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## Lesson 1

### *The Mysterious Library – Your Adventure Begins*

#### TEACHER PREPARATION

##### KEY CONCEPTS

Risk is a part of life. It is important to assume risks beneficial to life growth.

##### OBJECTIVES

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

1. recognize the pros and cons of taking risks.
2. realize peer pressure in risk-taking can be positive or negative.

##### KEY TERMS

**Risk:** an exposure to the chance of injury, loss or benefit.

##### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Creating a classroom environment that will provide safety, confidentiality and freedom of student expression is paramount to the success of this curriculum. As the authority in the classroom, the teacher must create such an environment with simple but straightforward boundaries or rules. Some suggestions for your classroom may include:

1. The person talking receives our undivided attention and appreciation.
2. Only responses that are respectful and encouraging are allowed when directed by peers to other students in the class.

Open and honest discussion about topics is encouraged even when the topic is difficult to discuss. Develop as much confidentiality as can be expected by the age of your students. Some students will be willing to share with you, but not in the general classroom. This should be allowed and encouraged.

Appropriate consequences for breaking these rules should be developed by you and discussed with your students before beginning this curriculum.

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## MATERIALS/PREPARATION

1. In **Exploring the Lesson**, you will need tape, a marker, baskets (or buckets), and wads of paper to use as balls.
2. In **Applying the Lesson**, the students will need their journals (or designated paper), and pencils or pens.
3. In **Going Deeper**, you will need a few small “treasures” to use in a game (a piece of candy, small toy, ribbon, etc.)

## LESSON

### BEGINNING THE LESSON

*[Say to the students:]* Are you ready to go on an adventure? Today, we will be starting an exciting journey with three children as they explore the world through the door of a mysterious library!

They will face many decisions on their adventure. We will see how the choices they make will affect their dreams for the future. We are going to talk about our dreams and hopes for the future, too! And how decisions we make will affect our lives. We are going to call this class *DreamMakers-DreamBreakers*. Let’s meet the children! Hector, Trish and Dugan will begin their adventure and discover the mysteries that can be found in rooms full of books.

### READINESS (5 minutes)

**Story:** *The Librarian and the Map of Wonders*

*[Read to the students:]* **Chapter 1 – The First Step**

“Who goes to the library anymore?” asked Trish.

“Yeah, you can find anything you want on the Internet,” mused Hector.

“Do we even have a library?” asked Dugan, a lanky boy who was starting to show the first signs of facial hair.

The three friends could never recall how the subject of the library came up in the first place. But the day they decided to set foot inside the library was the day their lives were changed forever.

“Almost every town has a library,” laughed Trish. “I think they hide it behind an unmarked door in the school principal’s office and make students sit in there as punishment.”

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“Why would that be punishment?” asked Hector who had an orderly mind that didn’t match his unruly hair.

“It is boring as death to be stuck in a library. Nothing to do but read!” groaned Trish.

“I don’t think reading is boring,” stated Hector.

“No, I don’t mean that!” replied Trish. “It’s just that all the books in a library are old and out of date. You know, you read and read and nothing ever happens.”

“How do you know that?” asked Dugan. “Have you ever been in our school library?”

“Well, not exactly,” said Trish feeling a bit defensive. “But it just figures.”

“I wonder where the library is?” mused Hector.

They asked a few of the students they met in the hallways if they knew where the library was located. All they got were blank stares. Finally, they ran into a teacher who told them the library had been moved to a storm shelter underneath the school and could only be reached through a metal door located behind the main building, down a narrow set of stairs.

“I bet no one in our class has ever been down here,” boasted Dugan as he tried the weathered green door. “Hey! It’s locked!” he complained.

“Knock and it shall be opened,” commanded Trish as she thumped the door with her fist.

“Guess there’s no one home,” said Hector. “We’re wasting our time.” The three were halfway up the narrow steps when they heard the swish of the door open on well-oiled hinges.

“May I help you?” a voice asked from behind the door.

“Uh ... we, uh, wanted to check out the library,” answered Dugan pulling away from the other two and approaching the door.

“Well, do come in!” the voice encouraged.

“Is this a good time?” asked Hector from his place halfway up the stairs.

“Oh yes! It is always a good time to visit the collective wisdom of the ages,” said the strange voice.

“Are you the Librarian?” asked Trish.

“I seem to remember being given that title at some point in the past,” replied the voice.

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Behind the door, they saw the floor of a dimly lit entrance and after that, only shadows. “Doesn’t seem to be enough light to actually read anything down here,” offered Trish.

“Oh, light is available when it is truly needed,” assured the voice.

**EXPLORE** (30 minutes)

**For Younger Elementary Students**

*[Simplify the game below by using only five pieces of tape.]*

**For Older Elementary Students**

*[Place the basket or bucket in the middle of the floor. Take two steps away from the basket and put a piece of tape on the floor. Write “1” on the tape. Take another step away, place a piece of tape on the floor and write “2” on it. Continue to repeat this process until you have placed 15 pieces of tape or as many pieces as the space will allow. You may make similar markings coming off four sides of the basket so four teams may play at once. Divide the class into even teams. Give each team three balls of wadded up paper.]*

***[Say to the students:] Today, we are going to play a game to see what kind of risks you will take to score points. Each of you will have three chances to throw your paper wad into the basket. You can choose where on the tape markers you want to stand. You may choose three different markers or stay in the same place for all three throws. The decision is up to you. If you are successful, you will receive the score according to the number on the marker tape you are standing on.***

*[Give each person a few trial throws before the game begins. One person could be assigned to be the referee to make sure each person stands behind the line. Another person could be the scorekeeper. The scorekeeper will write down the scores for each person as they throw their paper wad. For example, if a student throws from line 5 and gets it in the basket, he or she receives five points. If a student throws from line 3 and gets it in the basket, he or she receives three points. At the end of the game, total the scores for each team to see who won.]*

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**DISCOVER** (15 minutes)

*[Say to the students:]* Let's discuss what we discovered when we played the game. If you threw your paper wad from one of the lines that was close to the basket, tell us what made you choose to throw from a close place? If you threw your paper wad from a line that was far away from the basket, tell us why you chose to take that risk? Did you think about what your team members would say if you made the basket or missed the basket? How did this affect your choice? Do you think it should have affected your choice?

*[Begin a discussion about peer pressure and whether peers should help you make decisions. This will be discussed in greater detail later in the curriculum.]*

*[Say to the students:]* If you were to play the game again, would you throw from the same places or would you make a change? Why or why not?

**APPLY** (15 minutes)

**For Younger Elementary Students**

*[Say to the students:]* Each of you has a journal we are going to use in this class. Today, I want you to write in your journal your answer, either yes or no, to the following eight questions I will ask you. Take a minute to number your sheet 1–8.

*[You may write the words yes and no on the board.]*

1. Did you enjoy the game?
2. Did you stand where you knew you could get the wad of paper in the basket?
3. Did you stand where there was a chance you might miss getting the wad of paper into the basket?
4. Did you think about what your team would say if you missed?
5. Did you take a risk in this game?
6. Is it a good idea to take a risk?
7. Is it a good idea to take a risk to win the game?
8. Thinking about the story we just read, would you be willing to step through that door and go into the library?

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*[Lead a discussion to answer why or why not for question 8 as well as some of their answers to the other questions.]*

### **For Older Elementary Students**

*[Say to the students:]* Each of you has a journal we are going to use in this class. Today, I would like for you to copy this question in your journal and take time to write down your thoughts.

**What did you learn about yourself through this game?**

Then, think about the story we read earlier about Hector, Trish and Dugan. We left them faced with a decision of whether to step through the dimly lit door of the library where they heard a mysterious voice inviting them to explore. Would you be willing to step through that door? Why or why not? Write your thoughts in your journal. *[After your students have completed their journal writing, lead them in a discussion about their answers. Always invite your students to share. Do not pressure them to share what they have written in their personal journals.]*

**SHARE** (10 minutes)

*[Say to the students:]* Life is full of risks. You are taking a risk as you reach out to make a new friend; you are taking a risk as you go to a new school or a new classroom. Risks can open the door to wonderful new possibilities or be a doorway to bad choices.

### **For Younger Elementary Students**

*[Lead a discussion about taking risks and share a time when you took a risk. What happened? Ask your students if they have ever taken a risk and what happened as a result.]*

### **For Older Elementary Students**

*[A teaching strategy you can use over and over again in your classroom is called **Think/Pair/Share**. It simply means you give your students an assignment to think through, then you ask them to pair up with a classmate nearby and share their answer. Use **Think/Pair/Share** as a way of having your students share about a time they took a risk and what happened as a result.]*

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## ENDING THE LESSON

*[We discussed how we all face times when we have to decide whether to take a risk or not as we make decisions. It is vital for you to help your students understand how important it is they think about the consequences of their actions as they consider their decisions. Help them realize sometimes we need to take risks in life.]*

## GOING DEEPER (optional)

*[Before students arrive in the classroom, hide one to three items to be the “treasures.” They can be anything, a piece of candy, a small toy, a ribbon — whatever is readily available. The hiding places need to be somewhere students will not discover these items by accident, but hidden in places that can easily be described by whispering in a student’s ear.]*

*[Say to the students:]* **We are going to play a game called “King and Counselor.” I’ll need three volunteers.** *[Choose one of the students to be the Treasure Hunter, another to be the King and the third to be the Counselor.]* **The Treasure Hunter is going to try to find a “treasure” I’ve hidden in this classroom. The King and the Counselor are going to give the Treasure Hunter clues to help him or her find the treasure. But only one of them will really be trying to help the Hunter find the treasure. The other one will be trying to mislead and keep the Hunter from finding the treasure. Now, I’m going to take the King and the Counselor outside the room [or to a corner] for a minute to give them instructions.**

*[Quietly explain to the King and the Counselor that the King is to help the Hunter and the Counselor is to hinder the search. Then tell both of them where the first treasure is hidden. Tell the King not to give away the location too quickly. You may want to suggest some subtle clues the King might use. The Counselor is to say clues to try to lead the Hunter away from the treasure. Again, you may want to suggest some things the Counselor might say. Tell both they should try to not give away which of them is helping and which is not. They are to take turns giving clues to the Hunter.]*

*[Return to the rest of the class and say:]* **Let the treasure hunt begin!**

*[When the first treasure is found, thank the three students, have the King and Counselor sit down, but have the Hunter stay in front of the class and*

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*lead him or her in this discussion:]* **When did you figure out the King was the one whom you could trust? How did it feel not knowing whether you could trust the King or the Counselor? Would you have liked it better if I had told you who was trying to help you and who was misleading you?**

*[If you have time you can play the game one or two more times, with three other students each time. If so, wait and ask the questions above to all the Hunters after all the games are over.]*

*[Say to the students:]* **One of the most important things all of us have to learn is whom we should trust and whom we should not trust. That is the reason this class is called *DreamMakers-DreamBreakers*. There are some people in your life right now, and there will be more in the future, who will help you reach your dreams — will help you “find the treasures” in life. But there are also some, whether they mean to or not, who will lead you away from your dreams. Our goal in this class is to help you learn to know the difference.**



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## PARENT-TEACHER CONNECTION

You probably already have regular conversations with your child, but when parents get busy, many times the conversations are all about what the child should do or change, and often they become one-way conversations where the parent talks and the child listens (or as they get used to these talks, the child may just pretend to listen). The *DreamMakers-DreamBreakers* curriculum is especially important as it focuses on character development and helping your child make wise choices in life. Your child is regularly introduced to some new ideas and challenges in school. Below are some conversation starters, questions and challenges designed to encourage open conversation between you and your child.

This week, we discussed the pros and cons of taking risks in life. Discuss with your child some of the risks in life we may encounter. The risk can be something simple like reaching out to make a new friend or something complex like whether to stand up for someone who is being bullied or doing the right thing even when you know some people will not like it.

### Questions you might ask your child:

1. Can you tell me the story your teacher read? (Three friends, Trish, Hector and Dugan, risk entering a strange library.)
2. How did the class explore taking a risk? (They played a game about risks by throwing paper wads into a basket or bucket from different distances.)
3. What kind of risks might you want to talk with me about before taking them? (Encourage your child to think about dangerous risks, especially temptations by friends to do something he or she thinks might be dangerous or harmful. Explain even if the temptation sounds exciting, you want your child to talk about it with you before trying it out because you love him or her and have the responsibility for their safety.)

Parents, describe a risk you took and the results.



