

TEACHER PREPARATION

KEY CONCEPTS

1. Students need to understand the importance of saying “no” to activities that could harm them physically, emotionally, or psychologically.
2. Students need to learn when they can say “no” and how to cope with the situations in which they have difficulty saying “no”.
3. Some students need to learn how to say “no” effectively.

OBJECTIVES

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

1. Develop short skits to illustrate the importance of saying “no” in certain situations.
2. Have confidence that they can say “no” with their words or actions.
3. Describe how difficult it is for people to stand against pressure from the group.

MATERIALS/PREPARATION

There is no item in the box for this lesson. **No Grandmothers’ Letter.**

Ten beans for each student in your class. You may substitute buttons, marbles, pebbles, or whatever small tokens you can easily gather. For the purpose of the Bean Game, the tokens do not need to be identified, or even the same size, as long as they are small enough for a student to easily carry as many as 20 tokens.

Prepare the “Temptation to Drink” skit. Before class, you should have arranged for some older students (possibly from a drama class) to prepare a short skit or play to illustrate the following scenario:

- Boris has accepted an invitation to go over to a friend’s house to watch a soccer game on TV. It is Saturday afternoon, and Valery’s parents are not home.
- At half-time, Valery goes to the refrigerator for some snacks and sees his parents’ supply of beer and calls out to Boris, “Come and see what I’ve found.”
- Valery offers a beer to Boris. Boris says, “No”, but Valery decides to drink the alcohol.
- Boris realizes that if he stays longer, he may be tempted to drink the alcohol also, because of the pressure Valery is exerting on him.
- Boris feels pressured to say “yes”, so to avoid straining their friendship, he decides to leave and finish watching the soccer game at his own house.

LESSON

BEGINNING THE LESSON

INTRODUCTION

2 MINUTES

There is no letter from the grandmothers today.

Last time, we saw how powerful an influence the media can be in luring us into things that can be dream breakers. And several lessons ago, in the first lesson of this unit on Life Skills, we saw the power of peer pressure. Today, we’re going to learn about and actually practice one of the most powerful skills anyone can ever learn to combat peer pressure. Today, we’re going to practice the potent art of saying “no”.

Few of us would intentionally stick our arm into the cage of a hungry bear or jump in front of a moving automobile.

[Of course, some boys this age might answer “yes” to these dangerous activities to prove they are manly. Also, you may make mention of other dangerous situations that pertain to your particular city or circumstance.]

In these circumstances, saying the word “no” would not have much effect. Sometimes the best way to say “no” is with your actions. So during this lesson, we will discuss the importance of saying “no” with your actions and your words.

When we were younger, our mothers often said “no” to keep us from harmful activities; however, today we will be looking at each of us choosing to say “no” for ourselves.

Few of us realize how easy it is for us to be manipulated into saying “yes”, even when we don’t want to say “yes”.



GET YOU TO SAY “YES” ACTIVITY

ABOUT 8 MINUTES

If you have time, you may want to choose one student and act out the following example to demonstrate how the game is played:

I am going to give each of you 10 beans *[or marbles or small pebbles or other small tokens you have]*. Then, you will be assigned a partner. You and your partner should engage in a conversation about your favorite teacher or your favorite hobby.

The goal of this activity is for you to keep your beans. Each time in the conversation that your partner gets you to say the word “yes”, you must give up one of your beans.

[Beginning of optional section:]

Teacher: “Were you in school yesterday?”

Student: “Yes.”

Teacher: “Give me a bean.”

Teacher: “I’m sorry. I tricked you, didn’t I?”

Student: “Uh-huh.”

Teacher: “Give me another bean.”

Teacher: “Would you like me to give these two beans back to you?”

Student: (Nods affirmatively)

Teacher: “Give me a bean.”

Teacher (to the whole class): “Do you understand how to play the game?”

Students: Many nod or say some form of “yes”.

Teacher: “You all owe me a bean!”

[End of optional section.]

We will continue the game for three minutes. At the end of the three minutes, whoever of the two of you has the most beans wins.

Note: Another option for this game is to allow students to move around the room freely engaging in conversation with whomever they wish and the one with the most beans wins.

 = 10 minutes

EXPLORING THE LESSON

TRANSITION

You can see how readily we use these words in our everyday language. Actually, we often say various versions of “yes” without thinking before we say them. I’m sure that three or four of you can tell the class some creative ways you got your partner to say “yes” during the game.

[Allow several to share examples.]



WHICH LINE IS LONGER ACTIVITY

ABOUT 5 MINUTES

Note: Be sure to choose a student who will not be easily embarrassed.

Draw one vertical line about 100 centimeters long (Line 1).

[In the next activity, students will see how easily their friends give in to pressure to say “yes” when they know they need to say “no”.

Send a student from your class to the school office (or somewhere else) on some errand. While the student is gone, draw two straight lines on the chalkboard, so they do not intersect. Do not put the lines too close together or allow them to touch one another.

Explain to the class that when you ask them which line is longer, they should pick Line 2. When the student returns, ask the class which line is longer.]

Draw a horizontal line 90 centimeters long (Line 2).

ALTERNATE METHOD:

If you have so small a board that the lines would be too close, you can try having two students hold two pieces of string of nearly the same length at opposite sides of the room, both keeping their strings parallel to the floor.

[Say, “Raise your hands if you think Line 1 is longer.” Of course, the student who was out of the room will raise his hand. Then ask, “How many think Line 2 is longer?”]

The rest of the students will raise their hands. Ask the single student whether he would like to change his answer – most of the time the student will answer “yes”. Even if the student does not say “yes”, you can ask whether it caused him or her to rethink, question, or have less confidence in his or her answer. Ask whether he or she was tempted to just agree with the class.]

(Name of student) changed his or her answer (or was tempted to change) because of the influence of the group. Often, friends or acquaintances pressure us to say “yes” when we should say “no”. We can say “no” with our words or our actions, or both.



= 15 minutes



**TEMPTATION TO
DRINK SKIT**
ABOUT 10 MINUTES

You could also expand on this skit by asking these questions:

[Activity – see Classroom Preparation.

Tell the class that there is going to be short skit. Have the two oldest students enact the skit. Thank them when they are finished.

Then, ask the class as a whole:]

What other responses might Boris have made?

1. In the same situation, would you do what Boris did or something else?
2. What would have made the decision not to stay and drink easier?

[Example: If Boris had another friend who was also leaving.]

3. What would have made the decision more difficult?

[Hint to teacher: If the group were bigger or his friends had pressured him to stay.]

4. Can you think of another way Boris could say “no” to drinking or getting drunk without risking the loss of Valery’s friendship?



= 25 minutes



PRACTICING “No” ACTIVITY

ABOUT 8 MINUTES

Do’s and Don’ts for saying “NO”

Not only Boris but also Valery should have the strength to say “no”. A real friend is one who is strong enough to love, give, and not manipulate.

Remember that love wants the best for the other person – male or female. A person who manipulates others is a taker, not a giver, and uses other people to get what he or she wants. Manipulative pressure is always destructive, sooner or later.

I’ll let you in on a little secret. The secret is so simple that, at first, you may have trouble believing it will work. The secret is this: A simple “no” is much more powerful than a long string of excuses and explanations.

Here is the reason: Whenever you explain or make excuses as to why you don’t want to do something, it is like giving the one who’s trying to persuade you an invitation. An excuse is like an invitation for him or her to argue with you. But a simple “no”, on the other hand, doesn’t give the other person any foothold for an argument.

Here are several “do’s” and “don’ts” for saying “no” in a powerful way.

1. Say your “no” calmly and directly. Don’t raise your voice or whine or say it timidly. Speak confidently based on your previous decision to say “no” in this situation.
2. Be polite. You are not trying to offend – just refuse.
3. Keep it simple. Resist the impulse to elaborate upon your reasons for saying no. Remain polite.

Repeat it as often as necessary. Variations are nice and feel more comfortable, but if you can’t think of anything else, just repeat “no”, Eventually your persuader will probably get tired and give up.

 = 33 minutes



SAYING “No” PRACTICE

ABOUT 8 MINUTES

[Arrange the class into several different sized groups. (Examples: groups of two, groups of three, groups of four, groups of five.) Ask each group to create a one-minute drama depicting various situations of saying “no” in a polite way that will not destroy the friendship in the group.

Read this to the small “Acting Companies” you have created as an example.]

For example:

Tempter: "Here, have some beer."

Boris: "No, thanks."

Tempter: "Oh, come on. I don't like to drink alone."

Boris: "I prefer not to."

Tempter: "What's the matter, can't you hold your booze?"

Boris: "I would just rather not."

Tempter: "I'll bet you have never even tried it."

Boris: "No thanks."

Tempter: "You're no fun."

Boris: "Sorry, you go ahead."

Tempter: "Just try a sip."

Boris: "No, but thanks, anyway."

[Ask each group to act out its drama. Discuss and evaluate having students suggest improvements to each act. Also discuss the influence of the group size and the influence of another person who also says "no".]

 = 41 minutes

ENDING THE LESSON



PERSONAL JOURNAL ACTIVITY

ABOUT 4 MINUTES

[Start a board or poster board record of skillful ways students have devised for saying "no". Then, have your students complete the following activity.]

1. Write a list of skillful ways of saying "no" in your Personal Journal.
2. Also, complete the following sentence: "A situation in which it is hard for me to say 'no' is . . ."

[After two or three minutes, ask your students to complete task No. 3:]

3. Write down several different ways to say "no" in the situation you described in No. 2.

In this session, we've been practicing the power of saying "no". In the next session, we will continue to develop our life skills by exploring the power that various kinds of beliefs have over gaining or losing our dreams.

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

 = 45 minutes

RESOURCES

GOING DEEPER

	<p>In this lesson, we had some practice learning how to say “no” to specific temptations. But sometimes the problem begins beforehand. Sometimes, we are exposed to more temptation than necessary because of whom we hang out with. The very beginning of the book of Psalms in the Bible suggests three kinds of people we should learn to avoid.</p> <p><i>[Read Psalm 1:1.]</i></p> <p>Let’s talk for a minute about each of these. What do you think it means to “walk in the counsel of the wicked”, “stand in the path of sinners”, and “sit in the seat of scoffers?”</p> <p><i>[Discuss until you think the class has a clear understanding of each category.]</i></p>
<p>CONTEMPORARY EXAMPLES ACTIVITY</p>	<p><i>[Arrange the class into three or more groups. Instruct each group to come up with contemporary examples of what each of the phrases might look like in current adolescent experiences. Then, begin with the first phrase, “stand in the path of sinners” and write a list on the board that includes ideas from all the groups. Repeat the process with the other two phrases.]</i></p>
<p>FOCUS POINT</p> <p>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.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We are halfway toward giving in to temptation when we spend a lot of time with people who are doing things we want to avoid. 2. Sometimes, the people who are the best-looking, the most talented or the most popular are people the Bible would call “wicked”, “sinners”, or “scoffers”.

PARENT-TEACHER CONNECTION

For Family Discussion:

1. Describe to your adolescent a time when you avoided a situation that could have been harmful to you.
2. Describe a circumstance in which you were tempted to do something you didn't really want to do. How did you say "no" effectively?