



Decisions: Lesson 1 (6-8)

Decisions: Make Responsible Choices:

Consider Personal Beliefs, Safety, and the Situation
Think Through Potential Consequences
Put My Best Self Forward

Example Practices That Address Responsible Decision-Making:

- Support collaborative decision-making for academics and behavior
- Foster student-centered discipline
- Assist students in step-by-step conflict resolution process
- Foster student independence
- Model fair and appropriate decision-making
- Teach good citizenship

The Goals:

As an Arkansas graduate, I am:

- A self-directed learner
- A responsible citizen
- Able to identify, set, and accomplish goals

Personal Competency Addressed: In middle/junior high school, I can:

- ✓ Evaluate situations that are safe and unsafe and consider how I can stay safe (e.g., personal interactions, location, technology)
- ☐ Monitor how responsible decision making affects progress toward achieving my goals
- ☐ Analyze daily schedule of schoolwork and activities to meet goals
- ☐ Recognize how, when, and who to ask for help
- ☐ Collaboratively develop and model classroom rules, routines, and norms
- ☐ Identify a problem, state what the problem is, and identify the perspectives of those involved
- ☐ Identify a desired outcome of the problem
- ☐ Use creativity and innovation to generate multiple possible solutions and discuss each option in relation to resources, situation, and personal principles
- ☐ Identify the best solution to the problem and analyze if it is likely to work
- ☐ Generate a plan for carrying out the chosen option
- ☐ Evaluate the effectiveness of the solution
- ☐ Make adjustments and amendments to the plan
- ☐ Accept responsibility for my personal decisions, including consequences

Learning Objectives:

I can evaluate situations that are safe and unsafe and consider how I can stay safe (e.g., personal interactions, location, technology).

Materials and Preparation:

- Post-it notes
- Device and internet access for digital media
- White board
- [Cyberbullying](#) - link to article for teacher to preview before starting lesson.

Your feedback is invaluable to us. Please alert us to any inactive links, concerns, and/or suggestions regarding this lesson [here](#).

Key Vocabulary:

Consequences: a result or effect of an action; consequences may be positive or negative

Damage: physical or emotional harm

Evaluate: to review and create a decision or opinion on something

Minimize: to take away and make smaller

Predator: someone who wants to harm another person

Risk: being around a dangerous situation

Safe: secure, protected from harm or danger

Unsafe: risky, dangerous, harmful

Introduction (5 mins):

This lesson is designed to help students understand what measures they can take to be safe and healthy. Here are some guiding questions to kick off your lesson:

- How important is safety to you?
- Are there behaviors that could put you at risk?
- What are those behaviors? (*students might offer: confrontations, harassment, threats, bullying*)
- Are there decisions you can make to keep yourself safe?
- Are there decisions you can make to avoid dangerous situations?

Explicit Instruction/Teacher Modeling (15 mins):

After discussing vocabulary and introducing the objective of staying safe through decision making, allow students to share or express experiences in a safe class environment. Using the three possible areas below as starting points. (*Please note you will need to monitor for content as students share and be prepared to redirect conversation. If students start to discuss anything that raises concern or that might not be appropriate to share in class, please make sure to speak to the student after class or help the student seek appropriate help from guidance counselors. As educators we are mandated reporters.*)

- Location - safe locations, unsafe locations, alone or not alone
- Personal Interactions - friend vs acquaintance, unknowns
- Technology - cyber bullying, predators, inappropriate sites

Lesson Activities (15 mins): (*Teacher will select one*)**Location:**

- Do you always make sure you are in a well-lit or public place where assistance would be easily found?
- Are you aware of your surroundings?
- What types of locations could put you at risk?
- Do you let other people know where you will be going or estimated times of arrival?

Personal Interactions:

- How do you address others?
- When you see someone being treated poorly do you get involved or walk on by?
- How can you best handle uncomfortable conversations or situations?

Technology:

- **Has anyone ever tried talking to you online about inappropriate things? What did you do?**
- Do you trust all of your online friends?
- Are there any people you should unfriend or block?
- Do you know how to report, flag, or block people on the websites and apps you use? Can you show me?

- Who would you talk to if you were upset by a request you received online?

(Teachers: be prepared to offer an appropriate plan of action for students depending on their comments.)

Guided Practice (12 mins):

Using the questions above, facilitate a conversation with students. The guided practice will actually be a working discussion.

*Rapport and student safety is very important for students to share - it is important you take a vested and sincere interest in their responses so they will trust you.

*You can explain that decision making is a very important skill that will have positive or negative consequences.

*You should explain the avenues for students to seek help.

- [Be Strong \(Resource\)](#)
- [Teaching Decision Making Skills \(Resource\)](#)

Independent Work Time (5 mins):

Students will journal their thoughts about how they can personally improve their decision making skills.

Student reflection:

- What is a decision you wish you had handled differently?
- What did the situation look like?
- How did you feel?
- What made the situation uncomfortable or scary?
- How did you react?
- About your decision - do you wish you had handled it differently?

Differentiation:

- Allow students to “Think/Pair/Share” in smaller group settings to allow for more open and honest conversation.
- Give students Post-it notes to write their answers to the questions and place in a bowl or hat to read out loud to allow anonymity.
- Allow students to record their thoughts instead of writing the journal entry.

Assessment:

Students should complete the Pre-Test: [DECISIONS: 6-8: Pre-Test](#)

Review and Close (3 mins):

The teacher will review safe vs. unsafe, and students will use the Google Form as a closing activity.

Optional Activities:

[Safe Web Surfing: Top Tips for Kids and Teens Online](#) (Length - 5:01)

Intervention/Support:

- For ELL and struggling learners, provide definitions and have students create illustrations that demonstrate ideas expressed in the definitions.
- For advanced learners, students could define vocabulary words used and include examples.

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Enrichment/Extension:

Students could create a graphic comic strip or story board to illustrate what dangerous situations might look like. Link to story boards: <https://boords.com/storyboard-template#pdf-storyboard-templates>. Students could role play how to handle different confrontations and help develop solutions that result with positive endings.

Teacher Self-Care:

“Let go of toxic relationships or relationships that no longer serve you. *Toxic relationships* are ordinarily defined as those in which the other person does not wish you well or generally affects you negatively (Glass, 2015).” - Tina H. Boogren *Take Time for You: Self-Care Action Plans for Educators*

Sources:

“40+ FREE Storyboard Templates (PDF, PSD, Word & PPT).” Accessed July 30, 2020.

<https://boords.com/storyboard-template>.

cyberbullying, n.d. <https://www.missingkids.org/netsmartz/topics/cyberbullying>.

Safe Web Surfing: Top Tips for Kids and Teens Online, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yrln8nyVBLU>.

Teacher Reflection:**To Ask with Students:**

If we do this again, what can I do differently to help you learn more?

Did this activity help you learn more than others that we’ve done? Why?

Classroom Culture:

Are the relationships that I have with my students helping or hindering their ability to learn?

Could the problems I have in my classroom be solved by pre-teaching my expectations or developing rules/procedures to deal with these issues?

Was my demeanor and attitude toward my class today effective for student learning?

What choices have I given my students lately?

Can I explain at least *SOMETHING* about each of my students' personal lives?

Curriculum and Instruction - Assessment and Grading Practices:

Do my assessments really reflect learning or merely task completion or memorization skills?

What evidence do I have that my students are learning?

What new strategies have I tried lately with a student who is struggling?

In what ways do I challenge students who are clearly being successful in my classroom?

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Collaboration - Professional Learning Community:

In what areas can I still improve professionally?

Do my actions as a teacher show my belief that all students can learn at high levels?

Do my actions as a teacher show that I take pride in my work?

Are the relationships I have with my colleagues conducive to creating a collaborative culture focused on learning?

Are the relationships I have with my students' parents conducive to improving learning?

Mental Health – Maintain a Healthy Outlook:

What new ideas have I tried in my classroom lately to keep myself energized about teaching?

What have I done lately to relieve stress and focus on my own mental health, to ensure I remain an effective teacher?