

Decisions Decisions

*A Lesson Plan from Rights, Respect, Responsibility: A K-12 Curriculum
Fostering responsibility by respecting young people's rights to honest sexuality education.*

NSES ALIGNMENT:

By the end of 12th grade, students will be able to:

PR.12.DM.1 – Apply a decision-making model to choices about contraception, including abstinence and condoms.

SH.12.DM.1 – Apply a decision-making model to choices about safer sex practices, including abstinence and condoms.

PD.12.DM.1 – Apply a decision-making model to various situations relating to sexual health.

TARGET GRADE: Grade 9
Lesson 6

TIME: 50 Minutes

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- A donut – any kind
- A paper plate and napkin
- Donut Nutritional Information – one copy
- “Decisions, Decisions” – one per student, prepared as booklets as described
- Worksheet: “What’s Your Dogma?” – one per student
- Teacher’s Guide: “What’s Your Dogma?” – one copy
- Homework: “Teach Your Parents Well” – one per student
- White board and markers
- Pencils in case students do not have their own

ADVANCE PREPARATION FOR LESSON:

- Print out enough copies of the “Decisions, Decisions” pages for all students to have one whole set. Cut each sheet in half, and put them together in order with “Decisions, Decisions” on the top. Staple them in one corner to create individual booklets, one per student.
- Become familiar with the decision-making model below so that you can present it easily in class.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Describe the steps involved in one decision-making model. [Knowledge]
2. Apply the decision-making model to a scenario relating to pregnancy prevention and safer sex. [Knowledge, Skill]

A NOTE ABOUT LANGUAGE:

Language is really important and we’ve intentionally been very careful about our language throughout this curriculum. You may notice language throughout the curriculum that seems less familiar - using the pronoun “they” instead of “her” or “him”, using gender neutral names in scenarios and role-plays and referring to “someone with a vulva” vs. a girl or woman. This is intended to make the curriculum inclusive of all genders and gender identities. You will need to determine for yourself how much and how often you can do this in your own school and classroom, and should make adjustments accordingly.

PROCEDURE:

STEP 1: Say, “We make decisions every single day. What are some of the decisions you have made before you got to class today?” Possible answers may include:

- What to wear to school
- What to eat for breakfast
- Whether to take the bus/subway/walk to school
- Who to sit with at lunch
- Whether/how to respond to someone’s text

Say, “What we’re going to look at today is how we make decisions, focusing on making decisions that have to do with sexuality.” (2 minutes)

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STEP 2: Make sure all the students have a pencil or other writing implement. Distribute the decision-making booklets to every student face down, asking them not to turn them over until you have said so. Explain that, when you say go, you're going to ask them to turn over their booklets. On each page of these booklets is a situation in which they need to decide whether to do something. Tell them that you are going to read each situation and they must immediately decide whether they'd do what is described or not and then circle "yes" or "no" to reflect their choice. Tell them that no one will see their answers except them, so they should be completely honest.

Ask whether there are any questions and then ask them to turn the booklet over, turn to page 1 and read what's there. After you've read the brief scenario, say, "Yes or no?" Immediately say, "Turn the page," and read the scenario on the second page. Continue in this rapid fire way until you've completed the entire packet. (6 minutes)

STEP 3: Ask the students, "What was it like to do that?" Probe for responses, which will vary, but may include:

- It was easy
- It was difficult
- It went too fast
- It was fun

Ask, "Did this reflect how you usually make decisions? Why or why not?" Talk about how it may depend on the situation; how it may depend on what other factors are going on at the time. Ask for an example of what else they'd need to know in one of the examples in order to make a decision. (8 minutes)

STEP 4: Say, "This is very typical of how we make decisions every day. I'm guessing most of you did not sit staring at the breakfast choices this morning for 20 minutes wondering, 'Cheerios? Toast? Hmm...' You thought for a moment about what you wanted, you listened to what your body was saying, and you made your decision. That works for moving us through the day. What it doesn't work for is making decisions about sex and sexuality. Let's talk about that now."

Ask whether anyone has ever heard the word "dogma" before. Say, "A dogma is a set of principles or values or beliefs we have. They may be informed by our families, our friends, our religious group if we have one, and just our own thoughts about what we do and don't believe. When it comes to sexuality, we are making decisions based on what we know and what we believe. So when you think of making sexuality-related decisions, think about your own DOGMA."

On the board, write "DOGMA" in a column going down one side of the board. Say, "In this lesson, 'dogma' both means your beliefs and it is how you can remember the steps to making an effective decision that reflects those beliefs."

Next to each of the letters write the corresponding word, and go through each as outlined:

D = Determine what the situation is

Explain that in the scenarios given in the booklet, the scenarios were quick and easy – they either knew for sure because of their beliefs, or made a choice based on what they wanted in the moment. Explain that after you have gone through the model, you are going to talk

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about how you determine what the real situation is that they need to make a decision about.

O = Brainstorm your Options

Say, “We always hear people say, ‘I didn’t have a choice’ or ‘what was I supposed to do?’ For example, in one of the situations in the booklet, people might say, ‘that donut was calling to me!’ Of course, they’re joking – donuts can’t talk... but when we say we didn’t have a choice, many times it’s a way of making an excuse for just doing what we want to do.

Let’s stick with the donut example, because obviously, I’m hungry today. Are there only two possible outcomes, either eat or don’t eat the donut? No. I could [write these on the board] eat the donut, not eat the donut, eat part of the donut, take the donut and leave money for the person whose donut it was, I could leave a note for the person that reads, ‘if no one wants this donut, can I have it?’ sign my name and not eat it until I’ve given enough time for people to say whether they want it themselves.”

G = Gather Information about and weigh the pros and cons of each option

Say, “Once I have thought of my options, I need to gather information that will help me make my decision. Sometimes, this information is in my brain and I just need to access it. Other times, I’ll need to ask someone else for their thoughts or what they know or have experienced – or I might need to go online.

For example, say I want to eat the donut, but I’m also trying to be healthy and watch what I eat. That doesn’t mean I might not still eat it, but I need to know a bit more about the donut so I can determine – is it worth it?”

Hold up the Donut Nutritional Information and explain the one you found that does less harm, and one you could have that was much higher in calories, fat, etc. Explain that while you could eat either – or both – the impact of each is different because of the amount of fat, sugar and calories in each.

Say, “Now that I’ve gotten some information, I need to look at what the advantages and disadvantages of each option are.

Let’s talk choice one: I don’t eat the donut at all. What are some of the advantages of that?”

Probe for “You’ll feel better about yourself,” “You won’t feel gross afterwards,” “You won’t have a sugar rush and then the crash afterwards” as advantages, and “You won’t have eaten what looks like a yummy donut” as one disadvantage.

Then ask, “Now, what about a different choice? What if I just eat some of donut? What are the advantages and disadvantages?”

Probe for, “You still get some of the donut, but not as many calories or fat or other bad stuff” as an advantage and “You don’t get the whole thing” or “You may make the person whose donut it is really mad by only taking a piece of it” as disadvantages.

Say, “These are all good things to keep in mind. Also tuck away in your mind that the number of advantages and disadvantages you identify tells you something. If I can come up with ten reasons not to eat the donut, and only one reason TO eat the donut, I need to really pay attention to that.”

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M = Make a decision

Say, “So you’ve made a list of each options and weighed the pros and cons to each. Now you need to go ahead and decide what to do based on those things.”

A = Act on your decision

Say, ‘Now that I’ve made my decision I’m going to act on it. I pop that donut into my mouth and make all sorts of yummy noises as I eat it -- even as the person who owns the donut is yelling, ‘what are you doing?!’ Or, I walk away, feeling superior to everyone who I think was weak, knowing I made the right choice for my health.”

Summarize the steps of the model again. Then say, “So, we’ve gone from making a decision in a split second to going through a whole model that feels like it would take 15 minutes to do. But that’s not the case. By practicing this model, decisions start to come easier and easier – they’re just more thought-out.” (12 minutes)

STEP 5: Break the class into groups of 3. Hand out the worksheet, “What’s My DOGMA?” to each student, so that everyone can follow along, even if they complete only one for the triad. Ask them to put all three names on one of the sheets and designate a writer. Ask for a volunteer to read the scenario aloud to the class. Then ask students to decide which of the two characters they plan to represent and go through the worksheet and practice their DOGMA. Tell them they have about 10 minutes in which to do this. (12 minutes)

STEP 6: After about 10 minutes, stop the groups. Ask for one group to present their D and O, also asking for input from other groups. Record these on the board. Go to another group and ask them to share their G and M, again, asking for input from other groups to supplement.

Then go around the room and ask each group to share their final decision, or their A. If there is repetition, place check marks on the board next to any decisions that are repeated.

Once all the groups’ actions are recorded on the board, ask the students to reflect on what they notice about the decisions people reached. Each list will be different, but you may hear any or all of the following:

- Most of us picked the same answer
- There’s a lot of variety in what we said we’d do
- I started the activity thinking I’d do one thing, and ended up deciding something else

Ask, “Did you notice a difference when it was Kyle who they represented vs. Erika? Why do you think that was?”

Note to the Teacher: *If none of the students select Kyle, be sure to talk about whether and how they think it might have looked differently had someone selected that character instead.*

After students have shared their responses say, “The point is not to get to the same outcome, although some of you may have. The point is that, whatever decision you make, you want to think it through carefully before making it.”

Take the donut from the plate, wrap it in the original bag or paper, and throw it in the garbage.

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Then tell students about the homework and distribute the worksheet. (10 minutes)

RECOMMENDED ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING OBJECTIVES AT CONCLUSION OF LESSON:

The in-class description of the model will fulfill the first learning objective (the second in-class activity and homework will also reinforce the first learning objective). The homework assignment will achieve the second learning objective.

HOMEWORK:

“Teach Your Parents Well” worksheet, in which students need to walk through the decision-making model with one of their parents/caregivers and then help them make a decision they have to make.

Note: *Decision-making booklet activity adapted from an activity created by Michelle Gerka, CAI Global.*

Teacher's Guide: What's Your DOGMA?

Note: There will be all different responses from students. This provides a sample so you can help guide them on how to use the decision-making model effectively. It represents one possible choice, not necessarily the right choice.

Kyle and Erika have been together since the beginning of 8th grade. They've made out a lot and know how to make each other feel good, and haven't really had any complaints about that part of their relationship. It's almost the end of 9th grade, and they both feel ready to start having sex. Neither of them has ever had sex with anyone else before, although Erika performed oral sex on the guy she liked before Kyle (she didn't tell Kyle because she doesn't think that's really sex). Kyle and Erika don't want Erika to get pregnant, but they're not sure what their options are for protection. Neither of them will have sex without some kind of protection.

Character You're Representing (circle one):

Kyle

Erika

D - DETERMINE WHAT THE SITUATION IS

We both want to have sex, but we don't know what the most effective protection is.

O - BRAINSTORM YOUR OPTIONS

We can research birth control online and figure out what our options are.

We can go to a teen health clinic and find out more information there.

We can call/text a clinic hotline I saw advertised on Facebook to get more information.

We can ask a parent/trusted adult to get more information.

We can do nothing and just hope we're lucky and she doesn't get pregnant.

G - GATHER INFORMATION ABOUT AND WEIGH THE PROS AND CONS OF EACH OPTION

I want to talk with Erika about what birth control is available.

I want to figure out if we should get tested for STDs too?

I need to think about whether I am comfortable using condoms, since two methods work better together (I just read that on a website).

I need to find out from Erika what she would consider using.

(Note: A couple of options)

1) Get birth control from teen health center

PROS

Prevent pregnancy

If condoms, could prevent STDs

Will help us relax knowing we're protected

CONS

Might be embarrassing to go to clinic/drugstore

Might cost a lot of money depending on method

No method works 100% by itself so we should use two methods together (dual use)

Teacher's Guide: What's Your DOGMA?

2) Don't get birth control and hope Erika doesn't get pregnant

PROS

We don't have to do anything

It doesn't cost money

CONS

Big risk for pregnancy

Erika getting pregnant would be a disaster

If there's a risk of pregnancy, there may be a risk of STDs

M - MAKE A DECISION

Based on all of this, you decide that you think it would be best to use two methods, a condom and the pill.

A - ACT ON YOUR DECISION

I'm going to go out and get some condoms and talk with her about how she feels about getting on the pill. I'll offer to go with her to the clinic, too.

Student Worksheet: What's Your DOGMA?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____ Name: _____

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the following scenario. Decide whether you want to represent Kyle or Erika, then walk through the DOGMA decision-making model and make your choice!

Kyle and Erika have been together since the beginning of 8th grade. They've made out a lot and know how to make each other feel good, and haven't really had any complaints about that part of their relationship. It's almost the end of 9th grade, and they both feel ready to start having sex. Neither of them has ever had sex with anyone else before, although Erika performed oral sex on the guy she liked before Kyle (she didn't tell Kyle because she doesn't think that's really sex). Kyle and Erika don't want Erika to get pregnant, but they're not sure what their options are for protection. Neither of them will have sex without some kind of protection.

Character You're Representing (circle one): Kyle Erika

D Determine what the Situation is

O Brainstorm your Options

G Gather Information about and Make a List of Pros and Cons of Those Options

M Make A Decision

A Act on Your Decision

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You're about to leave for school. Your parent/caregiver has left their wallet out on a table and you know you could use an extra \$5 to have at school today. They probably won't miss it and you're late already – do you take it without asking?

Yes

No

You have the same class as another friend, and both sections have a quiz that day. Your friend grabbed an extra copy of the quiz when they were being handed out and offers it to you before class. Do you accept?

Yes

No

You really like your best friend's boyfriend or girlfriend. Like REALLY like them. You'd never say anything to them out of respect to your best friend – but one day, the boyfriend or girlfriend comes up to you and says, "I think I like you instead." Do you tell your best friend?

Yes

No

Your boyfriend or girlfriend is in the bathroom and left their phone out. You hear that they got a text – do you look to see who it's from?

Yes

No



You're walking down the street behind someone, and as they're walking you notice they drop something. Once you catch up, you see it's a Visa gift card. Do you keep the card?

Yes

No

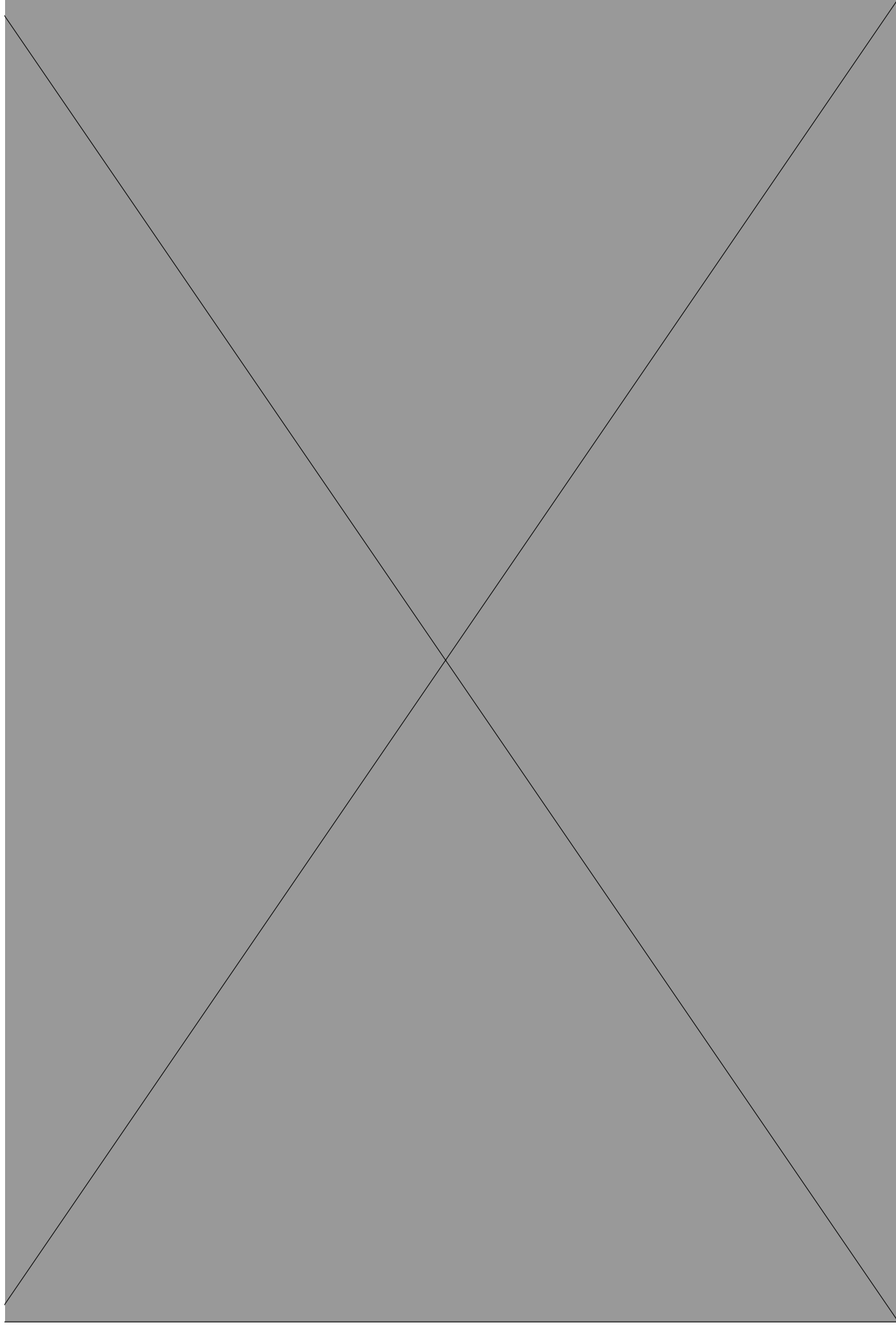
You are really trying to be healthy and have cut out almost all sugar from your life. This has been very difficult, as you are a total sugar fiend! You walk into class early and the room's empty, except for a coffee urn in the back left over from a teachers' meeting... and a plate of donuts. No one will see you – do you take one?

Yes

No



Donut Nutritional Information



Homework: Teach Your Parents/Caregivers Well

Name: _____ Date: _____

INSTRUCTIONS: Please walk through the decision-making model we learned in class today with a parent or caregiver. Then ask them whether they have a decision they need to make, and walk through the model together to see whether it will help them reach their decision.

Parent/Caregiver Name: _____

D – Determine the situation

O – Brainstorm Your Options

G – Gather More Information about and Weigh the Pros and Cons about those Options

M – Make a Decision

A – Act On Your Decision