money.” They started out wanting to serve people.

Another extremely successful company, Merck, which makes pharmaceuticals and provides pharmaceutical insurance, has as its mission statement: “To preserve and improve human life.” Once again, there is nothing in this huge corporation’s mission statement about wanting to make tons of profits. Merck values profits, but only “profit from work that benefits humanity.” Merck wants its pharmaceuticals to meet rigorous scientific standards, and it wants its company to be honest and have integrity in all its business dealings.

Ford Motor Company, the company that produced the automobile such that common people, not just the rich, could own a car, had as its mission statement in the early days:

“Ford will democratize the automobile.”

Ask your children what values this mission statement upholds. (democracy, equality, ownership, the importance of the common person, etc.)

Henry Ford believed that the ordinary person should be able to own a car. When Ford started out, only rich people could afford cars. He sought to find a way to make an automobile that was so cost-effective, the price could come down to the point where the common family could own a car in America. Did Ford realize his mission statement? Yes.

Here are some more mission statements from real companies and organizations:

- “McDonald's vision is to be the world's best quick service restaurant experience. Being the best means providing outstanding quality, service, cleanliness, and value, so that we make every customer in every restaurant smile.
- Levi-Strauss, the famous makers of blue jeans, says, “We will market the most appealing and widely worn casual clothing in the world. We will clothe the world.”
- The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights says, “The mission of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) is to protect and promote all human rights for all.”

Now tell students they are going to write their own mission statement, in twenty-five words or less. It can be just a sentence, and it can expand upon their mottos, but it should be more than their mottos too.

Ask your children to do the Exercise: “Me, Others, Society, and the Future” in order to begin to understand what kinds of things they might want to include in their own personal mission statement. Ask them to complete the exercise and then come up with a mission statement of their own.

Exercise: “Me, Others, Society, and the Future”

Please answer the questions or complete the statements:

Me:

“It's my life, and I can do with it whatever I like.” True or false?

What do I want others to think about me?

What three (non-material) things could I not live without?

The single most important thing in my life is...

I am the type of person who...

Others:

What is the value of a human being?

Are there any beliefs that all people have in common?

Are people responsible for their actions? If so, is this always true?

Are human beings basically good or evil?

What I value the most in others is . . .

I feel really good when other people...

Society:

What do I gain or lose from being a member of society?

Who decides what a society is like?

Does my behavior make a difference to society?

I want to live in a society that...

I believe that the main responsibility to create a good society lies in the hands of...

Future:

What do I think the world is going to be like in ten years? Will things be the same, better or worse?

Can I make a difference in the world?

What do I dream of doing with my life in the future?

If I could contribute one thing to the world, what would it be?

My ideal world is like...

Tell your children they will be responsible to show you that they have done the Questions for Reflection as homework that they will turn in at the next session. They will read Chapter 11 in the next session and need not read it for homework.

Chapter 11: Altruistic Love

Lesson Plan Objectives

Cognitive - Students will understand that they will be happier when they practice altruistic love—love for the sake of others.

Affective - Students will be eager to practice altruistic love.

Behavioral - Students will describe a time when they acted altruistically and a time when someone else acted altruistically. Students will act out the story of the Good Samaritan.

Session 1

Check to see if your children did the Questions for Reflection from the last chapter.

Now give them time to read this chapter in class.

Remind your children of the last session when they made mission statements and learned about the mission statements of successful companies. Note that many of the most successful companies in the world have something altruistic in their mission statements—they want to do something to help others, not just to make profits for themselves.

The definition of altruism is “unselfish concern for the welfare of others.” This quote is in their student books, but you might want to write it on a paper. Do your children remember “unselfish concern for others” in the mission statements of famous companies? Ford? Merck?

Point out that it may seem like individuals or groups will lose out by being unselfish and doing things for others, but actually, it is a formula for success in life—if not materially, at least in leading a life of inner satisfaction.

Ask, “Is altruism easy to practice? Is it easy to think of others before we think of ourselves—to put their benefit ahead of our own? What about practicing altruism on the people we know—the people we live and work with each day? Is that easy?”

Write on a paper: “I love humanity. It’s people I hate!” Mention that this quote came from a famous comic strip, *Peanuts*. Ask, “Is it easier to think kindly and charitably of people ‘out there’ than it is to think kindly and charitably of our brothers and sisters at home, our cranky neighbors, our demanding parents, our annoying classmates?”

Ask your children to do the Reflection Exercise: “Personal Experience” recounting a time when they acted altruistically and what the benefits were.

Reflection Exercise: “Personal Experience”

Can you think of some instances when you acted altruistically? What were the circumstances? Whom did you help? What was the outcome? Did you receive any unexpected benefit?

After that, ask your children to write down a story of altruism that they have heard of. It can be a famous story or a lesser-known story about someone they know. This is the Exercise: “Stories of Altruistic Love.”

Exercise: “Stories of Altruistic Love”

The text contains stories that demonstrate altruism. Can you think of a story you have heard about altruism?

Session 2

Try to gather a group of children for this session. (If you aren’t able to, read the story below and discuss it.)

Write on a paper: “Sam the Man.” Explain that today we are going to role-play the story of the Good Samaritan. Ask how many know the story of the Good Samaritan. Point out that there is a brief retelling of it in their student books.

You will need:

A student to play the man from Samaria—the Good Samaritan.

Two or three students to play violent thieves.

Two or three students to play important religious and civic leaders.

A student to play the robbed and injured man.

A student to play the Samaritan’s donkey!

A student to play the innkeeper.

This can be a lot of fun. Have your children act things out as you narrate them. They can add their own dialogue if they wish.

Narrate:

A man was set upon by thieves who robbed him, beat him, and left him for dead by the side of the road. Religious and civic leaders, hurrying along the road, saw

the injured man but decided they were too busy or important (or scared) to stop and help him. A man from Samaria (the Good Samaritan) came riding along the road on his mule. He too saw the injured man lying by the side of the road, and he decided to help him. He cleaned and bound the man's wounds, helped him stand up, put him on his own mule, and led him into the nearest village. There he brought the injured man to an inn, paid the innkeeper with his own money, and made sure the injured man was put in a comfortable room and attended to with food and drink. He told the innkeeper to take good care of the injured man and promised that he would return the next day to pay any extra expenses involved in the man's care.

The group may act out this simple story several times until everyone who wants to has had a turn to play a part and until the story is imprinted on their minds.

Ask your children how they think nations can practice altruism toward other nations—political altruism, as the book called it. Do they know of any times in history when nations have practiced altruism toward other nations? Do they know of any such times in recent history?

Now discuss the Questions for Reflection in their student books.

Questions for Reflection

1. What is altruism?
2. How does altruism relate to loving your enemy?
3. Do you think it is really possible to live in a totally altruistic manner, without regard for your own interests at all?
4. Is it easier to act altruistically toward someone you know or don't know? Why?
5. Does "power corrupt", as the saying goes, or can those in power truly act for the benefit of others? Give some examples.

Assign the reading of Chapter 12 as homework for the next session.

Chapter 12: Marriage and Divorce

Lesson Plan Objectives

Cognitive - Students will understand that virtues like altruistic love will serve them well in marriage. Students will understand some causes of divorce.

Affective - Students will want to prepare for marriage thoughtfully.

Behavioral - Students will describe ways to practice altruistic love. Students will describe what obligations they expect to live up to and that they would like their spouses to live up to. Students will distinguish between people in vignettes who are using their reason or heads to make romantic decisions and those who are using their emotions or hearts.

Session 1

Begin by asking your children why a chapter on marriage and divorce might follow a chapter on altruistic love. Explain that scientists have found that people who practice general altruism in their lives have happier marriages than those who do not. Even though altruistic love is different from romantic love, in the end, virtues count very much in building a long-term happy marriage. The virtues of kindness, compassion, helpfulness, unselfishness, and willingness to sacrifice for another that an altruistic person develops make for a romantic and highly satisfying marriage. “Sam the Man” would have been a good husband! Encourage your children that practicing altruism now is practicing for a happy marriage later on in their lives.

Ask your children for examples of how they can practice altruistic love now. Write the examples on a paper. Some might be service projects, helping neighbors, caring for siblings and aged relatives, spending time with disabled people, working to promote a community center for children to go to after school while their parents work, etcetera.

Write on a paper: “The number one reason people report for getting a divorce is that they lost respect for their partners.”

Ask your children how a person commands the respect of another. Ask, “Isn’t it due to the person’s good character?” Concede that, of course, men and women are attracted to one another, but attraction often fades if one or both of the partners is selfish, demanding, rude, dishonest, abuses substances, betrays the other by having lovers, is unkind, impatient, bad-tempered, or a spendthrift. Make the point that even the strongest attraction will not survive such bad character traits! Further, a less passionate attraction in the beginning will increase if a spouse is gentle, unselfish, giving, courteous, upright, temperate, faithful, kind, patient, understanding, mild-tempered, and has prudent money habits. Such a partner is truly a gem! Emphasize that these traits of character are best

developed when a person is young, before marriage, so that they are a firm part of his or her personality by the time marriage comes around.

As a review of the chapter on marriage and divorce, discuss the Questions for Reflection in their student books. Encourage them to use the text as a reference, but also to add their own opinions to the discussion.

Questions for Reflection

1. Name five reasons for divorce.
2. What are the reasons why people get married?
3. Why do you think there are more divorces today than in the past?
4. What is courtship? Is it important?
5. What are your expectations and hopes for your future marriage?
6. How can you prepare yourself so as to avoid problems that lead to divorce?
7. What are your views about the role of husband and wife in the family, raising children, the role of grandparents, spending money, etc.?
8. What activity that you like to do might you have to give up or cut short once you are married?
9. What is marriage to you: something sacred or simply a legal arrangement?
10. What would you do if you discovered that your spouse was unfaithful?

When you are finished discussing these issues, direct their attention to the Reflection Exercise: “Marriage Agreement.” Ask them if they are aware that, in modern times, some couples have wanted to write their own marriage vows instead of taking the traditional ones. Other couples have written “pre-nuptial” (before the wedding) contracts telling one another how money, property, children, etc. will be taken care of should the marriage break up. This reflection exercise is a combination of the writing of one’s own vows and a pre-nuptial contract. Ask your children to seriously consider what kind of agreement they would want to make with a future spouse. What kind of assurance and promises—or vows—would they want to make?

Reflection Exercise: “Marriage Agreement”

Imagine that you are about to get married. You and your future spouse decide to make a formal agreement with each other. What would you include in this agreement? What assurances and promises would you make to your beloved?

Session 2

Direct your children’s attention to the reasons for divorce given in their student books and ask them to glance over them for review. Mention that many of these reasons show a couple rushing into a marriage without thinking things through enough first, or being unprepared to deal with the issues and pressures they will face as a married couple. Make the point that this is because, in modern times, people tend to listen more to their hearts and hormones than they do to their heads when it comes to love, romance, and marriage.

Remind your children of the first chapter in the book, “Our Emotional Life.” In that chapter, students were urged to let the head be master over the heart when it comes to emotion. Love is one of the strongest emotions, but we can’t let it overpower us. We can “fall in love” with the mailman, the bus driver, the captain of the basketball team, the bank teller—our eyes dilate, our palms sweat, and we find it hard to breathe. We have a deep emotional and physiological response because something about the person—usually their looks—appeals to us and stimulates us sexually.

But that is thinking with our hormones, or our hearts in the sense of our emotions—rather than our heads. That person may not be suitable for us at all. We have to use our reasoning when it comes to whom we will marry. We can’t just base our decisions on revved up hormones and wild emotions. If we do, we are heading for unhappiness and perhaps divorce.

Remind your children of the story of Lucy and Anton in the first chapter of their student books. Ask them to flip back and reread it as an example of someone who listened more to her head than her heart and got out of a bad relationship:

Lucy Learns a Lesson

Lucy was absolutely crazy about Anton. He was so cute! And funny and nice. The wonderful thing was, Anton seemed to feel the same way about her. She was on “cloud nine.” The couple met constantly throughout the school day and said they were boyfriend and girlfriend.

But something puzzled Lucy. Anton could never see her on weekends. Anton told her he was busy with his family on weekends.

Soon, though, friends started mentioning that they had seen Anton on the weekend with a blonde girl named Marietta from another school. They saw him in the park with her, at the movies, and window-shopping downtown together. They couldn’t be sure, but they thought the couple had been holding hands.

Anton got mad when Lucy brought it up. He said that Marietta was a friend of one of his cousins. “You’re just jealous!” he accused her.

Upset, Lucy turned to her aunt for advice. She really wanted to believe Anton. Maybe he and Marietta weren’t holding hands. Maybe they were just in a group of cousins together. Was she just being jealous, like Anton said?

When she heard that several of Lucy’s classmates had seen Anton with Marietta on several different occasions, Lucy’s aunt said it didn’t sound to her like Anton was being completely truthful. Why did he never ask Lucy along on these group outings with his cousins if it was okay for Marietta, who was also no relation, to be there? Lucy’s aunt advised Lucy to cool off her relationship with Anton a bit and take a good hard look at the situation.

It was painful, but Lucy explained to Anton that she needed some time and distance from their relationship. She did not accuse him but said she needed to work some things out on her own. If she was too jealous like he said, she needed some time to work through that.

Lucy went through several lonely and painful months, but when things got too bad, she went to talk to her aunt. Her aunt strengthened her by saying things like, “You need to protect your heart,” and “Don’t let him play you along.”

It turned out Anton had been secretly going steady with Marietta for a long time, all during the time he was “boyfriend and girlfriend” with Lucy. The only reason he hung around with Lucy at school was because Marietta went to a different school.

Lucy was glad she had listened to her aunt. The voice of reason had won over her emotions. It was painful to “lose” Anton, but Lucy had the pride of knowing that she had ended with dignity a situation that was unfair to her.

Point out that as was said in the lessons in that first chapter, these kinds of scenarios are not all that unusual. The couple does not share the same values: in this case, they do not share the belief that a “boyfriend and girlfriend” owe one another some loyalty and commitment.

Mention that if a couple, whether they are dating or have gotten married, do not share similar values or attitudes about important things, they have a good chance of breaking up. Before getting into a relationship with someone, or while the relationship is in its very early stages, it is important to observe whether values and attitudes are shared or not.

The reasons for divorce listed in the student book included conflicts in values and attitudes about money, alcohol use, women’s and men’s roles, religion, children, in-laws, and enjoying each other’s company. Indeed, these are important issues that every couple faces to some degree or another. When you are madly in love, you may think it is unimportant that you can’t stand his father or her mother, but, in fact, it is very likely that he or she is a great deal like this person deep down and will show it more and more as time goes by. Should you really, then, be seriously dating someone on those terms? Not only will you not enjoy family times together at holidays and other times because of your dislike of the parent, eventually, you will find yourself married to someone who is “just like his father!” or “just like her mother!” and you may not like it.

To avoid these kinds of problems down the road of marriage, it is best to think them through before marrying someone unsuitable. It is best to lead with the head, not the heart. Because of strong physical attraction and personality appeal you can fall in love with people who cannot possibly make you happy. But coming down off that “cloud nine” feeling can be extremely painful when you realize this person wasn’t for you. Better to let strong personal attraction lead you to explore the possibilities of a relationship with the person rather than throwing yourself into it “head over heels” and winding up badly hurt.

Explain to your children that you would like to give them a test on these topics. You are going to read aloud little vignettes about dating couples and you want them to tell you whether the person in the couple is using his or her heart or head about this relationship. Emphasize that it is important to use one's head!

Your children may call out what they think: "Head" or "Heart" after you read each vignette to them:

"I was amazed how well Joel fit in with my family. They were really impressed with him too. I'd like to keep dating him and meet his family too." [Head]

"I was bored stiff watching his endless football games on TV and listening to his deafening yells every time his team scored. It was really great kissing during commercials, though!" [Heart]

"I would love to have sex with her, but I respect that she thinks that's only for marriage. Deep down, I agree with her." [Head]

"I hated it that my dad drank too much when I was little. I remember the fights all too well! Still, I think my boyfriend is cute when he's drunk—he gets all emotional and affectionate—and I think he'll grow out of drinking so much." [Heart]

"Peter said his dad's attitudes about the affairs he had was, 'What my wife doesn't know won't hurt her.' He seemed to admire his dad on that point. I felt really sorry for his mom, and I'm not going to get serious with Peter if he thinks his dad was right about that." [Head]

"Mary spends and spends on clothes all the time. I come from a poorer family, and I can't believe how she wastes money. She wears something once and never wears it again. I think we'd better just be friends. I can't afford someone like her!" [Head]

"I asked Julia to come to my church with me one Sunday—I went to hers. She said no, hers was the only true religion, and I should come to her church and give up mine. You know what? We'll end up one of these couples who never goes to church at all! As long as we love each other, that's okay." [Heart]

"He treated the little kids at the park badly, yelling at them to leave us alone. When I said I thought he was being mean, he said, 'Don't worry. I'd be nice to ours.' Would he? I'm not so sure anymore. I don't think he's really the one for me. I love kids and I want to have lots of them." [Head]

"She hates my interest in music and art. She says it makes me 'feminine.' When we make out, though, she says I'm a real man. I think everything will work out between us." [Heart]

“I’m looking for a woman who likes to work. I don’t want to be the only one who has to support the family. Angela wants be a stay-at-home mom. She thinks the man should earn the money and the woman should be the heart of the home. Once she realizes how expensive it is to have a family, though, I’m sure she’ll want to get a job.” [Heart]

If there is any disagreement as to what vignettes should be voted “Head” and which ones “Heart,” have students who got it right explain it to the other students.

Now ask your children to do the Exercise: “Marriage Counselor.”

Exercise: “Marriage Counselor”

Pretend you are a marriage counselor. You are asked to write an article for your local newspaper explaining the common mistakes people make in choosing marriage partners. Present some of the ways people can prepare themselves for their future marriage in order to avoid these problems.

Assign the reading of Chapter 13 as homework for the next session.

Chapter 13: The Individual, Family, and Society

Lesson Plan Objectives

Cognitive - Students will understand that individual moral choices affect families and society.

Affective - Students will not like the modern princess and will understand that more security and happiness came about when the first princess maintained her morality.

Behavioral - Students write a short story recreating in modern times the story they study. Students will compare and contrast the two princesses in the story. Students will compare and contrast the two princesses' impact on the kingdom.

Session 1

Materials Needed

Pictures, newspaper articles, magazine articles, Internet information on Prince Charles and Princess Diana.

Ask your children what they thought of the story “The Princess and the Barbarian” in their student books. Even though the story has “fairy tale” elements, do they find a certain basic truth behind it?

The book cites some scientific research—from anthropology and the social sciences—that an individual's moral choices—especially in the area of sexuality—do have an impact on society. Ask your children if they remember any of the points made in the text and to share what they remember.

Ask: “Is it only leaders—like princes and princesses and presidents—whose individual moral choices affect the nation?” Emphasize that a nation is made up of individuals, and is only as good as the moral choices those individuals make.

To make the point that individual choices affect the whole, ask your children what happens to a school as a whole if some students vandalize it. Maybe it is only one or two students who spray-paint a wall, break a window, plug up the toilets with rolls of toilet paper, or scatter marbles in a slippery hallway. Still, isn't everyone affected? Isn't the atmosphere of the school affected? Those individuals have an impact on everyone in the school because of their poor choices. It is the same with individual moral choices in a nation.

Point out that the story “The Princess and the Barbarian” makes the point that the second princess has different morals than those of her mother. Have they noticed a difference

between the morals of their generation and the morals of their parents' generation? Ask: "What are some of those differences? Which generation do you think has it right? Or does each generation have some things right and some things wrong? What are those things?"

Discuss the Questions for Discussion in their student books. Allow them time to pen notes in their books as to their answers to these questions.

Questions for Discussion

1. Why do values sometimes change from one generation to the next?
2. What should a traditionally moral society do when immoral ideas start influencing the youth?
3. How is it possible to choose between a moral and an immoral idea? What are the criteria for making such a judgment?
4. How does the breakdown of order in sexual love influence society? Is it a strict cause-and-effect relationship?
5. Why do you think most criminals come from broken homes or single-parent families?
6. How do an individual's choices affect his or her family?
7. How does a family affect society?
8. How did the first princess act to change the barbarian into a responsible adult? How did her actions and the result differ from her daughter's?
9. The couples in the story happened to be the kingdom's rulers. Do leaders have a special responsibility to set the moral tone of their society?
10. Why do you think the second princess rejected the values of her parents and adopted more "modern" ones?

Perhaps it would be interesting to discuss the case of a contemporary royal situation and its impact on society: Prince Charles and Princess Diana. Students are probably familiar with some elements of the story. Show pictures and share from articles about the couple. What impact do students think this unhappy marriage had on society? Did sexual immorality have anything to do with the unhappiness in this marriage? What about Charles's subsequent marriage to Camilla Parker Bowles? Even though legally she will be queen when Charles becomes king, the British do not call her "Princess Camilla" and they will not call her "Queen Camilla" because of the strong feelings among the British people that her love affair with Charles led to the death of the beloved Diana. Did the individual moral choices of these individuals—Diana, Charles, and Camilla—affect their nation?

Session 2

Remind your children that in the last session, they discussed Charles and Diana, a more contemporary prince and princess, whose actions impacted their country and indeed the world.

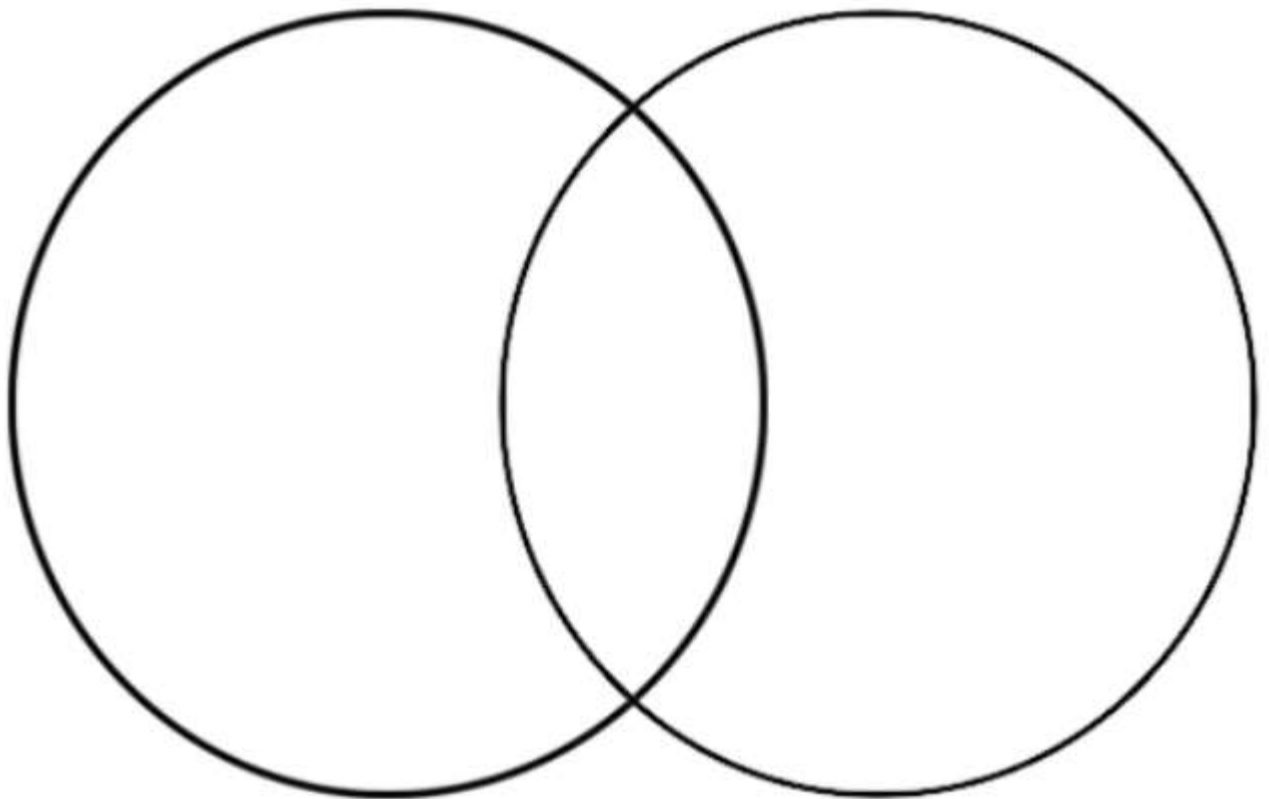
Ask them to do the Reflection Exercise: “The Princess and the Barbarian Today,” perhaps using modern monarchs as their models.

Reflection Exercise: “The Princess and the Barbarian Today”

Try to write a short story transferring the circumstances to the 21st century: where is the “kingdom,” who is the “princess,” who is the “barbarian,” and what happens? Use your imagination to create a modern-day setting for the story.

Point out that most children dream of being royalty at some point in their lives. (Actually, many adults do too!) Using a Venn diagram compare the older generation princess and the younger generation princess. Write the older generation princess’s unique characteristics in the left circle, the younger generation princess’s unique characteristics in the right circle, and the similarities they share in the intersecting middle portion of the diagram.

Draw on a paper:



Allow your children to call out characteristics of the older generation princess, characteristics of the younger generation princess, and the middle ground of characteristics that they shared.

Now have students help you fill out a “T” chart that you draw on a paper describing the princesses’ effects on the kingdom:

Older Generation Princess	Younger Generation Princess

Ask your children to think of themselves as the prince or princess of a realm. They are confronted with an attractive but wild barbarian of the opposite sex. What do they think they would do?

Having already done parts 1) and 2) of Exercise: “The Two Princesses,” they may now write in the lines their answers to the situation.

Exercise: “The Two Princesses”

Make a chart of the two princesses comparing:

- 1) their values
- 2) how their actions affected the kingdom

Now think which path you would realistically take if you were to find yourself in their situation (if you are male, let the barbarian be a female). To do this, you have to reflect on your own character and values.

Assign the reading of Chapter 14 as homework for the next session.

Chapter 14: Under Fire

Lesson Plan Objectives

Cognitive - Students will understand some of the character qualities of great leaders.

Affective - Students will want to emulate the great leaders they read about and hear about.

Behavioral - Students will describe an historical leader whom they admire. Students will perform tasks in groups that require leadership and later examine how the leaders emerged.

Session 1

Start by saying that this chapter is about leadership; specifically, it is about the leadership qualities of two great men who have inspired many people: Abraham Lincoln and the Prophet Muhammad.

In this chapter, great leadership qualities the two men shared in common are stated:

- 1) A vision of how society should be as opposed to how it was
- 2) Strength and perseverance: opposition and persecution did not sway them from trying to continue to implement their visions and to continue to inspire others to do so as well
- 3) Although leaders, they were humble
- 4) They believed in equality
- 5) They were generous to their enemies

Ask your children to list other qualities of a great leader as you write them on a paper. Ask them for examples of great leadership that they know of, saying that the person does not have to be well-known, although he or she may be. Acknowledge that there is room for disagreement about leadership, both its qualities and who may or may not be a great leader.

Ask your children to do the Exercise: “Exemplary Leadership” in their student books.

Exercise: “Exemplary Leadership”

In this chapter we presented the stories of two leaders who grew to greatness under intense opposition. Can you think of any other historical figures who demonstrated exemplary leadership under fire? What were their circumstances? What kind of opposition did they face? How did they overcome this and prevail? What was their greatest accomplishment?

Make the point that both Lincoln and Muhammad rose to positions of leadership when their societies were in crisis. What might be the differences between the leadership qualities needed in a leader during a time of crisis and the qualities needed during a time of relative peace and prosperity?

Discuss the Questions for Reflection in their student books.

Questions for Reflection

1. What is true leadership?
2. How can opposition and criticism actually strengthen a person's leadership capabilities?
3. What made Abraham Lincoln a good leader?
4. What made Muhammad a good leader?
5. Compare and contrast the circumstances of Lincoln and Muhammad.
6. How were Lincoln and Muhammad different?
7. How were they the same?
8. Do you see any potential leadership qualities in yourself?

Session 2

Remind your children that this session is a continuing one about leadership. This session is meant for a group so if possible, gather a group of children. If you aren't able to gather a group of people, skip to the reflection exercise.

For this session, your children will be divided into teams. (Try to have them sit with, discuss with, and work with the team.) The team is to be given a task. The first thing they are to do is to meet as a group and determine how they are going to accomplish their task.

Some sample tasks might be:

A team has to find out the birthday of each person in the group and present the list to the parent.

A team has to gather ten pens together and present them to the parent. They can be returned later.

A team has to find out the height of each person in the group and present the list to the parent.

Now have the team choose a spokesperson to present to you how the team has decided to go about achieving its task. Question them as to whose idea this was, how they decided upon their plan of action, and how they chose the spokesperson. Give each team the time it needs to achieve its task.

Next, ask if they saw any leadership patterns emerging among their group. Who took the lead in deciding how to do the task and who took the lead in actually doing it? Was it the tallest person? The biggest boy? The most talkative girl? The person with the best ideas?

The bossiest person? Did the person take the lead reluctantly, or out of necessity, or because he or she really wanted to lead? Did he or she take the lead because others “voted” for him or her to do it? Were they leaders by default—no one else wanted to take the lead? Explain that this was an exercise in how leadership emerges.

Next, have your children do the Reflection Exercise: “You Are the Leader” in their student books.

Reflection Exercise: “You Are the Leader”

We are all destined to be leaders someday, whether in our chosen career, in our community, or simply as a parent in our future family. Imagine yourself as a leader in one of these areas, i.e., career, community, or family. Using a real life crisis as a reference, one either that you have seen first hand or heard about, how would you handle such a situation? What kind of character qualities would you need to do so? What possible outcomes are there? What would be the best outcome and how would you achieve it?

Assign the reading of Chapter 15 for the next session.

Chapter 15: I Can Make a Difference

Lesson Plan Objectives

Cognitive - Students will understand the “bystander effect” and the power of group or “mob mentality.” Students will have tools to overcome the “bystander effect” and a “mob mentality”—namely to appeal to a specific person in a crowd. Students will understand that it is important to help others in need.

Affective - Students will feel empathy for people in trouble, especially when no one is helping. Students will be determined to be people who “make a difference.”

Behavioral - Students will imagine and describe themselves as being people who make positive differences in other people’s lives. Students will imagine themselves in scenarios that help them to empathize with people who need support and help.

Session 1

Explain that the first part of this chapter is about people not taking responsibility and the second part of it is about people taking responsibility.

Ask your children how they feel about the first scenario in the chapter—the girl who is robbed at a bus stop, in front of a group of people who do nothing to help her. Tell them that this is a true story. How did everyone feel? How do they think the person it really happened to felt? How do they think the bystanders felt? Mention that probably a lot of people felt guilty that they did not help. Surely, they went home battling their consciences and thinking of all sorts of justifications: “She asked for it—she wasn’t on her guard,” or “I was too far away to do anything,” or “I’ve got a wife and kids—if I got involved, they might suffer if I got hurt,” or “I’m just a skinny girl—what chance would I have had against those bad men?” or “That’s life in the big city. She wants to be safe, she shouldn’t take the bus.” Do students suppose that the people who did not help felt good about themselves afterward—even with all their excuses?

How about the young woman? Would she feel a lot of trust in her fellow human beings after that? Would she feel she could rely on “the kindness of strangers” (a quote from the famous play *A Streetcar Named Desire*)? Don’t we all, in many ways, rely on the kindness of strangers? What happens if it is not there?

Mention that psychologists have studied what is called the “bystander” effect. When a group of people witnesses a crime or tragedy or situation where someone needs help, if no individual does anything to help, the whole group probably will decline to help. This is also called “diffusion of responsibility.” Everyone thinks someone else should do something rather than that he or she should do something. Since no one is doing anything, there is a tendency to think one should not get involved or that the situation isn’t actually as serious as it appears. Group conformity becomes more powerful than the desire to intervene.

Sometimes people figure that more expert help than theirs should come—a police officer or other trained person. Some people are simply afraid—they are afraid of attracting the perpetrators' attention to themselves.

Ask your children to read over with you the scenarios in their student books and have them answer in a discussion the questions asked in the text. Let them follow up with any suggestions about what they think people in these situations should do or not do.

You are on the escalator in a crowded subway station. You see a man in front of you taking the wallet out of a woman's handbag. The woman does not notice the theft; neither does anyone else—except you!

1. How would you feel if you were the one being robbed?
2. Would you want someone to intervene if you were the victim?

You are riding a bus when you hear a young man making fun of two young, dark-skinned girls sitting next to you. He is with a friend, and the two are making mean jokes and ethnic slurs about the girls. The man tells them how he hates “their people.” The girls sit quietly, looking down.

1. Imagine you were one of the girls. What feelings do you think you would have if someone were treating you badly because you were different?
2. Do you think you would be grateful if someone stood up for you and told the young men that what they were doing was wrong?
3. If someone said something in your defense, what kind of impact would that have on you? Would it encourage or empower you to do the same for someone else if the occasion arose?

You are with a large group of classmates after school. Two boys in the group have a difficult time getting along. They are always arguing and saying nasty things to each other. Today they are acting especially hostile to each other. Suddenly, the two boys begin punching each other. Then one of them pulls out a knife and viciously stabs the other boy in the stomach and runs away. You and the rest of the group are left standing there in shock. The boy is lying on the ground bleeding, but no one is running for help.

1. Imagine you were the boy who had been stabbed. What would you have wanted your friends to do?
2. How would you feel if you saw all your friends just standing around watching you bleed?

If available, read to your children or have a printout of a scene in Harper Lee's novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*. The main character tells the story in the first person. She is Scout, a young girl in a small Southern town. Her father is a lawyer, and he is defending a young (and innocent) black man against charges of raping a white woman.

Scout's father is sitting outside the town jail house one night with but one deputy, protecting the young black man. Soon a “lynch mob” comes. They want to drag the

young black man out of jail, without a trial, and beat him and hang him from a tree until he is dead. Scout's father says they may not have the young man; he deserves a fair trial.

Scout does not understand what the men intend to do, but she singles out one of the men in the lynch mob and begins talking to him in a friendly manner. She tells him about how his son is a classmate of hers at school. She says hello to one or two other men in the crowd, and suddenly they are transformed from a lynch mob into men who are neighbors, townspeople, friends. Ashamed of themselves, the men disperse. Scout has counteracted a mob mentality by helping one man see himself as an individual, not as part of a group.

In general, it has been found that if a person in need appeals to one individual in the crowd, he or she has a better chance of getting help from that person, breaking up the group mentality of the "bystander effect."

Next, discuss the Questions for Reflection in their student books. They may refer back to the chapter in order to get some of the answers.

Questions for Reflection

1. What do you think you would have done (be honest!) if you were witness to the scene described at the beginning of this chapter?
2. What is duty? How may this differ from moral duty?
3. Why would a person with high self-esteem be more likely to get involved in a situation to help someone than a person with low self-esteem?
4. Do you think we are controlled by our circumstances or are we in control of them?
5. What is the relationship between our values and actions?
6. What are the consequences of lacking any strongly held beliefs about anything?
7. Can you remember doing something which made a lasting impact on someone?
8. How wide a circle of people would you be willing to help, if necessary?
9. Are you the kind of person who can influence others? Why or why not?

Session 2

Materials Needed

One big piece of poster board or paper
Crayons, colored markers, or colored pencils

Mention that, in general, the previous session dealt with people not taking responsibility, even when a dire situation called upon them to do so. This session is about people taking responsibility, even in dire situations.

Ask your children if they think just sitting in a bus seat and not moving is a heroic, world-changing act. If they have ever heard of Rosa Parks, they would know that such a simple act could (and did) indeed change the world for the better.

Direct your children's attention to the story "One Person Makes a Difference" in their student books and invite them to discuss Ms. Parks's quiet heroism.

One Person Makes a Difference

On December 1, 1955, a black seamstress in Montgomery, Alabama refused to give up her bus seat to a white passenger after a long, weary workday. Yet she was not only tired because of work. She was tired of the way black people were being treated.

The rule on the buses was that a black person could sit up front in a seat only if no white people wanted a seat at that time. If a white person came along, though, the black person was expected to give up the seat and move to the back of the bus.

This brave woman, Rosa Parks, chose not to obey the unfair bus rule. With quiet strength and dignity, she allowed herself to be arrested and fined for violating a city ordinance.

Black leaders in Montgomery were excited about rallying around Rosa Parks. She was an intelligent, quiet, church-going, hard-working woman who had never been in trouble with the law before. Everyone knew she was a good woman. No one could accuse her of being disorderly or a lawbreaker. Her dignity pointed to how unjust the bus rules were.

The black leaders decided that the black people of the city should stop riding the buses until they were treated fairly, and the black citizens agreed. The famous Montgomery bus boycott that followed brought race relations to the forefront of America's conscience, aided by the eloquent spokesperson Dr. Martin Luther King.

It all started because of Rosa Parks's quiet refusal to go along with injustice. Her brave, solemn act led to the end of legal segregation in America and made her an inspiration to freedom-loving people everywhere.

This is what one person can do if he or she has courage, determination, and the conviction that what he or she is doing is right and just.

Mention that the answer to the question, "What can one person do?" is always the same answer: "A lot!"

Of course, it is important to note that many forces and other persons were in place that made Mrs. Parks's victory possible. In the city in which she lived, a young, up-and-coming preacher had just arrived who had the courage, ideas, and eloquence to move presidents and nations: Dr. Martin Luther King. Mrs. Parks was a catalyst to forces and people already in place, ready to lead a social revolution. However, without a spark, a fire can't get started, and Mrs. Parks was that spark.

Ask your children if they can think of any other examples of people who, by a simple action, set in motion forces that changed the world. One example might be Lech Walesa of Poland. Lech Walesa was a worker's son, not highly educated, working as an electrician in communist Poland in the city of Gdansk. Always vocal in support of workers' rights, he had been sidelined by bosses and was often out of a job.

When the workers of the Lenin shipyard in Gdansk were striking for more workers' rights, Walesa illegally climbed the fence surrounding the shipyard and joined in with them. Soon he was leading them. He not only led their strike, he formed a labor movement in Poland named Solidarity that came to have world influence. In fact, he led Poland right out of communism and into democracy. In a sense, he led all of Eastern Europe in that direction, paving the way for the "velvet" revolutions of 1989 wherein many former Soviet bloc members transformed their countries from totalitarian systems into democratic ones. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1983 and became the president of Poland in 1990.

What if Rosa Parks had gotten up and given up her seat to the forces and representatives of injustice? What if Lech Walesa had not climbed that fence? This is what one individual can do: change nations; change the world.

Emphasize that while these people are historical figures who will never be forgotten, it is important to remember that there are many unsung heroes and heroines who make life around them better by taking responsibility. Do your children know any more ordinary heroes and heroines? Ask them who their heroes are—mention that many people, when asked this question, mention their own parents.

Sometimes it might be a very ordinary person who makes a difference in a person's life, who helps the person's life take a turn for the better by a simple act of kindness. Remind your children that such acts of kindness take courage too. Just as Rosa Parks's and Lech Walesa's gestures took courage, it takes courage to give a kind word to a stranger, to offer help when you are not sure it is wanted, to say something against the crowd. Yet these small acts of heroism do make a difference in making our world a more pleasant place.

As an exercise, ask your children to think about the people in the community who serve them every day. The garbage man might be one example. A recreation worker or mail man might be another. Vote on one such person and make a poster or big card of appreciation for the person, thanking him or her for contributions to the community. Everyone can sign his or her name in a different color. They can decorate the card with drawings. Look for an opportunity to present the card to the person.

Next, ask your children to do the exercise in their student books "Becoming a Person of Influence."

Reflection Exercise: "Becoming a Person of Influence"

Pretend that you are a person of great personal character and that you have dedicated your life to the betterment of others. What have you done and why? Share some of your experiences, and explain your outlook on life. Be as specific as possible. For example, what field do you work in, where do you live, how old are you at the moment you are speaking, how did you get to where you are?

Assign the reading of Chapter 16 as homework for the next session. A longer-term assignment—perhaps over the next two weeks—could be Exercise: “A Historic Person of Influence.”

Exercise: “A Historic Person of Influence”

Research the life of a real historic person who fought for a righteous cause, trying to improve the lives of others.

1. What was the character of this person like?
2. What did this person do?
3. What kind of obstacles did this person have to overcome?
4. What was this person’s lasting contribution?
5. If you found yourself in the same circumstances as this person, how would you have acted?

Chapter 16: Making a Difference through Service

Lesson Plan Objectives

Cognitive - Students will understand that living for the sake of others is the way to happiness. Students will understand the benefits of service to those served and to those who serve.

Affective - Students will want to be people of service and to experience the joy and satisfaction of being so.

Behavioral - Students will brainstorm, vote on, and perform a service project. Students will describe ways in which people in various professions make a contribution to society.

Session 1

Mention that this lesson reinforces what the previous lesson taught: that living for the sake of others is the most rewarding way to live. This chapter, too, is about making a difference in the lives of others by performing acts of quiet heroism or kindness.

Ask your children to take a few moments to read over and think about the Personal Reflection: “Creating a Service Learning Experience” in their student books.

Personal Reflection: “Creating a Service Learning Experience”

Take a moment to look around you. Look at your family, your school, your neighborhood, the town or city in which you live, your nation, and world. Do you see a problem that you feel you could make a difference in solving, if you could organize a group of people to tackle it? Whom would you be helping? What would you learn from that experience? What would you need to do in preparation for such an activity? Who could you get to work with you on it? Is it something your school could do? Create a plan for such a project and present it to your parent.

After the children have read this and thought about it, hold a brainstorming session about ways you could do something for the family, the neighborhood, the town or city they live in, or the nation and world. Explain that a recycling project, for instance, helps everyone in the world, for it conserves natural resources, which eventually will affect everyone.

Write down suggestions for a service project on a paper. A clean-up project of the local neighborhood is one suggestion. A bake sale to raise funds to donate to a local charity is another. Bringing in canned goods to donate to a homeless shelter or a food project for the poor is another. The project should be fairly simple.

Then ask your children to vote on which project they would like to do together and which they think they can complete by and during the next session. When a project is selected, as a family (or group), come up with a plan for implementation and begin assigning preparatory tasks to individuals.

Follow through with the service project, hopefully during the next session.

Next, ask your children to look at the Exercise: “Contributing to Society” in their student books. Ask them to think of and share ways in which the people named contribute to society.

Exercise: “Contributing to Society”

Think of the ways that people in the following occupations can touch the lives of others and contribute to the welfare of society:

- A nurse
- A professional athlete
- A mail deliverer
- An office clerk
- A priest
- A waiter in a restaurant

Next, ask your children how people in those same professions or occupations may be selfish and actually make the lives of others worse. Which kind of person would they rather know—a selfish or unselfish one? Would they rather have a selfish or unselfish nurse, waiter, or co-worker in an office? Which would they rather be themselves?

Session 2

This session should be devoted to the service learning project your children chose to do in the last session. Once they have done the project, they should be given time to reflect upon it, upon its significance to them and to the people or community served, and to share their experiences and impressions.

If there is not time to complete it, assign the Questions for Reflection in their student books as homework for the next session, as well as the reading of Chapter 17.

Questions for Reflection

1. What is an “unsung hero”?
2. What are the personal benefits of serving others?
3. How can living for yourself become a trap?
4. What is “service learning”?
5. How is it different from traditional types of community service?
6. Why is self-reflection important to successful service learning?
7. Do you think “lasting happiness comes by living for the sake of others”? Why or why not?

Chapter 17: A Life Worth Living

Lesson Plan Objectives

Cognitive-Students will reflect upon what life looks like from the point of view of a person whose life is nearly over. Students will understand a specific elderly person's point of view about life. Students will understand that they already have things they wish they could do over and that they should live so as to avoid regrets later on.

Affective - Students will empathize with an elderly person and share his or her wisdom. Students will be more thoughtful about life and what kind of life they want to lead.

Behavioral - Students will interview an elderly person about his or her opinions and experiences. Students will make a list of things they wish they had done differently in their lives so far.

Session 1

Mention that this is a chapter that asks them to reflect on what kind of person they would like to be by asking them to imagine themselves toward the ends of their lives. Explain that you are asking them to look forward by pretending to look backward!

Note that an expert on death and dying, Elisabeth Kubler Ross, mentioned that people at the end of their lives often experience a sense of “unfinished business” that keeps them from going peacefully to their final rest. Write the words “Unfinished Business” on a paper. Ask your children what they think “unfinished business” is. They probably will come up with some fine answers.

Affirm accurate answers, and clarify that “unfinished business” is comprised of issues that, at the end of a person's life, he or she regrets having done or not done; unresolved relationships that need reconciliation; guilt that needs unburdening; people who need to be communicated with in a positive way; and others. Sometimes unfinished business consists of large issues, but, more often, smaller issues bother the dying person—issues such as not having told someone often enough that they loved him or her, having gotten overly angry with one of their children when they were very young, or leftover feelings of jealousy or resentment toward a brother or sister. As the little story at the beginning of the chapter illustrates, people may regret not having given enough of themselves to helping others.

Aldous Huxley, a famous twentieth-century author, known for his rather cynical and penetrating social criticism, said that if he had one wish for the way he had lived his life, he wished, simply, that he had been a bit kinder to people.

Kubler Ross emphasized that the choices people make throughout their lives determine how peacefully they meet the end of life. Explain that, although your children are young

and probably have many years of life ahead of them, they are certainly not too young to be thinking about the choices they make every day to either give or not give of themselves to others.

Write the quote that ends the chapter on a paper:

Life is simple. What we give out, we get back.

Mention that a life that will etch beauty even on the oldest face and peace in dying hearts is a life that was dedicated to giving of one's time, energy, effort, willpower, and other resources in order to benefit others. It is not too early to start thinking about what kind of people they want to be when they are older.

Make the point that, after all, when a person sets out on a journey, he or she begins with the destination or end point in mind. He or she plans the journey based on where he or she wants to finish up. The journey of life may well be planned by thinking of where a person wants his or her life to be at in its final days.

Discuss the Questions for Reflection in their student books.

Questions for Reflection

1. What is most important to you now in your life?
2. What do you think will be most important to you twenty years from now? Thirty years? Forty years?
3. What do you wish to accomplish in your life?
4. What kind of personal relationships with others do you want to develop in your life?
5. Are the most important things in life material?
6. Why do you think some people experience regret at the end of their lives?
7. Do you have any regrets?
8. How do you deal with difficulties in your life?
9. What qualities do you most admire and respect in people?
10. How would you like to be remembered after you are gone?

Assign students the Exercise: "Personal Interview" to be completed by the next session. Let them read over the exercise now and ask you any questions they may need to.

Exercise: "Personal Interview"

For this exercise, find an elderly person to interview. It could be one of your own grandparents, a neighbor, or just someone you meet in the park. You may add some questions of your own if you wish.

1. What has been most important to you in your life?
2. What quality in your character has helped you get through the difficult periods of your life?

3. What qualities do you most admire and respect in people?
4. What has made your personal relationships closer? What has made them difficult?
5. What is your biggest accomplishment?
6. What was your most memorable experience? Why?
7. What do you feel you have contributed to your family, friends, community, nation and/or the world?
8. What was your biggest struggle in life?
9. How do you want to be remembered?
10. What do you regret?

Additional Questions:

Afterwards think about what you learned personally from the interview. Is there anything the person said that struck you in particular? Anything that made you reflect on your own life? What is your personal opinion of the person you interviewed?

Session 2

Ask your children if the personal interview was a good experience for them? Did the person interviewed seem to enjoy it?

Read aloud to one another their interviews, telling the others who the interviewed person was, general impressions, and anything that seemed particularly instructive or wise or thought-provoking in their encounters with the older people.

Next, explain that even at their young ages, they may have some regrets. Ask them to imagine how many regrets might accumulate over fifth, sixty, seventy or more years of living! Point out that there are huge decisions in store for them: whom to marry, what kind of work they will do for a living, what kinds of morality and belief systems they will live by, where they will live, etc. Emphasize that each of these choices will alter their lives considerably. Point out that a person would be very, very lucky to make absolutely no wrong choices in life and to have absolutely no regrets.

Ask your children to do the Reflection Exercise: “Living Life Over” in their student books.

Reflection Exercise: “Living Life Over”

Make a list of all the things you have done that, if given the chance, you would do differently. Next to each item explain why you feel that way; then state exactly what you would do differently if you could. Which of the items is it already too late to do anything about (for example, deciding to drop out of the Girl Scouts or Boy Scouts three years ago)? Which ones could you still possibly correct (for example, the quarrel you had last week with your best friend)? Regarding the second group, make a concrete plan to make things better.

As a last and closing exercise to this session and to the whole series, Ask your children to close their eyes and imagine the following:

Imagine that you are in the presence of the most innocent person or being that you know in the world. It should be a living thing. Maybe he or she is a baby brother or sister or neighborhood child; maybe it is a soft, fluffy kitten with round eyes; maybe it is the puppy at the park that always runs up to you in sheer joy at seeing you and exposes its belly to be rubbed. Maybe it is a vision of a tender mother attending to you with great care. Keep that image in your mind and let yourself smile and feel warmed and embraced by the loving mental images that being brings to you.

Now, imagine living in a world that feels like that—everywhere you look, there is innocence, kindness, gentleness, and care. Everyone is soft with one another; there are no harsh words or accusations; no cruelty or crime; no insulting others or judging them on their appearance or sexual appeal. It is a positive, supportive, safe world that embraces everyone as a precious human being.

Now, ask your children to open their eyes. Say something along the lines of, “Please create that kind of a world inside your own heart and mind and bring it out into the world we live in. Your world right now is home, and neighborhood; soon it will be the world of work, the world of commerce, and the world of politics. But you can bring that heart and mind to the world and make it a better place, responding to others with an open heart of love, regard, and helpfulness.”

Wish them well on their journeys in life.