

## **TEACHER PREPARATION**

### **KEY CONCEPTS**

1. Looking for freedom alone will not help us achieve our dreams and can lead to a great deal of pain.
2. Freedom needs to be accompanied by responsibility:
  - To ourselves.
  - To others.
3. Freedom without responsibility has one or more of these characteristics:
  - It looks easy (it doesn't require much effort).
  - It appears that it can achieve quick results.
  - It seems to have no consequences.
  - It is embraced without much thought.

### **OBJECTIVES**

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

1. Explain that freedom alone will not lead to the attainment of their dreams.
2. Convince a classmate that freedom should always be joined with responsibility.
3. Recognize immature ideas about freedom.

### **KEY TERMS**

**Immature freedom** is any concept of freedom that does not include making responsible choices.

**Mature freedom** includes making responsible choices.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Pursuing freedom without any external or internal restraints often leads to such problems as addiction, broken relationships, legal problems, and social anarchy. Trying to live a life of freedom without making responsible choices actually leads to a loss of freedom and opportunity.

### **MATERIALS / PREPARATION**

**In the Box:** Grandmothers' Letter and a paper airplane.

**Note:** You may want to make a large paper airplane with the words "Freedom" and "Responsibility" on the wings to hang or pin up in the room. In future class sessions, you can point to the plane and ask, "Is what we just experienced here in the class an example of freedom with responsibility or without?" (Is it mature or immature freedom?)

# LESSON

## BEGINNING THE LESSON

In our previous sessions, we began to look at our own dreams. One of the things you are going to need if you want to fulfill your dreams is freedom. But what exactly is freedom? We'll begin to answer that question by listening to some more of our story about the three grandmothers.



### INTERACTIVE STORY

ABOUT 4 MINUTES

*[Read the following story:]*

“What do our grandmothers have for us today?” asked Dima.

Tatyana Aleksandrovna pulled out three sheets of paper and handed one to each of them.

“More writing!” complained Sasha. “After making up those lists last time, I was hoping for something a bit different.”

“You won’t be writing much today,” encouraged Tatyana Aleksandrovna. “The instructions are to make a paper airplane of your own design out of the piece of paper.”

The boys set to work making tight-winged airplanes that looked more like missiles than anything else. Natasha tried her hand at a broad-winged model that could perform flips and spirals.

When they finished, Tatyana Aleksandrovna said, “Let’s see how they fly.”

Dima and Sasha launched theirs at the same time. Both flew straight as darts, finally sliding across the floor after a fairly long flight. Natasha carefully bent the back edges of her plane’s wings and gently tossed it into the air. Her plane did two loops before hitting a chair and falling to the ground.

“Not bad, Natasha!” said Sasha.

*[At this point divide the class into groups of four or five students. Each group is to make one airplane. Give your students about two minutes to fly their airplanes, being careful not to throw them at other students. You could have each group stand in a different row toward the back of the room, and then have each team compete to see whose plane flies all the way to the front wall.*

*Continue reading the story after taking another letter from the box.]*

*Dear Ones,*

*Ever meet anyone who didn’t secretly wish they could fly? Not as a passenger in an airplane, but really fly — like a bird or by magic. Perhaps you’ve even had dreams where you were free to fly. Sasha,*

*your grandfather, Alexei, worked in the airplane factory in a northern city where they made fighter jets — they were such beautiful planes. His job was attaching the wings to the bodies of the planes — kind of important, don't you think?*

*Funny thing, he always attached two wings to each plane. All those planes they made, and not once did they ever try to fly a jet with only one wing attached. Tell me, which wing is more important, the left or right wing? Silly question. They are both critical. Lose either one and the plane crashes or never gets off the ground.*

*I suppose there are a number of things we could write on our "wings". Things absolutely critical to life. But for today let's write two of the most important on the wings of the paper airplanes you just made.*

*On the right wing, write "Freedom".*

*On the left wing, write "Responsibility".*

*Now tear one of the wings off your plane.*

Dima immediately ripped off the right wing of his plane. Sasha carefully creased the paper close to the body of his plane and made a straight tear that removed the left wing from his plane. And Natasha took a deep breath and, with short rips, pulled the right wing off her paper plane.

*"Now try to fly what is left of your planes," continued the letter.*

The three launched what was left of their planes with predictable results. The boys' planes veered off and quickly fell to the ground. Natasha's plane fluttered like a leaf incapable of purposeful flight. None of them came close to "flying" as they did when they were first launched.

*[At this point, allow the students about two minutes to write the words "Freedom" on one wing and "Responsibility" on the other; tear off one wing, and attempt to fly their plane. When complete, continue the story.]*

What do you think is the point your grandmothers were trying to make?" asked Tatyana Alexandrovna.

"Obviously," said Sasha, "a one-winged plane won't fly."

"We already knew that," said Natasha. "But how did you feel when you were asked to tear up your planes?" asked Tatyana Alexandrovna.

"It was easy!" exclaimed Dima.

"Actually, I found it a bit uncomfortable," replied Natasha.

"Yeah, you're right," said Sasha and Dima at exactly the same time. They all laughed and looked at their teacher.

"So," said Tatyana Alexandrovna, "you've learned at least three things from this little experiment."

She wrote on the board:

- You can't fly with only one wing.
- It is easy to pull off a wing.
- It hurts to lose a wing.

"Hey, all this stuff about airplanes was pretty good. I wonder what the grandmothers will come up with next?" said Dima.

“Wait and see,” replied the teacher.

Write the three points on the board.

*[To reinforce these three points above, write them on the board as well.]*

 = 10 minutes

## EXPLORING THE LESSON



### DEFINITIVE LIST

ABOUT 7 MINUTES

#### What Freedom Means to You

Have the class come up with a list.

In the story of the airplane, you were asked to write the word “Freedom” on a wing of your plane. In this lesson, we are going to talk about freedom and learn why freedom, on its own, is not enough to achieve our dreams in life.

**Let’s try to define freedom – the kind of freedom an adult has. What do you think mature adult freedom means?**

*[Here is a list of possible student responses you may use to promote discussion:*

- *Nobody tells me what to do.*
- *I have enough money to buy anything I want.*
- *I can have a fast car.*
- *I don’t have to do any household chores.*
- *I can have my own place to live and do what I want.*
- *I don’t have to go to school.*

*Have as many students share as possible.*

*If the students’ suggested definitions don’t bring out the idea of personal freedoms, ask:]*

**How about you as an individual? What would freedom look like in your own personal life?**

**Does the idea of being free appeal to you?**

**What would you like to be free to do?**

 = 17 minutes



## FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY EQUATIONS

ABOUT 8 MINUTES

### Analyzing Freedom

Let's create some equations that represent some kinds of personal freedoms and what happens if we do not combine our freedoms with responsibilities. These would be like trying to fly an airplane with only one wing. For example:

1. Watch TV + neglect homework = poor grades.
2. Go to a party + stay up late = sleep in class.
3. Visit friends + lie to parents about where you were = parents won't let you go next time.

*[Have students give more equations and write them on a chart board.]*

The idea is that the portion of the equation before the plus sign is a "freedom". The portion between the plus sign and the equal sign is a lack of responsibility and the portion after the equal sign is the result of freedom without responsibility.

*[Your goal is to guide the students to the idea that mature freedom means considering the consequences of your actions and making responsible choices. If they suggest other inadequate definitions, ask them to think through how their view of freedom might play out in the adult world.]*

### Analyze Your Equations

- Mature freedom includes making responsible choices. Being responsible means thinking ahead and trying to see where your choices might lead. If your choice could hurt you, you modify your choice. That is mature, responsible freedom.
- Mature freedom requires limits. Freedom without limits can hurt us badly.
- Mature freedom always includes responsibility.
- Mature freedom means that we are responsible to exercise our freedom in such a way so as not to hurt ourselves or someone else.

Immature or incomplete freedom does not really make us free. Instead it ends up limiting our freedom or putting us in bondage. It can end up hurting you or someone else.



= 25 minutes



## REWRITING

ABOUT 8 MINUTES

The students may find this difficult, so focus on freedoms that are concrete and have them come up with very specific limits that reflect responsible decisions.

Let's go back to the list of various ideas of freedom. Are these *mature* or *immature* ideas of freedom?

Now let's rewrite the immature ideas of freedom so they become mature expressions of freedom.

You will need to add limits (i.e., responsibilities) to the freedom so you achieve your desire to not allow your freedom to hurt yourself or someone else.

Here's an example:

If the freedom is, "I want to stay out late and not be told when to come home," a limit might be, "I won't stay out late every night; otherwise I will get so tired that I will not do well in the soccer match on Friday night or do well in school."

Here's another example:

If the freedom is, "I don't want my parents telling me not to take drugs," a healthy limit would be, "I need to find out in advance why my parents don't want me to take drugs. Is there something in taking drugs that could hurt me?"



= 33 minutes



## CRITERIA LIST

ABOUT 7 MINUTES

Tests for Mature and Immature Freedom:

Write **FREEDOMS** on the board as a heading. Create two columns below the heading and write "**Mature**" and "**Immature**".

Write list for Immature Freedom on the board.

Our final activity is to build a list of things to look for when we think of a freedom we desire or when someone else offers us a freedom. We need a way to quickly determine whether this is a mature freedom or an immature or incomplete freedom. Remember our goal is to only have freedoms that don't hurt us or someone else.

Let's start with a test for immature freedoms. What are the things we need to look for to tell whether a freedom is an immature freedom?

*[Discuss each one to make sure that it is appropriate and the majority agrees before writing it on the board. The list for immature freedoms should include:*

- *It looks easy (it doesn't require much effort).*
- *It appears that it can achieve quick results.*
- *It seems to have no consequences for me.*
- *It looks like an exciting adventure.*
- *It is embraced without much thought.]*

Now, let's create a test for mature freedoms.

Write list for Mature Freedoms on the board.

**Remember, mature freedom doesn't stop me from making choices. Rather, mature freedom includes making responsible choices.**

*[The list should include:*

- *It doesn't put me or others at risk for physical injury.*
- *It doesn't cause injury to me or another human being.*
- *It's legal.*
- *It helps me achieve my dreams.*
- *It doesn't create obstacles to achieving dreams.*
- *It doesn't damage relationships with family and friends.]*

**Let's see whether our tests work.**

**"Kostya and several friends are sitting under a tree trying to cool off on a hot summer's day. Kostya has an idea. They could be a lot cooler swimming in the river. There are places to dive into the water. He says, 'Hey, everyone, I have a great idea. Let's go to the river now.' Some friends say, 'Great idea!' – and they get up to go. A few are uncertain, but Kostya pressures them into going."**

**Tell me whether Kostya is exercising genuine or counterfeit freedom and give your reasons."**

*[Encourage the students to use the tests listed on the board.]*

**This example fits all the tests of an immature freedom. Use the mature freedom tests to show the problems.**

- **Can everyone swim?**
- **Is it possible to hit your head on a rock while diving?**
- **Shouldn't your parents at least be aware of your plans?**

**Here's another example.**

**"You are out dancing with your friends and have had a good time for several hours. Your friend, Viktor, pulls you aside and tells you that you and he have been invited back to Anatoly's apartment. That sounds like fun, you think to yourself. You don't know Anatoly very well, so you ask Viktor about Anatoly. What's he like? What will we be doing at the apartment? Will there be alcoholic beverages or drugs present?"**

Are you exercising mature or immature freedom? Look at the tests on the board and evaluate the story.

Yes, you are showing mature freedom because you didn't agree to go immediately. You asked about Anatoly's character and you recognized that if they were planning to take drugs it would be very difficult to say no. You acted responsibly by asking questions to make sure that you didn't do anything that could spoil your life.

Mature freedom includes making responsible choices.

 = 40 minutes

## ENDING THE LESSON



### PERSONAL NOTEBOOK WRITING 5 MINUTES

We will end our lesson today with you writing in your notebook. Draw a small picture of the airplane and write "Freedom" on one wing and "Responsibility" on the other. Write "Dream Flight" on the body of the plane. Then, write a sentence that describes what genuine freedom is.

Finally, copy down the list of how to detect immature freedom.

Next time, we'll look at how habits can help you become free and also how they can make you a prisoner that takes away your freedom.

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

 = 45 minutes



## RESOURCES

### GOING DEEPER

Today we learned that true freedom and, in fact, all privileges carry with them responsibility. Jesus once told a story that showed how this works.

*[This story is found in Matthew 25:14-29. Either read it directly from the Bible or read the following paraphrase to the students, or read both:]*

**“A man was getting ready to leave on a long trip. He called together his workers and gave them money to invest for him while he was gone. He gave five bags of gold to one, two bags of gold to another, and one bag of gold to the last – dividing it in proportion to their abilities – and then left on his trip. The man who received the five bags of gold began immediately to invest the money and soon doubled it. The man with two bags of gold also went right to work and doubled the money. But the fellow who received only the one bag of gold dug a hole in the ground and hid the master’s money for safekeeping.**

**“After a long time, their master returned from his trip and called them to give an account of how they had used his money. The one to whom he had entrusted the five bags of gold said, ‘Sir, you gave me five bags of gold to invest, and I have doubled the amount.’ The master was full of praise. ‘Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let’s celebrate together!’**

**“Next came the one who had received the two bags of gold, with the report, ‘Sir, you gave me two bags of gold to invest, and I have doubled the amount.’ The master said, ‘Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let’s celebrate together!’**

**“Then, the man with the one bag of gold came and said, ‘Sir, I know you are a hard man, harvesting crops you didn’t plant and gathering crops you didn’t cultivate. I was afraid I would lose your money, so I hid it in the earth and here it is.’**

**“But the master replied, ‘You wicked and lazy worker! You think I’m a hard man, do you, harvesting crops I didn’t plant and gathering crops I didn’t cultivate? Well, you should at least have put my money into the bank so I could have some interest. Take the money from this man and give it to the one with the 10 bags of gold. To those who use well what they are given, even more will be given, and they will have an abundance. But from those who are unfaithful, even what little they have will be taken away.’ ”**

*[Spend a few minutes discussing the story with your students. Ask them what emotions each of the men might be feeling after the master returned. Ask them if they think what the master did for the last man was fair. Why or why not?]*

## **RADIO INTERVIEW ACTIVITY**

*[Now divide the class into three or more groups. Each group is to design and present to the rest of the class a “radio interview”. An interviewer can have on his or her “show” one or more of the four characters from the story. They should ask why the “guests” behaved as they did and what they were feeling. Do they think the whole thing ended fairly?]*

## **FOCUS POINT**

Be sure to leave time for discussion at the end of the learning activity so your students can discuss the connection between the learning activity and the lesson. Listen to see whether they seemed to understand the key points listed. If you sense that one or more of these points may have been lost, be sure to guide the discussion to make sure they get these main ideas.

- 1. With great privilege comes great responsibility.**
- 2. When we act responsibly, we tend to gain more privilege (and, with it, more responsibility).**
- 3. When we act irresponsibly, we tend to lose our privileges.**

## PARENT-TEACHER CONNECTION

### **For Family Discussion:**

This lesson dealt with the importance of responsibility and freedom. Discuss with your adolescent what additional freedoms he or she desires. These should be balanced with additional responsibilities. For example, if your adolescent picks up the responsibility of fixing the dinner meal one day per week, he or she might be given the freedom to be with his or her friends another night of the week.

