

## TEACHER PREPARATION

### KEY CONCEPTS

1. Students who have definite life goals are more likely to avoid abuse of drugs and alcohol and avoid premarital sex.
2. Students should now begin to set goals for their lives.

### OBJECTIVES

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

1. List their life goals.
2. Analyze their list of life goals and revise as needed.
3. Write a list of barriers that may be roadblocks to their personal goals.

### KEY TERMS

**Adventure:** a desire for activities that are enjoyable, challenging, or fulfilling, or both.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This lesson continues with another letter from the grandmothers. Students should again be assured that, in a learning community, they can be free to be honest without being embarrassed.

Early adolescents tend not to be life-goal oriented unless they come from families that have a strong goal (especially career goal) orientation. However, this is an important time to challenge your students to think about who they want to be in 10 or 20 years. Without this perspective, students too easily fall prey to experimenting with what they think will make them feel good in the present. And many of these temptations are likely to damage your students' potential.

### MATERIALS / PREPARATION

**In the Box:** Grandmothers' Letter and three folded slips of paper (see beginning of story).

- Students should have their notebooks and pencils ready.
- Each student will need his or her Personal Journal.
- You may want to make your own life goals list before teaching this lesson and read some of these goals to your students during the lesson.

## LESSON

### BEGINNING THE LESSON

Each student should be prepared with a notebook and a pencil.

**Do you remember our previous meeting with Dima, Natasha, and Sasha? Their grandmothers said they wanted to help them along the journey to reach their life goals and to help them live the adventure safely.**

**Let's see what the grandmothers had in mind next for their three grandchildren.**



#### STORY

ABOUT 1 MINUTE

*[Begin reading the story.]*

Dima sat back and smiled as he remembered his grandmother, Olga. The mysterious box was so like her. What could reach beyond the unforgiving boundaries of time and space? He remembered the time she told him she possessed a wonderful device for allowing one to pass through solid walls. He had been all of five years old at the time and begged at once to know what it could possibly be. Olga's eyes had sparkled as she reached deep into her purse and with a great deal of show produced an ordinary house key. Not what he had expected, but it certainly was "a device for passing through solid walls."

Sasha was all for grabbing the box and pouring out its contents onto the table.

Natasha said what all three were thinking, "Let's go for it!" They nodded their assent and looked from the box to their teacher.

"Good," said Tatyana Alexandrovna. She reached into the box and produced three folded slips of paper. On each was written, "What do you want out of life?"

"What has that got to do with time and space travel?" asked Dima.

"And they mentioned some sort of danger. What was that about?" added Sasha.

"You didn't honestly think our grandmas were going to explain what they were up to right away?" offered Natasha.

"Your grandmothers have instructed me to have you all make a list of answers to the question," said Tatyana Alexandrovna. "Once you each have at least 20 items on your list we can proceed."

### EXPLORING THE LESSON



#### LIST OF GOALS

ABOUT 10 MINUTES

**Your Life Goals**

**Let's do as Dima, Sasha, and Natasha were instructed to do and make our own lists of what we want out of life.**

**To get started on your life goals:**

## NOTE:

Move slowly through these levels, giving students time to complete one level before moving on to the next level.

Encouraging your students and reassuring them of the value of their thoughts and the protection of their feelings (for example, no one will make fun of their goals or dreams) are part of building the caring, nurturing classroom environment that will be crucial in the students' success as they complete this curriculum. If students do begin to criticize or make fun of another student, you will need to intervene in a firm, but sensitive, manner.

Allow approximately eight minutes for students to complete their lists.



**= 11 minutes**



## RECONSIDER LISTS

ABOUT 4 MINUTES

Allow students approximately three to five minutes to reconsider their lists.

## NOTE:

If time permits, have each student write several reasons for choosing the dreams and goals they have listed.

- Write down three goals you have for today.
- Write down three goals you have for this week.
- Write three goals you have for this year.
- Write 10 or more life goals.

**You may write as many as you can think of. The more, the better. See how many you can write.**

**Don't try to impress anyone; just be as honest as you can on your lists. Remember that what you want out of life can be something you want to see happen, something material, or something you want to experience.**

**Think about personal, inner goals that you want to achieve, and success-oriented, outer goals that perhaps you would like to accomplish. Your dreams and goals are valuable and important. No one here will make fun of them or embarrass you, nor will you have to show them to anyone unless you choose to share them. You have a few moments to write, and then we'll continue the story.**

*[While the students are making their lists, write on the board, "What do you want most out of life?"]*

*Have students list their life goals on the first page of their notebooks. Walk around the room to observe and offer encouragement to students who need it. Assistance through offering suggestions about what they would like to achieve may be helpful. Do they want to be rich, have children, learn to ski, read 100 classic novels, write a book, become a doctor, travel the world, etc.?*

*Watch the students to see when most seem to have completed their list. Students should complete their lists alone.]*

**Let's take a moment to look at your lists.**

- Do you have inner, personal goals – something you might want to change about yourself, or something you want to see developed in your personality or skills?
- Do you have some outer, success-oriented goals – maybe some things you would like to accomplish or experience? Think of various categories of your life.

- Don't worry if your lists aren't perfect; just do the best you can. And you can be assured that these lists are private and won't be shared with the class, so be honest with yourself about your dreams for your life.

While you're working, begin to think about why you have the dreams and goals that you do. It's not only important to have goals, but to also understand why we desire the things we do.

 = 15 minutes



## EXAMINE YOUR LIST

ABOUT 5 MINUTES

Give students a few moments to write three sentences about what they most want out of life.

Be encouraging; some students may find reducing all of their goals to three sentences a bit frustrating. Direct them to look at the whole picture of what they want to get out of life, at how they most want their lives to turn out in the big picture based upon what they have determined are their life goals. Wait until everyone has completed this task.

*[Point to the question you wrote on the board: "What do you want most out of life?"]*

Examine your lists for a moment and answer the original question, – "What do you want most out of life?" – in three sentences or less. Thoughtfully examine your lists again to help you see how, taking all your goals into consideration, you would like to express your heart's desire – what you want most out of life.

For some this may be a profession. Maybe you want to be an athlete or a businessman or a dancer. Some of you may want to write down the kind of relationships you want to have. Maybe you want to become a good parent or a faithful friend. Or maybe it will be strictly an inner dream. Perhaps you want to become a bold, courageous person. Or perhaps your dream is to learn to be patient and compassionate.

 = 20 minutes



## BRAINSTORM

ABOUT 5 MINUTES

Now that everyone has reduced his or her list lists to primary, private goals, gather with three other students close to you, and as a group brainstorm any obstacles or barriers you can think of that might keep people from reaching their goals. You do not have to share your personal goals with the group. We are looking for general obstacles to goals. Have one person in the group quickly record your group's suggestions. I'll be listening for when you are finished.

 = 25 minutes



## DISCUSSION AND LISTING

ABOUT 10 MINUTES

Let's talk about each of these and see why they are obstacles to achievement.

*[Make a class list of stated obstacles on poster paper to keep posted in the classroom.]*

Discuss obstacles with students, and mention that over the next few weeks these challenges are things they will be learning to overcome, as part of the journey toward genuine freedom and adulthood.

Now I want each of you to write in your notebooks a short list of one to five obstacles that apply to you personally.

- What things do you think are most likely to keep you from gaining what you most want in life?
- What difficulties or challenges will you have to personally overcome to see your dreams come true?

 = 35 minutes



## STORY CONTINUED

ABOUT 1 MINUTE

[Read the letter from the grandmothers.]

Dear Ones,

At this point, we don't know if you answered our question. Perhaps you've never really thought about it before. Or perhaps you have followed the same path we did. Olga thought she'd die if a certain boy didn't start paying attention to her when she was your age – he didn't and she didn't (die, that is). Ludmilla just wanted peace at home – her parents never seemed to get along. And Yelena would have traded just about anything to win a particular dance competition. The point is, we each went from one thing to the next, thinking each time that this was the answer to life's deepest desire. Yelena and her partner won the contest; but win or lose, there was still an unmet hunger in each of us that remained.

After a lifetime of pursuits, we all agree that the answer to what the heart longs for is wrapped up in two things: 1) having a clear understanding of your personal goal; and, 2) the obstacles that can stand in the way of reaching them. Miss either one and life is significantly diminished. Of course "romance" and "adventure" are slippery terms. It is amazing how many distortions exist regarding both. As a friend of ours once quipped, "Romance and adventure are sex, drugs and rock and roll!" But are they really?

Your Grandmothers

 = 36 minutes

## ENDING THE LESSON



## PERSONAL JOURNAL ACTIVITY

ABOUT 9 MINUTES

Today you will make your first special entry in your Personal Journal – and it is a very important one!

Turn to the first page in your Personal Journal and give it the title: "My Dreams." I want you to write your answer to the question we have been considering this hour, "What do you want most out of life?"

You may want to simply copy the answer you wrote earlier. But maybe as you've listened to more of the grandmothers' story and as you've discussed obstacles to goals in your groups, you now have a somewhat different idea of your life dreams.

## NOTE:

Give students a few minutes to also write their list of life goals in their Personal Journals. At this point, they may want to group them in various meaningful categories which they choose for themselves. If time permits, they could also list personal obstacles they see for their goals.

Before dismissing your students, remember to dictate the Parent-Teacher questions to them.



**= 45 minutes**

**So, if you want to write something different from what you put in your notebook earlier, you may.**

**As we end today, begin to think about the freedom you will need to achieve your goals. Freedom is what you gain as you become more responsible for your own decisions and the accompanying actions.**

**Responsibility is demonstrated each time you do the right thing, even when no one else is around. You decide to do the right thing and take the correct action. What can you personally do to create opportunities that would help you along the way? Are there choices you make to get closer to your goals, or habits that you could practice?**

**Think about these ideas as we look forward to our next few lessons. We're headed off on a great journey! Next time we're going to explore the difference between mature freedom and immature freedom.**

## PARENT-TEACHER CONNECTION

### For Family Discussion:

1. Did you have any goals when you were younger? If you did, did you reach them? If so, what were the sacrifices you made to reach them? If you did not reach them, explain to your adolescent why not. (Did your goals change? Were they unrealistic? etc.)
2. Do you know someone else who set goals as a youth (maybe an old school friend) and who achieved those dreams?
3. What can you do as parents to help keep your adolescent's dreams alive?