

A stylized tree logo in shades of blue, with a green sprout growing from the letter 'o' in 'Whole'.

Whole Life
CurriculumTM
living life as it was meant to be

Elementary
www.wholelifecurriculum.com



Whole Life Curriculum

Written by Linda Noble

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I have concluded that the materials presented in this work are free and doctrinal or moral errors.

Bernadeane M. Carr, STL
15 January 2010

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+ Robert H. Brom
Bishop of San Diego
15 January 2010

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Why Whole Life Curriculum?

What does God love about you?

What does God love about you? Most of us find this question difficult to answer. It touches on the basis of the value of our individual lives. Does God really value my life? If so, why? The answer—both individually and as a culture—has far-reaching effects. This is exactly why we are so passionate about getting this message out to students: You are uniquely and individually loved and valued by God, and He felt this way about you even *before* you were conceived.

The erosion of human value in America

American society has quietly eroded this message with its legalized choices and considerations: abortion on demand (for reasons ranging from gender preference to potential infant abnormalities), euthanasia, assisted suicide, and embryonic stem cell research. The media has subtly convinced us that there are circumstances that override the value of a person's life. This is perhaps the most dangerous sort of message because somehow it slips by us. Although no one has blatantly told our children that there are factors that legitimately negate the value of human life, that unspoken message has still filtered down into their thinking and attitudes. And even though we, as followers of Christ, would most strongly oppose this view, we have failed to address it as it has made its way into the culture of young people. We must recognize it, oppose it, and purposefully and deliberately affirm the value of human life.

The resulting impact on students—specifically their choices and their disregard for the value of the lives of anyone who gets in the way of their personal happiness and success—can be found in the evidence of an emergence of school shootings, infant homicide, and violence for the sake of entertainment. When we hear of these incidents, we are caught unaware and in shock. We wonder how we got to this place as a society, as if some alien force had come and twisted our world against our will.

The consequences of this unspoken message are apparent. This devaluation of human life has not only led to violence against the lives of others, but it has also bled over into the questioning of one's own value (and understandably so). Something unseen is whispering to us that we don't measure up. When students don't understand how immeasurably and unconditionally valuable their lives are, their susceptibility to suicide, drugs and drinking, promiscuity, and unplanned pregnancy increases. They seek to fill the emptiness through numbing or gaining the temporary approval of their peers at any cost.

Outward symptoms of an inner problem

Today's television and radio shows are filled with the merciless degradation of people. The more stinging and destructive the remarks made to callers and participants, the more entertaining the programs are considered to be. We enjoy hearing the hosts of radio and reality television shows make outrageously insulting statements to the guests or contestants. Some shows even tell us that the weeks and months of pain we'd endure at the hands of doctors and the relentless exercise schedule of trainers would all be worth it if people would ultimately approve of us on the outside. Then we'd finally feel better about who we are.

Another surprising symptom of society's decreased value of human life is an increase in road rage episodes. According to "Aggressive Driving: A Report by Louis Mizell, Inc. for the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety," incidents of aggressive driving have increased by seven percent every year since 1990. (A summary of this report is available at <http://www.aaafoundation.org/pdf/roadragePR.PDF>.)

Traffic psychology professor Leon James says angry exchanges are occurring more frequently between drivers and a culture of disrespect now exists on the roads. His formula for road rage:

MORE CARS, LESS SPACE,
AND MORE DRIVER
INTERACTIONS



CULTURAL NORMS OF
DISRESPECT CONDONING
HOSTILITY



AGGRESSIVE DRIVING
AND
ROAD RAGE BATTLES

It's interesting that even in a traffic study, experts can identify a new cultural norm of disrespect for life.

Rebuilding through purposeful education

So how do we push against this societal wave? We need to purposefully educate our children regarding the value of human life. What do students really need to know? Personal value is found in their individual, intentional, loving creation by God. He made them to reflect His image.

We must also clearly communicate the basis of human worth. Carrie Gordon Earll states, "Scholars note that being created in the image of God (*imago Dei*) means more than having certain abilities and attributes. It means that humans are the images of God, regardless of what they can or cannot do. To bear the image of the Creator is a privilege extended uniquely to humans. No other "creation" of God can make this claim" ("The Sanctity of Human Life," *Citizen Link*, November 24, 1999). The late Pennsylvania Governor Robert Casey once said that: when we look to the unborn child, the real issue is not when life begins, but when love begins. (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/20031105-1.html>) God's love for us began with His dreams about whom He would create each of us to be. This is what gives our lives value. This is what we must communicate clearly and persistently to our children.

Replacing the unspoken formula

We must not only affirm life's value, but also point out the erroneous methods our society practices when determining the value of life, and then we must *reject* those methods. Years ago, Dietrich Bonhoeffer recognized our error in thinking when he stated, "This idea springs from the false assumption that life consists only in its own usefulness to society. It is not perceived that life, created and preserved by God, possesses an inherent right which is wholly independent of its social utility" (*Ethics*, 1965, page 162).

Even as Christ's followers, many times we practically buy into the idea that our own value and that of our children comes from productivity, attractiveness, and social status. The unwritten formula that our society uses to determine our worth is:

CHARACTERISTICS



ABILITIES



WORTH

Unfortunately, this puts a lot of pressure on each one of us to achieve and sustain personal worth. We must replace this formula—in thinking and in practice—with a new one:

IMAGE



THE VALUE HE PLACES ON MY LIFE



WORTH

A story from L'Arche

Mike Yaconelli tells a poignant story in his book *Dangerous Wonder* that pinpoints our own misunderstanding of human worth:

I have already mentioned how life altering my experience at L'Arche was. So many of my expectations were shattered that week. I had expected to meet God in the lives of those who were "whole." Instead, God was hiding in the lives of the "broken," the mentally and physically challenged—especially in a girl I'll call Deborah. Her twenty-five-year-old body is ravaged by cerebral palsy and is as cooperative as a limp rag doll. She had to be held by someone at all times. Unable to speak, unable to respond, I wondered (I am embarrassed to admit now) why Henri had included her in our daily Bible studies.

As Mike chooses to take part in a communion service at L'Arche, he describes what takes place:

When Father Nouwen stopped in front of Deborah, her body stopped jerking and moving out of control, her eyes glistened, she opened her mouth to receive the wine and the bread, and there, ever so slightly, I saw her smile! At once the noise in the room was transformed

into what I imagined the noise at the nativity would have been like. *God was there!* His fragrance filled the room. Deborah—the girl who could do nothing, the girl who would never give a talk, the girl who would never dance, the girl who would never write a book or play the piano or sing a song—taught me about the grace of God! For fifty years I had struggled with God’s unconditional love for me; for fifty years I had tried to prove my worthiness to God by busyness; and helpless Deborah might as well have grabbed me by the shoulders and shouted in my face, “God loves you just as you are! Surrender to His love!” I realized God was hiding in Deborah, and I haven’t been the same since.

Value rooted in the image of God

We are of value because God created us as we are—purposefully and with a partial reflection of Himself in each one of us. This truth gives us worth apart from our performance or any qualities that our society deems to be attractive. As we establish this knowledge into our core belief system, we can also begin to understand that if we are of God-placed value, then so are those around us—even those who are different from us and those the world considers to be without value.

In *The Ragamuffin Gospel*, Brennan Manning asserts,

How I treat a brother or sister from day to day, how I react to the sin-scarred wino on the street, how I respond to interruptions from people I dislike, how I deal with normal people in their normal confusion on a normal day may be a better indication of my reverence for life than the anti-abortion sticker on the bumper of my car. We are not pro-life simply because we are warding off death. We are pro-life to the extent that we are men and women for others, all others; to the extent that no human flesh is a stranger to us; to the extent that we can touch the hand of another in love; to the extent that for us there are no “others”...The pro-life position is a seamless garment of reverence for the unborn and the age-worn, for the enemy, the Jew, and the quality of life of all people.

The task of the educator

Educators know that most students won’t ponder the implications of truth without a guide. We must help them see the significance of life’s value and lead them to make the connections that will profoundly affect their lives. We must move our students on to the understanding that on the basis of the inestimable worth of their lives and the lives of others, each one has a responsibility and a calling to live while affirming life’s value (Sanctity of Life). In addition, each must choose to preserve his own life of value and pursue God’s purpose—what God designed and created him to be. Thus, students are released from the pressure to give up their purity in a

misguided effort to affirm their own worth (Purity). And furthermore, each student grows to be convinced that they must courageously affirm the value of human life in their own world, as well as around the world (Social Justice). Thus, we join with God in expressing His love and value of every human life He created.

None of the above understanding comes by accident or osmosis. If we don't purposefully teach and affirm these truths, our students will drift into the societal norm and assume that the value of life is defined by a person's abilities and characteristics. This assumption can lead them to casually accept that life is sometimes appropriately expendable.

Whole Life Curriculum

To combat this false thinking, the *Whole Life Curriculum* is designed to build three elements into the value system of students: the sanctity of life, purity, and social justice. It is age appropriate and encourages the integration of each of these areas into students' worldview. A purposeful curriculum, designed for kindergarten through twelfth grade, is an essential resource as we attempt to impact how our students see themselves and how they make choices that will affirm their own value and the value of those in the world around them.

(Note: At this time only curricula for students in kindergarten through sixth grade are available on our Web site. However, materials for seventh through twelfth grades are presently being prepared and will be posted on our Web site in the future.)



Envisioning the Big Picture

The Relationship of Scope, Goals, and Lesson Objectives

How Do Sanctity of Life, Purity, and Social Justice Fit Together in One Curriculum?

Our lesson objectives fall into three categories: Sanctity of Life, Social Justice, and Purity. This curriculum will focus on building into students the attitudes and values that will enable them to live their lives abundantly, as God meant them to do. The process begins and grows out of the truth that each student's life is of the highest value to God. During the process of maturation, children need to grow out of their "me-centered" existence. As they grow, they will realize that God not only values them, but also highly values the life of every person He creates (Sanctity of Life). This curriculum presents the value that God imparts to each human being and encourages students to share that value with those in the world around them (Social Justice). Realizing and being affirmed by their own value to God, as well as their role in recognizing and affirming value to others, they will be challenged and free to live their lives while fully enjoying God's gifts of chastity, future marriage, and family (Purity). Then, as they live in the freedom they have chosen, they will be motivated throughout their lives to heroically express and defend God's value of human life.

Each lesson plan includes a paragraph explaining the relationship of the lesson objectives to the scope and goals of the curriculum. The following pages contain lesson objectives for each grade level, as well as a listing of the objectives by category.

How Would You Summarize the Scope of This Curriculum?

Living life as it was meant to be, a person who—

- Embraces God's creation and heart for all of me (The Sanctity of Life)
- Expresses the heart of God by caring for the whole person in my world (Social Justice), and
- Feels free and determined to live out God's unique plan and purpose (Purity).

What Is the Desired Outcome or Goal of This Curriculum for Students Graduating from High School?

1. **Worldview**—As we've built this curriculum, we've kept in mind the following desired results in the lives of students. At the core of a student's view of her own life—as God meant it to be and as it is in the world around her—will be these truths:

- God's creation of, delight in, and purposes for human life give it the highest value to Him and to us.
- The personal life choices that allow us to enjoy full and satisfying lives will be choices that reflect God's values, including His value of human life, not our own comfort or convenience.
- Our lives will be full and satisfying as we express God's value of human life, involving ourselves in impacting others' lives for good, instead of focusing only on what we can get for ourselves.
- Sexual purity provides a real freedom to learn and value friendship, communication, a God-based worth and the use of the gifts, skills, abilities, and dreams God has given us to impact our world.
- Marriage and family are gifts that God can use to help us to understand ways that He loves us.
- In the course of our lives, there will be times when we must evaluate the choices of those around us and humbly and creatively act to protect human life.

2. **Life Expressions**—This new view of life and the world will result in:

- An enjoyment of life while in close communion with God, who imparts value to every person He creates.
- Choices and decisions that are consistent with God's value of human life.
- A determination to remain sexually pure and undistracted from enjoying healthy relationships and adventures so that one may be able to impact the lives of others for good.
- Expressing God's value of human life to the world with words, attitudes, and actions.



Lesson Objectives by Grade Level

Kindergarten

Lesson 1—God made you.

Lesson 2—God loves and cares for you.

Lesson 3—God loves and cares for others.

Lesson 4—God’s plan is that we show His love to others.

Lesson 5—God is our hero.

First Grade

Lesson 1—God created you to be loved by Him.

Lesson 2—God made each one of us alike and each one of us different.

Lesson 3—Each one of us was given special talents and abilities by God.

Lesson 4—We work with others to show God’s love.

Lesson 5—God has hopes and plans for us to become heroes who show His love.

Second Grade

Lesson 1—You are special because God made you.

Lesson 2—God created you to love Him.

Lesson 3—We appreciate the special abilities God gave others.

Lesson 4—We look for opportunities to love others as God does.

Lesson 5—Jesus is the ultimate hero.

Third Grade

Lesson 1—God enjoys you.

Lesson 2—God wants to enjoy His creation with you.

Lesson 3—God gives us the job of helping Him to protect people.

Lesson 4—God wants you to share your special abilities and talents with others.

Lesson 5—God wants you to have friends and family who will share their abilities and talents with you.

Lesson 6—There are heroes who share in the adventure of showing God’s love to people in the world around us.

Lesson 7—Harriet Tubman was a hero who shared in the adventure of showing God’s love by protecting people.

Fourth Grade

Lesson 1—God wants to enjoy creating with us.

Lesson 2—God did an extraordinary work when He created your life in your mother's womb.

Lesson 3—God wants us to enjoy the similarities and differences of others around us.

Lesson 4—We learn to make good choices, deciding not to allow our feelings to direct us.

Lesson 5—God reveals Himself in His gift of marriage.

Lesson 6—God invites us to enjoy adventures with Him.

Lesson 7—There are heroes who share in the adventure of showing God's love to people in the world around them, through creativity: C.S. Lewis.

Fifth Grade

Lesson 1—God created you for relationship with Him.

Lesson 2—God wants us to enjoy discovering the uniqueness of others around us.

Lesson 3—God uses surprising people to meet one another's needs.

Lesson 4—We appreciate the value of each stage in the human life cycle.

Lesson 5—God reveals Himself in the gift of children in marriage.

Lesson 6—We learn to make good choices, deciding not to allow our desire to impress others affect us.

Lesson 7—God is inviting you to adventures He has planned.

Lesson 8—There are heroes who share in the adventure of showing God's love to people in the world around them by caring for those who have disabilities: Helen Keller, Jean Vanier.

Sixth Grade

Lesson 1—God made you to be loved and to love.

Lesson 2—The value of a person is given by God, not by popular opinion.

Lesson 3—God wants to protect His most precious creation from destruction.

Lesson 4—We can be confident that God tells us the truth about life.

Lesson 5—God gives the gift of family.

Lesson 6—Following God's direction can help us to more fully enjoy the gift of family in the future.

Lesson 7—We can begin right now to do what it takes to be ready for God's adventure for us.

Lesson 8—We learn to make good choices, deciding to live by commitments rather than feelings.

Lesson 9—There are heroes who share in the adventure of showing God's love to people by acting against popular opinion: Corrie Ten Boom, Pandita Ramabai.



Lesson Objectives by Topic

Sanctity of Life

Kindergarten

Lesson 1—God made you.

Lesson 2—God loves and cares for you.

Lesson 3—God loves and cares for others.

First Grade

Lesson 1—God created you to be loved by Him.

Lesson 2—God made each one of us alike and each one of us different.

Lesson 3—Each one of us was given special talents and abilities by God.

Second Grade

Lesson 1—You are special because God made you.

Lesson 2—God created you to love Him.

Lesson 3—We appreciate the special abilities God gave others.

Lesson 4—We look for opportunities to love others as God does.

Third Grade

Lesson 1—God enjoys you.

Lesson 2—God wants to enjoy His creation with you.

Lesson 3—God gives us the job of helping Him to protect people.

Lesson 4—God wants you to share your special abilities and talents with others.

Lesson 5—God wants you to have friends and family who will share their abilities and talents with you.

Lesson 6—There are heroes who share in the adventure of showing God's love to people in the world around us.

Lesson 7—Harriet Tubman was a hero who shared in the adventure of showing God's love by protecting people.

Fourth Grade

Lesson 1—God wants to enjoy creating with us.

Lesson 2—God did an extraordinary work when He created your life in your mother's womb.

Lesson 3—God wants us to enjoy the similarities and differences of others around us.

Lesson 7—There are heroes who share in the adventure of showing God's love to people in the world around them through creativity: C.S. Lewis.

Fifth Grade

Lesson 1—God created you for relationship with Him.

Lesson 2—God wants us to enjoy discovering the uniqueness of others around us.

Lesson 3—God uses surprising people to meet one another's needs.

Lesson 4—We appreciate the value of each stage in the human life cycle.

Lesson 5—God reveals Himself in the gift of children in marriage.

Lesson 6—We learn to make good choices, deciding not to allow our desire to impress others affect us.

Lesson 7—God is inviting you to adventures He has planned.

Lesson 8—There are heroes who share in the adventure of showing God's love to people in the world around them by caring for those who have disabilities: Helen Keller, Jean Vanier.

Sixth Grade

Lesson 1—God made you to be loved and to love.

Lesson 2—The value of a person is given by God, not by popular opinion.

Lesson 3—God wants to protect His most precious creation from destruction.

Lesson 4—We can be confident that God tells us the truth about life.

Lesson 5—God gives the gift of family.

Lesson 6—Following God's direction can help us to more fully enjoy the gift of family in the future.

Lesson 7—We can begin right now to do what it takes to be ready for God's adventure for us.

Lesson 8—We learn to make good choices, deciding to live by commitments rather than feelings.

Lesson 9—There are heroes who share in the adventure of showing God's love to people by acting against popular opinion: Corrie Ten Boom, Pandita Ramabai.

Social Justice

Kindergarten

Lesson 3—God loves and cares for others.

Lesson 4—God's plan is that we show His love to others.

Lesson 5—God is our hero.

First Grade

Lesson 4—We work with others to show God's love.

Lesson 5—God has hopes and plans for us to become heroes who show His love.

Second Grade

Lesson 4—We look for opportunities to love others as God does.

Lesson 5—Jesus is the ultimate hero.

Third Grade

Lesson 3—God gives us the job of helping Him to protect people.

Lesson 4—God wants you to share your special abilities and talents with others.

Lesson 6—There are heroes who share in the adventure of showing God’s love to people in the world around us.

Lesson 7—Harriet Tubman was a hero who shared in the adventure of showing God’s love by protecting people.

Fourth Grade

Lesson 3—God wants us to enjoy the similarities and differences of others around us.

Lesson 4—We learn to make good choices, deciding not to allow our feelings to direct us.

Lesson 6—God invites us to enjoy adventures with Him.

Lesson 7—There are heroes who share in the adventure of showing God’s love to people in the world around them through creativity: C.S. Lewis.

Fifth Grade

Lesson 3—God uses surprising people to meet one another’s needs.

Lesson 4—We appreciate the value of each stage in the human life cycle.

Lesson 6—We learn to make good choices, deciding not to allow our desire to impress others affect us.

Lesson 7—God is inviting you to adventures He has planned.

Lesson 8—There are heroes who share in the adventure of showing God’s love to people in the world around them by caring for those who have disabilities: Helen Keller, Jean Vanier.

Sixth Grade

Lesson 1—God made you to be loved and to love.

Lesson 2—The value of a person is given by God, not by popular opinion.

Lesson 3—God wants to protect His most precious creation from destruction.

Lesson 4—We can be confident that God tells us the truth about life.

Lesson 7—We can begin right now to do what it takes to be ready for God’s adventure for us.

Lesson 8—We learn to make good choices, deciding to live by commitments rather than feelings.

Lesson 9—There are heroes who share in the adventure of showing God’s love to people by acting against popular opinion: Corrie Ten Boom, Pandita Ramabai.

Purity

Kindergarten

Lesson 1—God made you.

Lesson 2—God loves and cares for you.

Lesson 4—God’s plan is that we show His love to others.

First Grade

Lesson 1—God created you to be loved by Him.

Lesson 3—Each one of us was given special talents and abilities by God.

Lesson 4—We work with others to show God's love.

Lesson 5—God has hopes and plans for us to become heroes who show His love.

Second Grade

Lesson 1—You are special because God made you.

Lesson 2—God created you to love Him.

Third Grade

Lesson 2—God wants to enjoy His creation with you.

Lesson 3—God gives us the job of helping Him to protect people.

Lesson 4—God wants you to share your special abilities and talents with others.

Lesson 5—God wants you to have friends and family who will share their abilities and talents with you.

Lesson 6—There are heroes who share in the adventure of showing God's love to people in the world around us.

Lesson 7—Harriet Tubman was a hero who shared in the adventure of showing God's love by protecting people.

Fourth Grade

Lesson 1—God wants to enjoy creating with us.

Lesson 2—God did an extraordinary work when He created your life in your mother's womb.

Lesson 4—We learn to make good choices, deciding not to allow our feelings to direct us.

Lesson 5—God reveals Himself in His gift of marriage.

Lesson 6—God invites us to enjoy adventures with Him.

Lesson 7—There are heroes who share in the adventure of showing God's love to people in the world around them through creativity: C.S. Lewis.

Fifth Grade

Lesson 1—God created you for relationship with Him.

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Lesson 8—We learn to make good choices, deciding to live by commitments rather than feelings.

Lesson 9—There are heroes who share in the adventure of showing God's love to people by acting against popular opinion: Corrie Ten Boom, Pandita Ramabai.



Answers To Your Questions

Thank you for investing in this very important aspect of a child's education and development. The long-term results will be worth every minute that you dedicate to your students' education and the realization of the value of human life.

What Grade Levels Are Included in This Curriculum?

It is our intention to eventually construct a curriculum that will continue through twelfth grade. Currently, however, we are presenting our kindergarten through sixth-grade curriculum for use in private schools, home schools, Sunday schools, and even for parents to use with their own children outside of the school or church setting.

What Topics Are Covered in This Curriculum?

As you look at the goals and objectives of these lesson plans, you will see that this curriculum is not just a resource for sex education with an emphasis on purity and abstinence, nor does it focus on training students to defend the pro-life cause. It is much more than either of those things. The intention for this curriculum is to establish a basis for a worldview that reflects the heart of God and His value of human life. This foundation is essential for every age group as the students grow and gradually understand that the implication of sharing God's heart for people will impact the way they live their lives at every stage.

Although the kindergarten through sixth-grade lessons don't directly address the topics of sex education, abstinence, or the defense of the pro-life position, the result in the students' lives will be defense of and respect for human life, including their own. This grows into a realization that there is no value in self-destructive behaviors (violence, addictions, premarital sex) and imparts a determined sense of purpose to use the gifts and abilities God has given them.

How Does This Curriculum Overlap With Topics Included in Sex Education or Family Life Coursework?

The materials for each grade level include a lesson where you could potentially make a presentation about the development of human life in the womb (using fetal models or a video). An instruction sheet detailing the

highlights of each prenatal stage is included in the curriculum.

This presentation does not require an explanation of sex or even detailed human anatomy. We realize people have differing views as to when and how much sexual information should be given to children, so we limit our presentations to the development of life only. When our presenters speak in schools, we simply explain, “God placed one tiny cell inside of a special room called the ‘womb’ on the very first day of your life.” This enables children to understand that even in the creation of their own physical lives, we can see God’s specific and intentional plan, as well as His personal involvement in their creation. This is the unchangeable source of their value.

Where Can I Find the Expected Outcomes of Each Lesson Plan?

A lesson objective is stated at the beginning of each lesson plan. This is the one big idea to be communicated by the lesson and every part of the lesson will contribute to the achievement of this objective. The lesson objectives are further developed into three (sometimes four) subobjectives, which are preceded by the phrase “Each student will—.” These subobjectives restate the truths being taught, as well as the desired response to those truths. They are not merely informational; they connect the head with the heart. The result—students at each grade level will change the way they think, which will also affect their feelings, choices, and behavior.

Biblically, it is clear that the condition of the heart is of importance to God. Behavior change without heart change is often shallow and temporary. This curriculum cultivates a way of thinking and feeling that will change the students’ whole lives for the long term. Learning activities will include writing letters to God, reading stories, creating artwork, going on treasure hunts, acting out role-plays, planning class projects, and a variety of relational activities, all enabling the students to holistically experience truth.

Where Can I Find an Overview of Each Lesson?



The *Outline* follows the statement of lesson objectives, listing the content to be covered in each lesson. This will give the instructor an overall idea of how the lesson should flow. Each point in the outline contributes to the realization of the lesson objective and subobjectives.



Realized Impact is the section that will help you to connect the individual lesson to the big picture. The curriculum promotes a way of thinking that is decidedly different than the one out there in the world. First of all, the instructor must be able to understand it well. And secondly, they must be able to verbalize it in order to help their students form this new, countercultural perspective for themselves.

What Additional Materials Will I Need?



The *Materials* list includes all the items needed for each lesson. Some will require advance notice to students and their parents, so be sure to read through the entire list for each grade level well before you begin teaching the unit. (Hint: Almost every grade level includes the use of old magazine pictures, so start collecting magazines any way you can!)

In a handful of lessons, there are suggestions for different materials that can be used to supplement the teaching. We've kept the cost of materials to a minimum, and we hope that many of the suggested books and videos can be borrowed from your local library.

Finally, a few handouts are included (identified by their grade level and objective number). Otherwise we left it up to the individual teacher to make the necessary handouts or simply write the information on a chalkboard or white board.

What Are the Components of Each Lesson Plan and How Do They Contribute to the Instructional Process?



Making an Entrance introduces the truth to students. The activity is designed not only to help students think, but also to help them consider the personal value and implications of what they are about to hear. It answers the question, "Why should I care about what comes next?" Each learning activity in this section also communicates to students that what is about to come is fun and interesting, and it will actively involve their participation in the learning process.



Informing is the part of the lesson that provides the truth to be considered. In most lessons the biblical background is included in this section. Students will actively participate in discovering and exploring God's instructions for life.

We realize that people with varying religious backgrounds will use this curriculum. Therefore, it is likely that some may have differing preferences and convictions regarding the version of Scripture we've used. Thus, we have indicated our suggested Bible translation for each passage based on the child-friendliness of the text. However, we invite you to use the version of Scripture you are most comfortable with, making sure the children understand any unfamiliar vocabulary.



Valuing gives students the chance to think about how this truth might change the way their peers choose to do life each day. Again, they are actively engaged in these considerations as they discuss, act out situations, talk with one another, draw, plan, and get involved.



Changing helps students to identify a change that needs to happen in their own lives as a result of all they have learned in the lesson. As they have participated in the first three sections of the lesson plan, they have grown to desire a change and are now ready to plan for it as they participate in the culminating learning activity.



Finally, each lesson ends with a simple statement of how that individual lesson fits into the big picture of the *Whole Life Curriculum*.

The last four parts of the lesson—*Making an Entrance*, *Informing*, *Valuing*, and *Changing*—all contain sections of text in bold print. These are guidelines for instructors to refer to when speaking directly to their students. You know your students best, so after reading our suggested text, please feel free to adjust your instruction for your own audience.

What Is the Suggested Schedule for Presenting This Curriculum?

We recommend that you present these lesson plans either once a week or once a month. Each lesson teaches concepts that are life forming and should be allowed extra time to soak into the hearts and lives of students. Many of the lesson plans suggest ways to follow up that will require more than one day. It would be of great benefit to continue to discuss and discover additional ways that the truths presented during each lesson may influence the way students think and behave on a daily basis.

Why Do You Call This Curriculum Holistic?

The *Whole Life Curriculum* is unique and essential to the lives of students. It doesn't isolate behavioral choices, nor does it limit its message by *only* teaching about behavioral choices. This curriculum will affect your students' worldview as they recognize how they were made by a creative and complex God. He wove together the spiritual, emotional, social, and physical parts of each one of them in an inseparable way. We believe the time you invest in teaching this curriculum will have an eternal impact.



Additional Resources Required

Sixth Grade

Human life development video (optional; *Biology of Prenatal Development*, National Geographic, 2006)

Book or Web site with optical illusions (such as *The Little Giant Book of Optical Illusions* by Keith Kay (Sterling, 1997) and other suggestions listed in Lesson 4)

Remember the Titans DVD or video (Disney, 2000)

Hoosiers DVD or video (MGM/UA, 1986)

Guest Speaker—a local police officer or firefighter

Books about being a police officer or firefighter, such as:

Catching Fire: The Story of Firefighting by Gena K. Gorrell (Tundra Books, 1999), 160 pages for ages 9-12

If You Were a Firefighter by Virginia Schomp (Benchmark Books, 1998), 32 pages for ages 9-12

If You Were a Police Officer by Virginia Schomp (Benchmark Books, 1997), 32 pages for ages 9-12

True Blue: Police Stories by Those Who Have Lived Them by Randy Sutton and Cassie Wells (St Martin's Press, 2004)

Hero Tales, Volume IV by Dave and Neta Jackson (Bethany House, 2001)

The Hiding Place by Corrie Ten Boom (Bantam, 1984)

Paint the Prisons Bright: Corrie Ten Boom by Jill Briscoe (W Pub Group, 1991)

Ten Girls Who Changed the World by Irene Howat (Christian Focus Publications, 2002)

The Hiding Place video (World Wide Pictures, 1975)



Sixth Grade

God made you to be loved and to love.

Written by Linda Noble

Lesson 1



Each student will–

- Know that God made him to be loved and to love others with God's love
- Know the characteristics of God's love for him and for others
- Feel confident that he is loved, freeing him to love in turn
- Journal ways he recognizes God's love, as well as ways he expressed God's love every day for a week



Outline

1. The media and love
2. God's kind of love for every person He creates
3. Passing on God's kind of love



Realized Impact

As students prepare to enter their adolescent years, they have a great need to understand the difference between what the world defines as love and how God defines love. They can begin to make a habit of recognizing God's kind of love for them in everyday life. The resulting confidence in God's love gives a person freedom to love others. It should also help to quiet their fears about their future and enable them to make good choices for their lives, in spite of pressure from peers.





Materials

Paper for group recording
Chalkboard or white board
Chalk or dry erase markers
Notebooks or journals (with lined pages) for each student
Pencils



Making an Entrance

Divide the class into three groups and give each one a piece of paper and something to write with. Say—**What does love look and sound like? Before we answer that question, we are going to determine what our world thinks. Group 1, you will list five popular songs that describe love. Group 2, I want you to list five TV programs that try to show us what love looks like. Group 3, your job is to list five movies that try to show us what love looks like.** Give students time to complete the above assignment. Then continue the discussion by asking each group to consider one of the following questions—

- **Group 1, what do these five songs teach us about love?**
- **Group 2, what do these five TV shows teach us about love?**
- **Group 3, what do these five movies teach us about love?**

Ask the groups to report their answers to the class. Write their responses on the board.



Informing

Now say—**Are they right? Read Isaiah 43:1 (NLT)—“But now, O Israel, the Lord who created you says: ‘Do not be afraid, for I have ransomed you. I have called you by name; you are mine.’”**

Ask—**When did God start loving you and why?** Give students a moment to share their responses. **God loved us as He created us, before we could do anything to earn that love. He loves us because we are individually His creation, His idea. His love is something we can count on and it doesn’t depend on what we look like, what we do well, or how good we are. We can never lose His love. How does this compare to the type of love the media shows us?** Allow a few students to share their thoughts.



Read 1 John 3:16-18 (NLT).

We know what real love is because Christ gave up his life for us. And so we also ought to give up our lives for our Christian brothers and sisters. But if anyone has enough money to live well and sees a brother or sister in need and refuses to help—how can God’s love be in that person? Dear children, let us stop just saying we love each other; let us really show it by our actions.

Ask—**How do we recognize real love?** Pause a moment or two to give the class a chance to think about that question before moving on with the discussion. **Jesus’ life on earth showed us what real love looks like. His example showed us that real love gives up its interest in its own life for the loved one. Jesus demonstrated this to the extreme when He gave His life for us. We can be secure and confident in His love every time we remember the cross.**

Discuss the following questions to wrap up this section of the lesson.

- **How does Jesus’ type of love compare to the love the media shows us?**
- **What type of love does the passage from 1 John direct us to show for one another?**
- **What would this type of love look like?**



Valuing

Ask—**Can you think of a time when you felt very loved? How did that “loved feeling” affect everything you did that day? There are so many expressions of God’s love in our world that we often don’t take the time to recognize them. Let’s think about ways we could recognize God’s love for us in our world every day. We’re going to list on the board all the ways we can think of that God shows us His love. Brainstorm ideas and write them on the board.**

Now ask the following questions and continue brainstorming with the class. Write the students’ responses next to the list of expressions of God’s love.

- **If you realized every day how much God loves you, how would it change your life that day?**
 - **How would it affect the way you treat other people? Why?**
 - **How many ways can we think of to show others God’s kind of love?**
- 



Changing

Close the lesson by saying—**At the end of every day this week, we're going to journal about the same two things we considered as a class today. Turn to a page in your journals and write today's date. Then answer the following questions—**

- **In what ways do I see God's love for me today?**
- **In what ways did I give some of God's love away to someone else today?**

(Note: Since the lessons in this curriculum are not designed to be done in one week's time, you'll need to make a point of asking the students to do their journaling each day.)



Builds into:

Sanctity of Life, Social Justice, Purity



Sixth Grade

The value of a person is given by God, not by popular opinion.

Lesson 2



Each student will–

- Know that God, as the ultimate authority, gives every human being immeasurable value
- Feel secure in her own worth and determined to agree with God on the value of others
- Participate with the class to find solutions to problems that demonstrate our agreement with God regarding the value of every human life



Outline

1. How do human beings evaluate the worth of other human beings?
2. God's authority to give value to every person He has created
3. Agreeing with God about value



Realized Impact

This lesson will cause students to consider the underlying basis for the way they view human beings. This basis will determine the way each one responds to others throughout life. Knowing that value is determined not subjectively but authoritatively by God can create a great sense of certainty and confidence. The lesson will give students an opportunity to practice the value of life. Learning to align themselves with God in the way they relate to others will not only cause students to value human life, but it will also reinforce their sense of security and freedom.



Materials

Magazines
 Heavy paper for making collages
 Scissors
 Glue
 Copies of the **What Do You Do?** handout, one for each student.



Making an Entrance

Distribute a variety of magazines and a sheet of heavy paper to the students. Say—**Your assignment is to make a picture collage of people who are valued by American society. But first, take out a sheet of notebook paper and fold it in half lengthwise. At the top of the page, write the word “Characteristics” on one side of the fold and “Capabilities” on the other.**

Stop for a moment and discuss these two questions:

- **What are characteristics?**
- **What are capabilities?**

When you're sure the students understand what these two words mean, and the differences between them, let them get started on their collages.

After some time, say—**Take a look at your collage. Tell me why the people in your collage are valued. As we mention each reason, write it in one of the columns on your paper.**



Informing

Now say—**Our society gives value to people on the basis of their capabilities and characteristics. Does God agree with this practice?** Read Ephesians 1:4, 11-12 (MSG).

Long before he laid down earth's foundations, he had us in mind, had settled on us as the focus of his love, to be made whole and holy by his love. It's in Christ that we find out who we are and what we are living for. Long before we first heard of Christ and got our hopes up, he had his eye on us, had designs on us for glorious living, part of the overall purpose he is working out in everything and everyone.

Ask-

- According to this passage, when did God decide that He loves us?
- Why are our lives of value to God?
- What makes you a person of value?

Say-Although the world measures your value on the basis of your capabilities and characteristics, God values us because He created us and has a place for us in His eternal plan. Our value is all about the value He's given us. That is great news because it means we can never lose our value through failure or inability.

Now ask-What about the value of those around us?

- What types of people do we have trouble thinking of as valuable? Why?
- What gives them value?
- How do we sometimes act like we disagree with God about the value of other people?

Valuing

Say-We're going to divide into groups and look at some stories. Then we'll determine two things about each one:

- The popular opinion about the value of life in that situation.
- The practical choices we can make to show that we agree with God, not popular opinion, about the true value of life.

Distribute copies of the **What Do You Do?** handout, one to every student, and divide the students into smaller groups of four or five. Assign a case study to each group. The groups should discuss the popular opinion and practical choices for their assigned case study by answering the questions at the bottom of the handout. Tell the students not to go ahead and do the "Personal Reflection" part of the handout until you tell them to do so.

When the groups have finished, ask them to choose one student to share their answers with the rest of the class and discuss their responses.



Changing

Now say—Notice on your worksheet there is a “personal reflection” question. Go back to your seats and take a few moments to reflect on the way you sometimes behave toward people, and then fill in the blanks. We don’t want to hurt anyone’s feelings so don’t show anyone else your paper. If other students in the class know the person you’re thinking of, just put the initial of their first name in the blank. For the “prayer of response to God” part, write a prayer asking God to show you how He values this person’s life so you can make good choices the next time you interact with them.



Builds into:

Sanctity of Life, Social Justice, Purity



What Do You Do?

1

Case Study 1: Two weeks ago, the school secretary brought a new student into your classroom. He is from Lebanon and only speaks Lebanese. This boy is dressed funny, has a strange haircut, and he looks at the floor all the time. He keeps to himself and doesn't seem very friendly.

2

Case Study 2: Your grandmother came to live with you a couple of months ago and now everything has changed at your house. She is old and sick and can't take care of herself anymore. Your mom has to spend a lot of her time caring for your grandmother and she can't spend as much time helping you with homework and cooking nice meals for the family. The house smells funny and your grandma can't even talk. It just seems very inconvenient having her around.

3

Case Study 3: Your school offers a special class for students with mental disabilities. During recess, Aaron, one of the students from this class, approaches you. He asks you to play ball with him. You have no idea what he means or the type of game he is able to play. He makes you feel very uncomfortable. Besides, your friends are waiting for you out on the football field.

4

Case Study 4: Your mom tells you that your cousin Amy, who is 16, is going to have a baby. She lives at home with your aunt and uncle only a few blocks away. Your birthday is coming up, so all of your extended family comes over to your house for a celebration. Amy is feeling sick because of her pregnancy and is sitting all by herself in the living room watching television.



Group Discussion Questions

1. What might be the popular reaction to the situation assigned to your group?
2. What capabilities does this person's life lack?
3. What characteristics of this life are undesirable—from our society's point of view?
4. What practical choices could you make in this situation to show that you agree with God about the value of life?



Personal Reflection — Examination of Conscience

I have the most trouble behaving in a way that shows how much God values _____'s life.
(Person's First Initial)

I don't act like I value him/her because I have noticed that this person doesn't have these capabilities:

I don't act like I value him/her because I have noticed that this person doesn't have these characteristics:

Write a prayer to God telling Him you're sorry and ask Him to help you change the way that you behave toward this person.



Sixth Grade

God wants to protect His most precious creation from destruction.

Lesson 3



Each student will–

- Know that God desires to protect our lives
- Know that the human tendency to do things our own way ends in destruction
- Desire to follow God’s direction for protecting human lives
- Brainstorm and plan a class project where students can participate in protecting human lives



Outline

1. God protects us in the womb
2. God protects us by giving us direction for a full and satisfying life
3. God wants us to join with Him in protecting the lives of others



Realized Impact

This lesson plan connects all three categories of objectives in this curriculum: Sanctity of Life, Purity, and Social Justice. It also communicates the scope of the curriculum, which encourages a way of seeing life. God values our lives, and He wants us to value our own lives as well, by living within the parameters of His best way for us. He desires for us to join Him in valuing the lives of others and doing so proactively. As a class, the students will be able to experience this in a practical way. They’ll express God’s value of their lives—and the lives of others—as they complete an act of service together.



Materials

Video about human development (optional), such as National Geographic's *Biology of Prenatal Development* (2006)

Chalkboard or white board

Chalk or dry erase markers

Paper for recording group ideas



Making an Entrance

Ask—**What is your most valuable possession? It doesn't necessarily have to be the thing that is worth the most money, but the possession that is most valuable to you personally.** Let students share their answers and discuss.

Do you treat that most valuable possession any differently than your other possessions? How? Discuss.



Informing

Say—**God sees your life as one of His most valuable possessions. He desires to care for it and to protect it. When do you think God first valued your life? Did you have to *do* something to be deserving of that value?** Discuss.

In Psalm 139, God lets us in on when and why we are so valuable to Him. He is the one who formed us from the very beginning in our mother's womb. He provided for our care and protection before anyone else even knew of our existence.

O Lord, you have examined my heart and know everything about me.
 You know when I sit down or stand up. You know my every thought when far away.
 You chart the path ahead of me and tell me where to stop and rest.
 Every moment you know where I am.
 You know what I am going to say even before I say it, Lord.
 You both precede and follow me. You place your hand of blessing on my head.
 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too great for me to know!
 I can never escape from your spirit! I can never get away from your presence!
 If I go up to heaven, you are there; if I go down to the place of the dead, you are there.
 If I ride the wings of the morning, if I dwell by the farthest oceans,
 even there your hand will guide me, and your strength will support me.



I could ask the darkness to hide me and the light around me to become night—but even in darkness I cannot hide from you. To you the night shines as bright as day. Darkness and light are both alike to you.

You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb.

Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—and how well I know it.

You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion, as I was woven together in the dark of the womb.

You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed.

How precious are your thoughts about me, O God! They are innumerable! I can't even count them; they outnumber the grains of sand!

And when I wake up in the morning, you are still with me!

O God, if only you would destroy the wicked! Get out of my life, you murderers! They blaspheme you; your enemies take your name in vain.

O Lord, shouldn't I hate those who hate you? Shouldn't I despise those who resist you? Yes, I hate them with complete hatred, for your enemies are my enemies.

Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts.

Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life.

—Psalm 139:1-24, NLT

Say—The womb was designed by God to protect the very beginnings of life and to allow for its development until birth. It's located inside a woman's pelvis area. Hollow with a thick muscular wall, it's considered to be the strongest muscle in the human body.

When a fertilized egg travels through the fallopian tubes and into the uterus or womb, it buries itself in the thick, moist membranes that have developed in readiness for its arrival. As the fertilized egg becomes an embryo and continues to develop for 40 weeks inside the mother's body, the uterus grows in size to accommodate the baby.

Think of it—this whole process and the parts of the human body that are involved were all thought up by God as He created Adam and Eve! It is His intention that human life should grow in a warm, safe place inside of the mother's body. Even before we're born, He provides and plans for the protection of one of His most valued possessions—us.





If you wish, show a video that will teach the students about prenatal life. National Geographic has produced an excellent DVD on prenatal development called *In the Womb* (available at <http://shopngvideos.com/products/InTheWomb>). However, the DVD is 100 minutes long, and it includes some views of the female anatomy that might be more of a distraction than a help. Be sure to preview the DVD beforehand, and use clips that are appropriate for your classroom situation. Before you begin the video presentation, ask students to notice how God provides for and protects the life during the process of pregnancy.

After the video ends and the students have shared their observations, say—**God also provided a way to protect our lives as we make choices. Listen as I read from the Bible. Afterward, I want you to tell me one way that God protects us each day.**

Read Psalm 119:90-95 (MSG) to the class.

Your truth never goes out of fashion; it's as up-to-date as the earth when the sun comes up. Your Word and truth are dependable as ever; that's what you ordered—you set the earth going. If your revelation hadn't delighted me so, I would have given up when the hard times came. But I'll never forget the advice you gave me; you saved my life with those wise words. Save me! I'm all yours. I look high and low for your words of wisdom. The wicked lie in ambush to destroy me but I'm only concerned with your plans for me.

Then say—**God protects us in life by giving us guidelines to live by. He created us. He knows the best ways for us to live life and to enjoy it. When we choose to live His way, we are protected from many of the problems and much of the pain that we'll encounter when we choose to live our own way. Can you think of an example of choosing to go against God's direction for life that results in pain or damage to life?**

After a few students have shared their ideas, continue on by saying—**God sees our lives as valuable. He wants us to value our lives as He does. He also wants us to value the lives of others as He does.**

Read Jeremiah 22:15-16 (NLT) to the class.

“But a beautiful palace does not make a great king! Why did your father, Josiah, reign so long? Because he was just and right in all his dealings. That is why God blessed him. He made sure that justice and help were given to the poor and needy, and everything went well for him. Isn't that what it means to know me?’ asks the Lord.”

Say—**According to this passage, what is God's desire for us?**



Now let's brainstorm some examples of those who might be considered poor and needy. Write the students' ideas on the board as they call them out. When your list is complete, point to it and say—**God wants us to make time in our lives to make sure we are protecting these people, the poor and the people who have special or extraordinary needs in our neighborhoods and communities. They are as valuable to Him as we are.**



Valuing

Ask—**What can you do to protect the valuable life that God has given to you?** Ask them to give specific examples and write them on the board. **What could we do to protect the valuable lives of others?** Again, they should give some specific examples as you record them on the board. **What could we do to protect the valuable lives of the poor and needy?** Don't let them shout out their answers yet. They'll be answering this question in groups during the next part of the lesson.



Changing

Say something like—**Look at our list of examples of the poor and needy. We are now going to divide into groups of five and brainstorm some ways that our entire class could serve others. We want to show those people who've been overlooked and forgotten by society that we believe their lives are valuable—because God believes their lives are valuable. After 10 minutes of group discussion, you'll report your ideas to the class.**

Over the course of the next week, take the time to plan and implement a class project that will affirm the value of protecting human life using the input from your class discussion.



Builds into:

Sanctity of Life, Social Justice, Purity



Sixth Grade

We can be confident that God tells us the truth about life.

Lesson 4



Each student will–

- Know with confidence that God’s Word contains the truth about life
- Recognize the difference between the world’s “truth” and God’s truth
- Determine to live by the real truth, even when faced with opposition to it



Outline

1. Recognizing truth can be confusing
2. God is the one who can be most trusted to tell the truth about life
3. Finding some truth about life
4. Living by the truth



Realized Impact

Sixth-grade students are about to enter a world where the value of peers and their opinions escalates, while parents’ opinions become less influential. Their independence from the family is growing and the desire to make their own choices about their beliefs and behavior is growing along with it. It is important to establish an objective basis for good decision-making at this time. If we are going to encourage students to live by scriptural principles—even when it doesn’t seem like those choices immediately benefit their own welfare—we need to give them confidence that those hard choices will be worth making. Valuing life, purity, and social justice all require making hard choices at times. We don’t want to neglect the cultivation of confidence in God’s direction for life. This is all the more crucial in a time when it is unpopular to claim to know truth outside of one’s own personal realm.



Materials

Optical illusions—These can be obtained from the Internet or from books containing optical illusions (*The Little Giant Book of Optical Illusions* by Keith Kay (Sterling, 1997) is an inexpensive resource.)

Copies of **What Is the Real Truth?** handout, one for each student

Pencils

Bibles



Making an Entrance

Say—**I have a set of pictures to share with you. These pictures are all optical illusions. Optical illusions can trick our eyes.** Show the class examples of four or five optical illusions. (Try to avoid using illusions that are length or size distortions, as that type of illusion will be used in a later sixth-grade lesson plan.)

Then say—**These pictures can make things seem different than they really are. In life, there are also things that seem to be true; but in the end, we discover they are false. Many people believe they know what is true, and yet they may disagree with one another. Or you may have a problem so you ask 10 different people what you should do, but they all give different advice. How do we know which one is right? How can we know what is really true? How do we know the best way to make choices about our lives?**



Informing

Say—**Jeremiah 17:7-8 (NIV) tells us that those who put their confidence in God live the most fulfilling and satisfied lives:**

But blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. He will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.

Although many people are unsure about truth, we can be confident that God's direction for our lives is the truth about how to experience the best kind of life.





Now read Psalm 1:1-3 (NLT).

Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand around with sinners, or join in with scoffers. But they delight in doing everything the Lord wants; day and night they think about his law. They are like trees planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season without fail. Their leaves never wither, and in all they do, they prosper.

Ask—**How does God describe the life of someone who lives by following God’s direction?** Accept a few responses from the students. **Where can we find God’s truth about life?** John 17:17 (NIV) says: **“Your word is truth.”**

I am going to give you a list of statements that are commonly made on television, during talk shows, and even in everyday conversations at school, church, work, or in public places. Some are just unspoken thoughts. Look at each statement and decide whether you think that statement is true or false. Give each student a copy of the **What Is the Real Truth?** handout and a few minutes to work on it. (Ask them to only work on the first page of the handout for now.)

When they’re finished, ask—**How can I know for sure whether these statements are true or false?** (*Look to the Bible, to your pastor, parents, and teachers to find the truth.*) Now ask the students to pair off and go over page two and three of the **What Is the Real Truth?** handout together. This time the students should use the provided Scripture passages to figure out which statements are true and which are false, based on God’s direction. Then as a class, go over the statements together comparing the students’ original answers on page one with what the Scripture passage said on the other pages of the handout. Have the students correct their own papers and discuss the results as a class.



Valuing

Say—**You will encounter times in your life when you have to make choices. These will include choices about how to treat others, how to think about yourself, how much should you personally give to help another person, how you will react to people who hurt you or someone that you love, and how you will relate to the opposite sex. It can be confusing.**

Let’s think about a real-life example of a choice to be made. John is a great guy, but no one at school seems to notice that. He doesn’t have many friends. In fact, a couple of the more popular boys from his class have decided to be really mean to him. They often call him names, tell lies about him, and make sure that no one else is nice to him either.



Let's make a list of all the possible influences, good and bad, that could affect John's thinking about how to handle this situation. What would be the solution each influence might offer? As you discuss these questions, write the students' responses on the board. *(Make sure students identify the sources of influence before thinking of the possible solutions.)*

How could John sort through all of these solutions to choose the best one? Remind students to focus on the way to sort through the solutions, rather than on the solution itself. Write these ideas on the board as well. *(If no one else does, make sure you mention that John could ask a trusted adult or friend who is committed to living life God's way to help him find God's truth about handling situations like this.)*

Ask-

- **Do you think it would be difficult for John to respond the way God wants him to?**
- **If the real truth is in the Bible, why is it sometimes so hard to live according to God's truth about the best direction for our lives?**



Changing

Wrap up the lesson by saying—**I want you to take out a blank sheet of paper and write a letter to God, expressing your thoughts and feelings about living by His truth. What is your response to His truth?**



Builds into:

Sanctity of Life, Social Justice, Purity



What Is the Real Truth?

Read each statement below and decide whether you think each statement is true or false. Indicate your answer with a T or an F on the line to the left of the statement.

_____ Enjoying things in this world too much is wrong.

_____ If you can't take care of yourself, then it is selfish to go on living.

_____ Take care of yourself first and then you can take care of others.

_____ Don't worry about what other people are doing; just do what you think is right.

_____ No one will take care of you but yourself.

_____ Let your heart be your guide or do what feels good to you.

_____ Life is all about finding true love.

_____ Live to pursue your own happiness.

_____ No one knows what is right for anyone else.

_____ You will be happier if you are attractive.

_____ Take control of your life.

Reread each statement and then read the Scripture passages* provided below. Based on what God says is true, write “true” or “false” in the space next to the statement.

_____ *Enjoying things in this world too much is wrong.*

Luke 11:13–“If you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him.”

James 1:17–“Whatever is good and perfect comes to us from God above, who created all heaven’s lights. Unlike them, he never changes or casts shifting shadows.”

_____ *If you can’t take care of yourself, then it is selfish to go on living.*

Proverbs 31:8–“Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves; ensure justice for those who are perishing.”

_____ *Take care of yourself first and then you can take care of others.*

Philippians 2:3-4 (NAS)–“Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves. Do not merely look out for your own personal interests but also for the interests of others.”

_____ *Don’t worry about what other people are doing; just do what you think is right.*

Isaiah 1:17–“Learn to do good. Seek justice. Help the oppressed. Defend the orphan. Fight for the rights of widows.”

_____ *No one will take care of you but yourself.*

Matthew 6:32-33–“Your heavenly Father already knows all your needs, and he will give you all you need from day to day if you live for him and make the Kingdom of God your primary concern.”

_____ *Let your heart be your guide or do what feels good to you.*

Ephesians 4:21-23 (NIV)–“Surely you heard of him and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires, to be made new in the attitude of your minds.”

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_____ *Life is all about finding true love.*

Matthew 22:37-38—"Jesus replied, "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind." This is the first and greatest commandment."

_____ *Live to pursue your own happiness.*

Philippians 3:17-19—"Dear brothers and sisters, pattern your lives after mine, and learn from those who follow our example. For I have told you often before, and I say it again with tears in my eyes, that there are many whose conduct shows they are really enemies of the cross of Christ. Their future is eternal destruction. Their god is their appetite, they brag about shameful things, and all they think about is this life here on earth."

_____ *No one knows what is right for anyone else.*

Psalms 96:7-10—"O nations of the world, recognize the Lord; recognize that the Lord is glorious and strong. Give to the Lord the glory he deserves! Bring your offering and come to worship him. Worship the Lord in all his holy splendor. Let all the earth tremble before him. Tell all the nations that the Lord is king. The world is firmly established and cannot be shaken. He will judge all peoples fairly."

_____ *You will be happier if you are attractive.*

Philippians 3:7-9—"I once thought all these things were so very important, but now I consider them worthless because of what Christ has done. Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the priceless gain of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I may have Christ and become one with him. I no longer count on my own goodness or my ability to obey God's law, but I trust Christ to save me."

_____ *Take control of your life.*

Matthew 16:25—"If you try to keep your life for yourself, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for me, you will find true life."

* All Scripture is taken from the New Living Translation, unless otherwise noted.



Sixth Grade

God gives the gift of family.

LESSON 5



Each student will–

- Know that God’s ideal plan is for us to live and grow in a family
- Value present and future family relationships
- Identify good gifts given by God in her family



Outline

1. God as our life coach
2. A picture of God’s plan for family
3. God’s provision when things change



Realized Impact

The family unit, as God intended it to be, is becoming increasingly rare. Many students no longer realize that a core family unit—with husband, wife, and children all living together—is God’s intention for us. If our hope is for them to grow up to enjoy God’s plan for a family, then we have to create a picture of that family. We must help our students understand how their choices in the present will enable them to grow until they have the ability to live in the types of relationships God intends for them.

This is a very difficult topic, as many students’ families are broken and hurting. This lesson plan recognizes the problem and helps students feel confident that God has not abandoned them or their family. It is also important to note that while many family units include extended family members, the intention of this lesson is only to identify God’s plan for a husband, wife, and children, not to exclude any extended family members.

(For more biblical background on God’s plan for the family, see the fourth- and fifth-grade lesson plans on God’s plan for marriage and God’s plan for marriage and children.)

Materials

A sports-themed film on DVD, such as *Remember the Titans* (Disney, 2000) or *Hoosiers* (MGM/UA, 1986)

Copies of **Family Questions** handouts, one for each student

Pencils

Bibles

Making an Entrance

Ask—**Why is it important for a team to have a coach? I’d like you to think about your answer to this question while we watch part(s) of a movie.** Show a clip or two from a sports-themed film, such as *Remember the Titans* or *Hoosiers*, where a coach instructs his team about a strategy for winning.

Following are three recommended clips from *Hoosiers*. They portray the coach’s desire to discipline and train his young team, how important it is for the team to trust their coach and obey him, and how the coach’s unfailing belief in his team positively affects one player in particular. If possible, show all three clips to your class.

Clip 1 (about five minutes and 17 seconds long)—The new basketball coach runs his first practice at Hickory High School in small-town Hickory, Indiana.

Start: 00:13:39 Coach Norman Dale (Gene Hackman) says, “Huddle up!”

Stop: 00:18:56 Coach Dale says, “To your left. Let’s move!”

Clip 2 (about one minute and 39 seconds long)—The basketball team is playing in the regional finals. Coach Dale encourages the team in the locker room before the game.

Start: 01:15:38 The words REGIONAL FINALS, JASPER, INDIANA appear on the screen.

Stop: 01:17:17 The team runs out of the locker room.

Clip 3 (about five minutes long)—After one player is injured during the game and another player fouls out, Ollie McClellan (Wade Schenck), the former equipment manager and the smallest player on the team, is called into the game.

Start: 01:21:54 A Hickory player leaves the court and Coach Dale says, “Ollie, we need you.”

Stop: 01:26:49 After the game ends, Ollie is carried around the gym on the team’s shoulders.



As a class, discuss your earlier question—*Why is it important for a team to have a coach?* After the students have shared a few responses, say something like—**Sometimes it helps us to better understand God when we picture Him in the role of a coach. He has a plan for the human race and a plan for us. He doesn't leave us to ourselves to figure out how to accomplish that plan. God gives us instructions as to how to “play life” so we can enjoy it and see His plan carried out. Part of God's plan for us is that we learn to live in families.**



Informing

Continue the lesson by saying—**Steve Wozniak introduced one of the first personal computers in 1977. He built his first computer when he was 13 years old! How do you think he intended for that computer to be used when he invented it? Sometimes people use computers for doing things that Steve Wozniak never intended when he designed them. People can always find ways to use computers to destroy themselves and others, instead of using them in ways that will be helpful to people. For example, some people may spend all their free time creating viruses that will destroy other computers. Others find ways to instruct people about how to do violent acts. This was not the intention of the computer's creator.**

God made us in His image and with His creativity. He allows people to join Him in this work of creating new life when He gives children to a couple. It is obvious, when we look at the way God designed the male and female body, that His plan from the very beginning was that a man and a woman would come together to create new life.

Notice that His plan was not to create every human being in the same way He created Adam and Eve (with dirt and His breath, forming them as adults). Instead, God arranged the first marriage between Adam and Eve and told them it was His desire that they have children.

He invented the human body and the family, and He intended us to live His way so we could really enjoy them. He coaches us through life with His Truth, which shows us how to live our lives in helpful and healthy ways by avoiding things that will be destructive to us.

One of the reasons why God came up with the idea of marriage and family is that these relationships would help us to understand the way He relates to us and us to Him. God gives us pictures in the Bible of Himself as a bridegroom and a husband, as well as pictures of Himself as a father. He gives other pictures of Himself relating to us as a mother. We understand more about Him because we see examples of these types of relationships in the world around us.



Ask—**How is God like a father? How is God like a bridegroom or a husband? How is God like a mother?**
Allow a few students to share their thoughts.

God has another reason for placing us in families. As children are born and as families grow, God also acts as a “coach” by showing us how to live in those families. He gives parents the responsibility of “coaching” their children through life and passing on to their kids the truth about life that they’ve learned from God.

Read Deuteronomy 11:18-21 (NLT).

So commit yourselves completely to these words of mine. Tie them to your hands as a reminder, and wear them on your forehead. Teach them to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are away on a journey, when you are lying down and when you are getting up again. Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, so that as long as the sky remains above the earth, you and your children may flourish in the land the Lord swore to give your ancestors.

Now continue by saying—**Although God’s desire for the family is for children to live with a mother and a father, many times, because of human weaknesses, things don’t end up that way. But God still provides for us in those situations.**

Genesis 21 tells a story about a boy named Ishmael who lived in a tough family situation. It was so bad, in fact, that Ishmael and his mother, Hagar, had to leave his father, Abraham, and their house behind. But they had nowhere else to go. So they ended up in the desert without any food or water, and they were close to death.

This is where we pick up the Bible story in Genesis 21:17-20 (NLT).

Then God heard the boy’s cries, and the angel of God called to Hagar from the sky, “Hagar, what’s wrong? Do not be afraid! God has heard the boy’s cries from the place where you laid him. Go to him and comfort him, for I will make a great nation from his descendants.”

Then God opened Hagar’s eyes, and she saw a well. She immediately filled her water container and gave the boy a drink. And God was with the boy as he grew up in the wilderness of Paran. He became an expert archer.

Give students a copy of the **Family Questions** handout to work on individually.



Valuing

After students have completed the handout, ask them to share their responses to question four with the class—*What do you really like about your family?*



Changing

As a class, discuss responses to question five from the handout—*In what ways has God taken care of you and your family?* Then say—**No matter how your family looks, God wants to give good gifts to you through your family and to give good gifts to your family. Let's be watching for those good gifts every day.**



Builds into:

Sanctity of Life, Purity



Family Questions

1. What happened to Ishmael's family?
2. How did God take care of Ishmael?
3. What does your family look like?
4. What do you really like about your family?
5. In what ways has God taken care of you and your family?



Sixth Grade

Following God's direction helps us to more fully enjoy the gift of family in the future.

Lesson 6



Each student will–

- Understand that following God's directions for making good choices in our families now will also prepare us to make good choices in our future families
- Be motivated to discover and practice God's direction
- Role-play family situations, showing God as the coach giving directions
- Respond to God personally in prayer, giving Him the place of "life coach"



Outline

1. Our need for a coach to help us live in families
2. Discovering direction from God about choices that will help us enjoy the good life He has for us
3. Identifying family situations that require good choices



Realized Impact

In this lesson students have a chance to consider the way each member of their families should be treated in view of the value God has given their lives. Hopefully, they'll make practical connections between the value of human life and the way they choose to relate to their family members.

In addition, they'll understand how their present choices form their future choices as many of them begin their own families. (Note: In the junior high curriculum, purity will also be discussed as a present choice that will enable students to enjoy their future families as God intended.)



Materials

Picture of a well-known athlete
Chalkboard or white board
Chalk or dry erase markers
Bibles
Paper for group recording
Index cards (3 x 5 size) for each member of the class



Making an Entrance

Show the students a picture of a well-known athlete. Ask—**How did this person become a superstar athlete?** After the students have thrown out a few ideas, say—**One way this person achieved this level in sports was by making good choices for many years of his life. He chose the right foods, got the right amount of rest, did the right exercises, and had the right amount of discipline so his body would grow and develop in ways that would enable him to perform at the highest ability levels.**

Another way this person could achieve his goal would be to get a good coach. What makes a good coach? Accept some responses from the students before moving on.

So, someone who wants to become a superstar athlete has to make good choices and find a good coach in order to prepare for his future. We all need to consider taking part in God’s ideal family plan in our future. As we know, from seeing the pain of families around us, great families don’t “just happen.” Therefore, we should make good choices right now that will enable us to enjoy and protect the families God may give to us. And God “coaches” us in making those choices that will prepare us for future family life.



Informing

Say—**We talked about God’s plan for families: a husband, wife, and children living together and learning about God together. We also talked about how God can take care of us when we end up in situations that differ from His plan. It’s important, though, that even in sixth grade you begin to think about what you need to do to prepare yourself to enjoy God’s good plan for you in the future.**

He created you and wants you to really experience the good life He’s given to you. Today we’re going to talk about how God is coaching us right now in ways that will help us to become the kind of people who can really enjoy God’s plan for family.



Ask—In what ways is God like a good coach? If someone you respected told you there's a way that promises a good life in the future, how would you respond?

Have the students get into groups of three; give each group a Bible and some paper. The groups should work together to complete the following assignment (write it on the board or create a handout to give to them, but don't include the answers in parentheses)—

READ THE FOLLOWING VERSES AND WRITE DOWN THE CHOICES WE NEED TO MAKE SO WE CAN ENJOY LIFE IN THE FUTURE.

PROVERBS 3:3-4 (*Always make choices that show love and loyalty toward another person.*)

PROVERBS 13:1-3 (*Listen to parents; say only things that are helpful; carefully choose your words.*)

EPHESIANS 6:2-3 (*Give respect to parents.*)

- GIVE A PRACTICAL EXAMPLE OF WHAT IT WOULD LOOK LIKE TO PUT THESE TRUTHS INTO PRACTICE IN YOUR FAMILY RIGHT NOW.
- WHEN IS IT HARD TO PRACTICE THESE TRUTHS?
- WHY IS IT WORTHWHILE TO CHOOSE TO REACT TO SITUATIONS IN GOD'S WAY INSTEAD OF REACTING OUT OF THE WAY WE ARE FEELING IN THE MOMENT?

After about 10 minutes, ask a few of the groups to share with the rest of the class what they discovered. As students report, list on the board the truths about choices they've identified in these passages.

After the discussion ends, say—**Because we know our family members better than any other people on earth, and they know us, it's difficult to consistently live in a way that allows us to really enjoy our family. It's easy to forget that God created each one of them, and He highly values their lives. When we're feeling hurt, we tend to react instead of making thoughtful choices. God coaches us in relationships and we are wise to listen to His direction, trusting that He knows our weaknesses and difficulties and He can show us how to overcome them.**

In your groups, look at the following passages and write down any additional instruction God gives to us about making good choices in relationships. All of them reflect the value God gives to each human being He created—even the ones He's placed in your family.

Write these Scripture references on the board:

PROVERBS 17:17 (*Loyalty; I'm on your side!*)

PHILIPPIANS 2:3 (*Be humble and unselfish, think about others first*)

COLOSSIANS 3:13 (*Forgive; Note: You may wish to talk with your class about what it means to forgive.*

A simple suggestion: to forgive means to wish someone who has harmed you well as you think of them.)



Valuing

Hand out 3 x 5 cards to the class. Ask each student to write down an example of a problem that occurs in family relationships. Collect the cards and then give one card to each group of three. (Of course, you'll want to sort through the cards to make sure situations are clear and appropriate for students to act out.) Give the groups five to ten minutes to prepare.

Then say—**Your group will now role-play the situation I gave to you. Talk about how God would coach each of the family members involved. In your role-play, someone should play God as He participates in a coaching role. This person should give direction to the family. And remember—God values each person in that family!**

After each group finishes, ask for feedback from the rest of the class as to how God coached the family, what the family members could have done differently, whether or not they did as God wanted them to do, and so on. This will provide some good times of class discussion.

After the last role-play has been critiqued, say something like—**Practicing following God's directions now will prepare you to enjoy and protect the family He might give to you in the future. You are practicing God's direction to value life and you're seeing how following His directions will result in great and enjoyable relationships. Practicing good choices now will help you to make good choices in the future, when you're responsible for your own family. Practicing bad choices now will make it more difficult for you to make good choices in the future.** (Note: It may be helpful to point out to your students that bad habits and faulty life perspectives are more difficult to change as we get older.)



Changing

Lead the students in a time of silent reflection. Ask them to close their eyes and consider these questions (pause between each one)—

- **Who will be your coach for the rest of your life?**
- **With God as your coach, which of His directions is hardest for you to follow within your family relationships?**
- **Ask God to help you remember His directions and to choose to follow them as you live each day as a part of your family.**



Builds into:

Sanctity of Life, Purity



Sixth Grade

We can begin right now to do what it takes to be ready for God's adventure for us.



Each student will–

- Know how to prepare to enter into God's adventure as a hero
- Desire to do what it takes to be a part of the adventure
- Work with the class to create a cartoon illustration of God's adventurous hero



Outline

1. Body (physical condition, self-control, willing to follow through on what you know to be right)
2. Soul/Heart (love for God, expressing God's love for people, humility, unselfishness)
3. Mind (disciplined, know God's perspective, know the needs in the world)



Realized Impact

Students who are involved in something bigger than themselves are less likely to indulge in self-destructive behaviors. We are made to be a part of God's game plan in the world. Students should be constantly challenged to look beyond their own self-centered worlds and to join with God in His bigger purposes for their lives and the lives of others. In fact, God has clearly stated that those who only seek their own fulfillment in life—die (John 12:25). We can begin now to inspire students to discover and to prepare for the part they might play in God's plan and purposes, so they're more likely to decide to join Him in what He is doing.



Materials

Guest speaker: a local police officer or firefighter
Books about being a firefighter or police officer:

Catching Fire: The Story of Firefighting by Gena K. Gorrell (Tundra Books, 1999), 160 pages for ages 9-12.

If You Were a Firefighter by Virginia Schomp (Benchmark Books, 1998), 32 pages for ages 9-12.

If You Were a Police Officer by Virginia Schomp (Benchmark Books, 1997), 32 pages for ages 9-12.

True Blue: Police Stories by Those Who Have Lived Them by Randy Sutton and Cassie Wells (St Martin's Press, 2004)

Copies of **Preparing Body, Heart, and Mind** handout, one for each student

Large piece of newsprint for each group of four students

Markers or colored pencils for each group



Making an Entrance

Ahead of time, ask a police officer or firefighter to come speak to your class (during the first part of this lesson) about how she prepared for her profession. Ask the speaker to prepare answers to the following questions as well:

- When did you first start to think about becoming a police officer/firefighter?
- What changed in your life after you decided that you wanted to become a police officer/firefighter?

If this is not possible, you might find a story you can read to the class that covers this topic (see the **Materials** section for ideas).



Informing

After the guest speaker has finished speaking and answering questions, say—**God has invited all of us to join Him in heroic adventures in our world. If we want to be ready to join in, we have to decide to make the right choices today that will help us prepare for tomorrow.**



Ask-

- What is God doing in our world every day?
- What part might He ask you to play in what He is doing?
- In what ways was our speaker joining God in His work in our world?

Now say—Once we decide we want to join God in heroic adventures, we must start making choices in life that will help us prepare. Today, we're going to talk about three areas of our lives that we can start to prepare now: body, mind, and heart.

Distribute copies of the **Preparing Body, Heart, and Mind** handout to students. Ask them to work on the first part of this matching test on their own. Then discuss their answers and correct it as a class. (*Answers: 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 = Body; 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 = Heart; Philippians 4:8 = Mind; Philippians 4:9 = Body.*)



Valuing

Now divide the class into groups of four and ask them to work through the “Group Discussion Questions” at the bottom of the handout:

- *What can we do to prepare our bodies for the adventures in our future?*
- *What can we do to prepare our hearts for the adventures in our future?*
- *What can we do to prepare our minds for the adventures in our future?*

Discuss their answers as a class.

Give each group a piece of newsprint and colored pencils or markers. Ask them to work together to create a cartoon that illustrates a *prepared* adventurer. Their drawings should include the body, heart, and mind characteristics that were just discussed. Allow each group to explain their drawing to the entire class and display them around the classroom.





Changing

The students should return to their seats for this last part of the lesson. Say—**On the back of your handout, write down one thing you'd personally have to do to prepare to join God in His adventure.** If you wish, ask a few volunteers to share their “one thing” with the class.



Builds into:

Sanctity of Life, Social Justice, Purity



Preparing Body, Heart, and Mind

Match each verse to the appropriate word on the right.

“Remember that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize. You also must run in such a way that you will win. All athletes practice strict self-control. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize. So I run straight to the goal with purpose in every step. I am not like a boxer who misses his punches. I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should. Otherwise, I fear that after preaching to others I myself might be disqualified.” 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 (NLT)

Heart

“If I could speak in any language in heaven or on earth but didn’t love others, I would only be making meaningless noise like a loud gong or a clanging cymbal. If I had the gift of prophecy, and if I knew all the mysteries of the future and knew everything about everything, but didn’t love others, what good would I be? And if I had the gift of faith so that I could speak to a mountain and make it move, without love I would be no good to anybody. If I gave everything I have to the poor and even sacrificed my body, I could boast about it; but if I didn’t love others, I would be of no value whatsoever.” 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 (NLT)

Mind

“And now, dear brothers and sisters, let me say one more thing as I close this letter. Fix your thoughts on what is true and honorable and right. Think about things that are pure and lovely and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.” Philippians 4:8 (NLT)

Body

“[Paul said,] ‘Keep putting into practice all you learned from me and heard from me and saw me doing, and the God of peace will be with you.’” Philippians 4:9 (NLT)

Group Discussion Questions:

Keeping in mind the verses above, answer the following questions:

1. What can we do to prepare our bodies for the adventures in our future?

2. What can we do to prepare our hearts for the adventures in our future?

3. What can we do to prepare our minds for the adventures in our future?

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Sixth Grade

We learn to make good choices, deciding to live by commitments rather than feelings.

Lesson 8



Each student will–

- Review a healthy decision-making process
- Realize he needs to make decisions that aren't directed by feelings but by commitments
- Work through a decision-making case study with the class



Outline

1. Introduction for decision-making (See fourth-grade curriculum.)
2. The problem with living by feelings rather than by commitment
3. The decision-making process: a case study (feelings versus commitments)



Realized Impact

Sixth-grade students are entering a time of life when they will feel and be aware of many different emotions. It's important for them to understand that they *don't* have to act on their feelings. Unfortunately, this is not what the media teaches them. And we're also at fault, as we've neglected to proactively teach children a method for making daily choices—and even major ones—that's better than just acting on one's impulses.

This is an opportunity to help students recognize the problems that come about when people make choices based only on their emotions. It will also help them to consider the importance of being honest and remaining committed to their promises. As students continue to practice decision-making, this strategy will become a habit when decisions come into play in their lives.



Materials

Notebooks or journals (with lined pages) for each student
Pencils
Bibles



Making an Entrance

Say—**Today we're going to create a decision-making journal that we will use throughout the year. Write your names on the inside cover. Give them time to do this. On the outside cover, write the words "Decision-Making," and on the first page, write "Life's Decisions." Now I'd like you to take some time and make a list of all of the decisions you think you'll have to make throughout your lifetime.**

Discuss the students' ideas. If students come up with additional ideas after the class discussion, give them time to add those to their own lists.



Informing

Say—**On the top of the second page of your journal, write "Sixth Grade Decisions." Now let's make a list of decisions you might have to make while you are in sixth grade. Discuss the students' ideas. God created each one of us. He knows us better than we even know ourselves. Because He knows us, He also knows the best decisions or paths for our lives. We can trust Him to tell us the best way to go. We can trust Him to direct us in ways that will give us the best possible kind of life.**

The writer of the Psalms talks about God's direction for his life—"Oh, I'll guard with my life what you've revealed to me, guard it now, guard it ever; And I'll stride freely through wide open spaces as I look for your truth and your wisdom" (Psalm 119:44-45, MSG). "But I'll never forget the advice you gave me; you saved my life with those wise words" (Psalm 119:93, MSG). How does he describe the benefit of making choices with God's direction?

Let's start with a situation for a girl named Allison. Allison agreed to babysit for her neighbor on Friday night. She enjoys baby-sitting and especially for this particular neighbor because her two children are very well behaved. At school on Thursday, Lyndsey invites Allison to come to her birthday party the next night—the same night Allison is supposed to babysit. Allison is very excited because Lyndsey is so popular and she recently started to seek out Allison and talk with her during lunch. Allison really wants to say yes to the birthday party invitation, but she has already committed to babysit for her neighbor.



Now title the next page of your journal “Options.” What are all the possible choices Allison could make in this situation? List them on this page with about ten spaces between each. Under each option draw two columns—one titled “Pros” and the other one “Cons.” What would be some possible *positive* consequences if Allison acted on option one? What would be some possible *negative* consequences for option one? Continue moving through the options, listing positives and negatives for each.

Turn to a new page and title it “Directions for the Good Life.” Let’s think about God’s directions for this type of situation. What do you think God, your parents and your pastor would say about each option and why?

Write these Scripture references on the board so the students can copy them in their journals:

PSALM 145:13 (*Be faithful in all you say and gracious in all that you do.*)

PROVERBS 3:3 (*Be loyal and kind.*)

PROVERBS 6:16-19 (*“There are six things the Lord hates—no, seven things he detests: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that kill the innocent, a heart that plots evil, feet that race to do wrong, a false witness who pours out lies, a person who sows discord among brothers.”*)

PROVERBS 10:9 (*Have integrity so you don’t slip and fall.*)

PROVERBS 13:5 (*Godly people hate lies and avoid shame and disgrace.*)

Say—Write down these Scripture references, leaving some blank lines in between them, and then read each passage on your own. For each verse, write down the direction that could be applied to Allison’s situation. According to these verses, what choice should Allison make?

Valuing

Say—Look again at your “options” page(s). Do any of these verses give direction that would help you with the options you’re considering? If so, write the verse near the option it applies to.

Title the next page “Choice.” After considering all we’ve talked about today, write out the decision you’d make if you were Allison. After a few minutes, ask—What choice did you make and why? Why would it be difficult to choose to babysit instead of going to the party?

Then say—Now give me some examples of choices people make because of the way they *feel* about a situation, rather than because of the commitments they’ve made. Write down at least one example of a time when you did this.



Changing

Ask—What do you struggle with when you try to make the right choice and act on God’s directions? Why do you think you should choose to act using God’s direction, rather than just doing what you feel like doing?

Throughout the year we will be journaling about some of the decisions we’re making. Keep your journal in your desk for these times.



Builds into:

Sanctity of Life, Social Justice, Purity

Sixth Grade



There are heroes who share in the adventure of showing God's love to people by acting against popular opinion.

Lesson 9



Each student will–

- Learn about the heroic acts of Corrie Ten Boom and Pandita Ramabai
- Be challenged by the example of Corrie Ten Boom and Pandita Ramabai
- Identify one way she could imitate the example of Corrie Ten Boom and Pandita Ramabai in her own world



Outline

1. The heroic acts
2. The obstacles overcome
3. The hero in my world (See fourth-grade discussion.)



Realized Impact

Students in sixth grade are quite self-conscious, due to all the changes occurring in their lives at this age. Therefore, it's a good source of "relief" for kids when we ask them to look at a world that is much bigger than their own small one. As they learn that personal sacrifices are required when we affirm the value of lives that others don't value, it adds weight to the truth about the value of their own lives. It is our hope that this lesson will also call attention to the fact that the majority opinion isn't always the right one. In addition, students will see that God is calling them to a life with Him that is much bigger than the world of their elementary or middle school. This realization should motivate them to make choices that will enable them to be a part of this adventure.



Materials

Display of optical illusions with length or size distortions
Copies of **Heroes Facing Challenges** handout for each group
Resource materials for research



Making an Entrance

At the front of the room, display an optical illusion that shows two figures with size or length distortions. Label one figure “A” and the other one “B” so the class can distinguish between the two. (Don’t tell the class that you’re going to show them an optical illusion.)

Beforehand, arrange with one student (let’s call her “Suzie”) to choose the figure that appears to be smaller—and regardless of what the other students say (or what she knows to be true), she must stick with that choice throughout the exercise. To make this activity work the way it should, you should choose a student with plenty of self-confidence.

Now begin the lesson by asking the entire class to stand up. Say—**I’m going to test your vision. Which of these two objects is bigger—A or B? If you think object A is bigger, stand on this side of the room. If you think object B is bigger, stand on that side of the room.** Suzie should now be standing alone on one side of the room. Ask some of the students to explain why they chose the way they did. Then ask Suzie to explain her choice. After the explanations, ask if anyone would like to switch their answer and go stand on the other side of the room. Give the students some time and see if anyone moves or tries to talk Suzie into coming over to their side.

Explain the optical illusion to the class. Then explain that Suzie was *asked* to choose the wrong answer and to answer differently than the rest of the class. Ask Suzie—**How difficult was it for you to choose differently than the rest of the class?**

Then ask the rest of the class to consider this question—**If I’d chosen *you* as my accomplice instead of Suzie, what would have made it difficult for you to stand alone on the other side of the room?** Accept a few ideas from the students, then say—**There are going to be times in your life when it will be important for you to stand on “the wrong side of the room.”**

What is the definition of a hero? (This idea was previously discussed in the fourth- and fifth-grade curriculums.) **A hero is a person who is willing to give up his own personal comfort to do something that benefits or helps people. Heroes often choose differently than everyone else in order to help others. Today we’re going to take a look at the lives of two people who chose to live a heroic adventure with God, even though it meant going against popular opinion—or standing on the wrong side of the room!**



Informing

Students will research the life of either Pandita Ramabai or Corrie Ten Boom. Possible sources range from books to Web sites to videos. You'll need to collect these ahead of time and provide them during the lesson—enough so each group will have access to some information when working through their handout together.

Pandita Ramabai

Hero Tales, Volume IV, by Dave and Neta Jackson (Bethany House, 2001), four chapters

www.ccmbooks.org/onlinebooks/Pandita/pandita.html

<http://chi.gospelcom.net/GLIMPSEF/Glimpses/glmps133.shtml>

www.christianitytoday.com/ch/2005/003/5.12.html

www.watchword.org (listed under the “biographies” link)

Corrie Ten Boom

www.Christianheroes.com

www.intouch.org/myintouch/mighty/portraits/corrie_ten_boom_159770.html

The Hiding Place by Corrie Ten Boom (Bantam, 1984), 256 pages

Paint the Prisons Bright: Corrie Ten Boom by Jill Briscoe (W Publishing Group, 1991), 83 pages for ages 9-12.

Ten Girls Who Changed the World by Irene Howat (Christian Focus Publications, 2002), one chapter for ages 9-12.

The Hiding Place video (World Wide Pictures, 1975)

Divide the class into smaller groups and hand out the **Heroes Facing Challenges** worksheet to each one. Tell the class they'll need to use the resources you've provided and work in groups to answer the questions on the sheet. Give the students time for group discussion, and then ask each group to make a report to the class, giving their answers to the first six questions on the sheet:

1. *Which hero are you writing about?*
2. *What influenced this hero's life?*
3. *What did the hero accomplish?*
4. *What problems did this hero have to overcome?*
5. *How did this person react to being treated unfairly?*
6. *How did this hero act against popular opinion?*



Valuing

As a class, discuss the groups' answers to questions seven and eight on the worksheet-

How were peoples' lives changed as a result of this person's actions?

Do you think there is a need for a hero who does this kind of work now? Where? How?



Changing

To wrap up the lesson, discuss the students' answers to the final question: *In what ways could you imitate this hero?*

Lesson 9



Builds into:

Sanctity of Life, Social Justice, Purity



Heroes Facing Challenges

1. Which hero are you writing about?
2. What influenced this hero's life?
3. What did the hero accomplish?
4. What problems did this hero have to overcome?
5. How did this person react to being treated unfairly?
6. How did this hero act against popular opinion?
7. How were peoples' lives changed as a result of this person's actions?
8. Do you think there is a need for a hero who does this kind of work now? Where? How?
9. In what ways could you imitate this hero?

