

PART III

# DEVELOPING RELATED SKILLS

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LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

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## PART III: DEVELOPING RELATED SKILLS

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# ADAPTING TO CHANGE

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## AGENDA

- Starter
- Different Now
- Change and Stress
- Changing the View
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

### Objectives

Students will recognize both positive and negative reactions to change.

Students will learn that they have the power to accept and adapt to change.

Students will visualize potential changes in themselves and their lives.

### Materials Needed

- Items to change your appearance for this class (e.g., glasses, hat) (Starter)
- Two sheets of drawing paper for each student (Part III)
- Colored markers and crayons (Part III)

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**Starter (3 minutes)**

Change your appearance for class today. (For example, if you do not wear glasses, wear a pair. Comb your hair differently or wear a hat. If you usually wear plain-colored clothing, wear a shirt with a brightly colored pattern.) Choose a change that will be noticeable to your students.

As students enter the classroom, greet them as usual. When everyone is seated, ask if anyone notices a change in your appearance. Invite students to respond to your new look.

Explain that life is full of changes. Sometimes we create the changes ourselves, and sometimes we respond to them. Tell students that in today's lesson you'll be discussing different types of changes and how people respond to them.

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**Part I Different Now (15 minutes)**

Purpose: Students recognize both positive and negative reactions to change.

**1. Students identify and evaluate reactions to change.**

Ask students to think about their reactions to your new look. Then, begin a discussion about changes in appearances by asking the following questions:

- How do people sometimes react to a change in another person's appearance? (Students might respond: ignore it, like it, dislike it, compliment the person, laugh at the person.)
- How do you think the person who has made the change feels? (Students might respond: self-conscious, anxious, uncertain, excited, proud, happy, sad.)

Write student responses on the board. Then, challenge students to review the responses listed and mark those they consider to be positive with a + sign, and those they consider to be negative with a – sign.

Point out that students have identified both positive and negative reactions to change. Tell students that changes affect people in different ways. Explain that sometimes we feel ambivalent about change, while other times we struggle to adjust to changes in ourselves and in others.

Continue the discussion by asking how tolerance and respect affect reactions to changes in people. Remind students that they have control over how they respond to people. Then, have them identify responses that do not show tolerance or respect for others.

**2. Students make a change in their classroom.**

Explain that students are now going to think about a different kind of change. Announce that you have decided to adjust the seating in the classroom for the rest of the session.

Ask students to seat themselves in a specific manner (e.g., alphabetically if students are seated randomly, in size order, or by eye color).

Give students time to change seats and settle themselves. Then, say, “I noticed some very different reactions from people in this room.”

### **3. Students react to the change.**

Invite students to tell how they feel about the new seating arrangement. Encourage them to consider both positive and negative reactions. Write student responses in a second list on the board, asking whether you should place a + or a – sign after each one. If students are uncertain about how to categorize a response, write an “A” after it for “ambivalent.”

Ask students to compare this list with the other list on the board. Ask if they notice any similarities. (Students should respond: both lists include positive and negative reactions; reactions to this change are very similar to the reactions to changes in the other list.)

## **Part II Change and Stress (10 minutes)**

Purpose: Students learn that they have the power to accept and adapt to change.

### **1. Students identify changes that take place over time.**

Point out that changes in life are not always visible and don’t always happen suddenly. To prompt students to think about such changes, say, for example, “When I was your age, I was six inches shorter and wanted to become a pilot.”

Through discussion, guide students to identify changes that are invisible or that happen over a period of time. Use questions and comments if necessary to prompt students to identify such changes as likes and dislikes, opinions, feelings, thinking, learning, goals, age, physical build, friends, and family structures. Encourage students to give examples of the changes they mention.

### **2. Students recognize that change can be stressful.**

Point out that all changes—ones that we can see, ones that we make ourselves, ones that we can’t see, and ones that happen over time—can be difficult to handle at times. Then, ask students if they think that change can be stressful. Encourage them to explain why.

As students respond, guide them to review what they learned about stress:

- Stress is tension, or feelings of pressure or anxiety.
- Stress can happen when people, events, or situations make us feel powerless and out of control. Some changes can make us feel this way.
- Change does not cause stress—our feelings cause stress.

Emphasize that some changes can cause us to feel stress, and that this stress can sometimes lead to conflict. Then, remind students that they have the power to handle stress, control their feelings and behaviors, and even avoid conflicts. Explain that this power enables them to accept changes in their lives and adapt to them.

### **3. Students recall the power of positive attitudes.**

Point out to students that change is a natural part of life and that they cope very well with many changes every day. Ask volunteers to describe how they cope with change. Invite other students to add comments or give suggestions of their own. If it doesn't come up in discussion, ask students how a positive attitude can affect how they accept and adapt to change.

Summarize your discussion by saying, "Change can be negative if you respond to it negatively. But if you respond positively by understanding your feelings and keeping them in control, positive things will result from change. Remember what we learned about the power of a positive attitude, because it comes into play here."

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## **Part III Changing the View (20 minutes)**

Purpose: Students visualize potential changes in themselves and their lives.

### **1. Students work on an art project to visualize changes in their lives.**

Set out sheets of drawing paper and a supply of colored markers and crayons. Explain that students are going to draw "Now" and "Later" pictures.

Give students the following instructions:

- Begin by drawing a large pair of eyeglass frames on each sheet of paper. Draw a frame that reflects what you would like to wear now. Then, draw another pair that you might like to wear later.
- You will picture your world today in one pair and your world four years from now in the other pair.
- In the lenses of your "Now" glasses, draw a picture of yourself, a picture of your school, a favorite thing, and a goal you have for this year—things that reflect you now.
- In the lenses of your "Later" glasses, draw how these things might change in four years.
- You may include symbols or words in your pictures if you wish.

## 2. Students compare pictures.

Give students most of the remaining class time to work. To close this activity, have students look at the differences in the pictures they drew. Ask for a show of hands from students who drew changes in themselves. Observe that it seems as though all of them expect to continue to grow and change over the next four years.

Call on volunteers to describe the schools they drew in their “Later” pictures. Have them identify the schools and tell how they expect them to be different from the school they are currently attending.

If time permits and students are willing, invite them to share their pictures and identify some of the changes they drew. Focus the discussion on the changes their pictures represent by asking, for example, “What changes did you need to make in order to get that diploma (or that car, or that job)?”

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## Conclusion (2 minutes)

Ask students if they think that successful people are able to accept and adapt to changes in their lives. Encourage volunteers to explain their answers. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- Change is a natural part of everyone’s life.
- Changes in life can be stressful, but you have the power to adapt to them.
- Keeping a positive attitude will help you accept and adapt to changes in your life.

## Student Assessment

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1. List three changes you have made in the past year.
2. Describe a positive and a negative response to change.
3. List a positive change that you want to make in yourself, your school, and your community.

## LESSON EXTENSIONS

### Using Quotations

“Our dilemma is that we hate change and love it at the same time; what we really want is for things to remain the same but get better.”

Have students make lists of things in their lives they want to change and lists of things they don't want to change. Discuss how to make change happen and how to cope with change.

### Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

Ask students to draw outlines of their hands and list five ways to handle stress. Have them place one of these methods on each finger in their drawings. Provide markers and crayons so students can decorate their outlines.

Ask students to share their outlines with the class. Display their outlines around the classroom.

### Writing in Your Journal

Have students imagine that their best friends have changed and no longer like the activities or music they do. It seems as though they and their friends have different values. Have students write about how they would feel in this situation.

Have students discuss how they would react to such a change and if they would find it stressful.

### Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

Give each student a short comic strip. Have students describe what is happening in the comic strip. Then, have students change, add, or delete one thing about the comic strip.

Have students trade comic strips and write about how adding or deleting something impacted the outcome.

## Homework

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Have students interview someone outside of class about the most significant change (either positive or negative) the person has ever had to handle.

Have students discuss those changes (not whom they interviewed) and how they would have dealt with the same situations.

## Additional Resources

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Have students read *Who Moved My Cheese? for Teens* by Spencer Johnson.

When they have finished reading, discuss the book's allegory and the idea that change is the only certainty in life. Ask students to brainstorm ways to anticipate, accept, and adapt to change.

# HANDLING PEER PRESSURE

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## AGENDA

- Starter
- How Hard Is It?
- But I...
- Deal with It
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

## Objectives

Students will discuss peer pressure in their lives.

Students will define the concept of peer pressure.

Students will recognize the importance of staying focused on personal values, beliefs, and goals.

Students will create solutions to a dilemma that involves peer pressure.

## Materials Needed

- Five small paper cups and one piece of wrapped candy (Starter)
- One copy of the “True or False” activity sheet for each student (Part I)

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### **Starter (3 minutes)**

Before class, number the bottoms of five small paper cups from one to five. Place the cups upside down in numerical order on a desk. Hide a small prize, such as a piece of wrapped candy, under one of the cups.

To begin class, explain that there is a prize under one of the cups. Ask a volunteer to come to the front of the room. Tell the volunteer that at your signal, they are to pick up the cup that they think is concealing the prize. Tell the rest of the class that they should feel free to call out what they think the volunteer should do.

Allow some time for everyone to call out their advice before having the volunteer begin. After the volunteer has chosen a cup, ask, "Why did you choose that one?"

Without making a comment, allow the volunteer to respond. Then, say, "Today we're going to talk about how hard it can be to stay focused on what you want to do when everyone else is telling you what they want you to do."

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### **Part I How Hard Is It? (15 minutes)**

Purpose: Students discuss peer pressure in their lives.

#### **1. Students fill out a questionnaire regarding peer pressure.**

Distribute copies of the "True or False" activity sheet. Explain that students are to read each statement, and then check whether the statement is true or false for them. Point out that when they have finished, they are to look back over the statements and circle ones that they think are difficult for teenagers to live by.

#### **2. Students respond to individual statements.**

When students have finished, begin a discussion about the statements on the activity sheet by asking for a show of hands from students who circled number one. If some have circled it, ask volunteers to explain why they think this can be difficult to do.

Proceed in a similar manner with the other statements, making note of and writing on the board recurring responses that indicate students' unwillingness to go against their peers, stand out, or sacrifice popularity.

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### **Part II But I... (15 minutes)**

Purpose: Students define the concept of peer pressure and recognize the importance of staying focused on personal goals and values.

### 1. Students define “peer pressure.”

Write the words “peer pressure” on the board. Ask volunteers to explain what these words mean. Through questions and comments, guide students to understand that peers are friends and other people their own age, and that pressure is an influence or force to make someone do something. Therefore, peer pressure is the influence students feel from others their own age to act a certain way.

### 2. Students identify examples of peer pressure.

Refer to the list of responses on the board from Part I, and ask students if they think these responses reflect peer pressure. Encourage volunteers to explain their answers; suggest that they use examples from the completed activity sheets to support their opinions.

Ask students if they think that peer pressure is positive or negative. Challenge students to give examples of negative peer pressure, and then challenge them to give examples of positive peer pressure. (Students might provide the following positive examples: studying rather than cheating; staying away from drugs; working out problems rather than giving up; trying new things; joining a new group; being fair; resolving conflicts without violence; playing by the rules.)

Point out that peer pressure is only a problem when it is negative. Say, “Peer pressure becomes negative when it threatens or conflicts with your values, beliefs, or goals. It produces conflict within you and can make you feel powerless and stressed. This conflict is between what others think you should do, and what you know you should do.”

### 3. Students consider ways to deal with negative peer pressure.

Point out that dealing with negative peer pressure can be very difficult. Ask students if they have any ideas about what they can do when confronted with negative peer pressure. Through discussion, guide students to identify the following tips:

- Keep your personal values and beliefs in mind.
- Stay focused on making decisions that are based on those values and beliefs.
- You alone have the power to make decisions.
- Keep your personal goals in mind.
- Stay focused on making decisions that will help you reach your goals.
- You alone have the power to control your words and actions.

Acknowledge that students deal with peer pressure every day, and that this will continue to be an issue throughout their school years and beyond. Emphasize that learning to recognize negative peer pressure and staying focused on their values and goals will help them overcome negative influences in their lives.

**Part III Deal with It (15 minutes)**

*Purpose:* Students create solutions to a dilemma that involves peer pressure.

**1. Students consider a dilemma.**

Divide the class into four groups. Ask everyone to listen carefully as you present the following dilemma:

Tatiana invites Lisa, a new friend, home after school. Nobody else is home. They decide to play some games on the computer, which is okay, but Tatiana is not supposed to use the internet without permission. If she does, she will lose computer privileges and probably get grounded. Lisa wants to visit some websites. Tatiana says, "Nah, let's play some more." But Lisa says, "So what's the big deal? Everybody does it. My other friends and I do it all the time." What happens next?

**2. Students create endings for the dilemma.**

Explain that groups one and two will work out endings to this dilemma that result in negative consequences for Tatiana. Groups three and four will work out positive endings.

Tell students that they will have five minutes to create endings within their groups. Explain that they will share their endings with the class, and can either appoint a spokesperson to read their endings or have students role-play them.

**3. Students share their endings with the class.**

Invite representatives from each group to read or perform their endings. When all groups are finished, begin a discussion by asking questions such as the following:

- Who had to deal with peer pressure in this dilemma? What was the pressure?
- What conflict did this cause in Tatiana?
- How were the endings presented by groups one and two similar?
- How were they different?
- How were the endings presented by groups three and four similar?
- How were they different?
- If you had been Tatiana, what would you have done?

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### Conclusion (2 minutes)

Ask students if they think they have a responsibility to avoid placing negative peer pressure on others. Encourage a few volunteers to explain their answers. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- Peer pressure can be both positive and negative.
- Peer pressure becomes negative when it conflicts with what you know you should do.
- Overcome negative peer pressure in your life by staying focused on your personal goals and values.

### Student Assessment

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1. Define "peer pressure."
2. Describe a situation in which you gave in to negative peer pressure.
3. List three examples of positive peer pressure and three examples of negative peer pressure.
4. Why is it important to stay focused on your goals and values?

## LESSON EXTENSIONS

### Using Quotations

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“The best years of your life are the ones in which you decide your problems are your own. You realize that you control your own destiny.”

As a class, discuss the importance of making your own decisions and how this can impact your quality of life (e.g., more confidence, happiness).

### Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

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Have students create collages showing things they value. To make their collages, have them select pictures that represent what they believe and value.

Have students share their work with the class.

### Writing in Your Journal

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Have students describe a time when peer pressure affected them in a negative way and a time when it affected them in a positive way.

Have students identify which values they compromised when they were affected by negative peer pressure and which values they hold as a result of the positive effects of peer pressure.

### Using Technology

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Have students research websites that are devoted to answering young people’s questions and helping them deal with peer pressure.

Have students write a review of the site they enjoyed the most and create a guide to finding advice on the internet.

## Homework

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Have students reflect on a time when they felt peer pressure to do something that conflicted with their values. Have students illustrate the internal conflict that they experienced.

Have students present their illustrations to the class.

## Additional Resources

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Have students read *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupery.

Ask students to summarize the values described in the book. Have students explain how the prince was able to stick to his beliefs.

# TRUE OR FALSE

Check whether each statement is true or false for you.

	TRUE	FALSE
1. I would participate in an activity that involved people I didn't know.		
2. I would not cheat on a test, even if everyone else was doing it.		
3. I sometimes think people who are unpopular are nice.		
4. I would speak out about something, even if I thought others would disagree.		
5. I would help someone if they needed it, even if this person wasn't a friend.		
6. I like to meet people who are different from me.		
7. If two of my friends aren't speaking to each other, I can still be friends with both of them.		
8. I would wear a favorite shirt to school, even if nobody else wears shirts like this.		
9. I would join a popular group, even if they did things I don't agree with.		
10. I would not lie for a friend, even if he or she wanted me to.		
TOTAL		

Now, go back and circle the statements that you feel are the hardest ones for people your age to do.

# GETTING ALONG

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## AGENDA

- Starter
- Over, Around, Under, or Through?
- Tools for Success
- Tips from Us
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

### Objectives

Students will participate in an activity in which they use a variety of skills in order to overcome obstacles and achieve goals.

Students will identify skills they learned and used in the activity.

Students will collaborate to create posters for display in their classroom or school.

### Materials Needed

- Fifteen paper plates (Part I)
- Four sheets of poster paper (Part III)
- An assortment of crayons, markers, old magazines, scissors, glue, and tape (Part III)

## Starter (3 minutes)

Write the words “next year” on the board. Elicit students’ responses to the phrase. Prompt as many students as possible to identify both positive and negative feelings. Then, make the observation that because the future is unknown, thinking about it can cause us to experience a mixture of emotions.

Tell students, “Everyone is naturally concerned about what is to come, but with what you have learned in this class, you should feel confident about your abilities to face new challenges and overcome obstacles. Today, we’re going to talk about some of the skills you have developed that will help you succeed in the future.”

## Part I Over, Around, Under, or Through? (20 minutes)

Purpose: Students participate in an activity in which they use a variety of skills in order to overcome obstacles and achieve goals.

### 1. Students prepare for the activity.

Have students move all chairs, desks, and tables to the sides of the classroom. When they have finished, divide the class into two teams. If you have an uneven number of students, ask for a volunteer to act as a referee.

Place 15 paper plates in a straight line across the center of the open space, leaving about a foot of space between the plates. Be sure to leave enough space on either end of the row of plates for teams to line up. Use tape to secure the plates to the floor.

Show teams where they will line up at either end of the row, and then provide them with the following directions:

- Both teams must begin at the same time.
- The goal is for every student on a team to reach the other side of the room by stepping only on the plates.
- If a student steps on the floor, they must move to the back of the line.
- The team that moves from one end of the row of plates to the other first wins.

### 2. Students work in teams to achieve their goals.

Allow students time to work out a strategy.

When they are ready, have the teams line up on either side of the row of plates and tell them to begin. When students become frustrated, stop the activity.

### 3. Students work in teams to achieve another goal.

Explain that the teams will now repeat this activity. Tell students that the rules will stay the same, but that this time, they must work out strategies that will enable them to move down the row of plates as they meet members of the other team.

If necessary, straighten the plates before repeating the activity. When the teams are in place, tell them to begin. Remind your referee, if you have one, to be sure that the teams do not step on the floor. Suggest that students observe how others accomplish the task in order to work out winning strategies. Students should discover that they can get around each other by holding onto each other's shoulders and stepping on a plate with one foot. They can also squat down with both feet on the plate as the other student steps over.

Give students as much time as possible to work their way across the plates. It will be a slow process, but allow students to work out the procedure themselves. Make comments only to keep order or to settle disputes about stepping on the floor.

Declare the first team to reach the other side to be the winner.

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## Part II Tools for Success (10 minutes)

Purpose: Students identify skills they learned and used in the activity.

### 1. Students identify the skills and abilities they learned and used.

Begin a discussion about the activity just completed by asking students to name some skills they used to successfully move across the plates. Through questions and comments, guide students to recognize how they used the following skills during this activity:

- Teamwork: the ability to work together despite differences; the ability to cooperate with each other in order to achieve a common goal
- Self-reliance: the ability to work with a positive attitude, manage stress, and take the initiative to work toward a goal
- Communication: the ability to communicate effectively by speaking and listening; the ability to send messages both verbally and nonverbally
- Decision making: the ability to consider different options and their consequences, and to make choices in order to reach goals
- Problem solving: the ability to define a problem and work through options in order to arrive at a solution
- Goal setting: the ability to make decisions about reaching short-term, medium-range, and long-term goals

## 2. Students recognize their potential.

Point out that these skills are tools for success and that using these skills will enable students to overcome obstacles and achieve goals. Ask students how these skills will be useful to them next year, in high school, and when they have a job.

Remind students that it is not necessary to be a straight-A student nor popular in order to develop and use these skills successfully. Say, “Getting along successfully is a matter of using the skills you have. If you use them, they will become stronger and they will develop more fully as you grow and change.”

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## Part III Tips from Us (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students collaborate to create posters for display in their classroom or school.

### 1. Students create posters to summarize what they have learned in this class.

On the board, write, “If you want to succeed, remember to...” Explain that students are to work in groups to create posters with a number of tips that will finish this sentence. Tell them not to forget to include specific tips about getting along with others. Encourage students to focus on five to 10 things that they think would be important for people their age to remember.

Divide the class into four groups. Give each group a piece of poster paper, crayons, and markers. Set out a stack of magazines, scissors, glue, and tape.

Tell students that they may illustrate their posters with words, slogans, drawings, or pictures cut from magazines. They may also use their own writings and drawings.

### 2. Students display their work.

If groups have not completed their work when time is up, suggest that they find time to complete their posters after class today. Display completed posters in your classroom or elsewhere in your school. Be sure that students have signed and dated their posters before displaying them.

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## Conclusion (2 minutes)

Ask students if they were aware at the beginning of class today of how many skills they have developed in this course. Invite volunteers to comment. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- You have learned many skills in this class that will help you overcome obstacles and achieve your goals.
- If you use these skills, you will strengthen them and they'll enable you to get along well in the years to come.

## Student Assessment

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1. List three obstacles you have overcome in the past year.
2. List three skills or abilities you have used to overcome these obstacles.
3. How can you use these skills or abilities in the future?

## LESSON EXTENSIONS

### Using Quotations

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“One reason we don’t attain our goals is that we often focus on how far away we are from feeling satisfaction rather than how far we’ve come.”

Have students write about a moment of success they had during the school year. As a class, discuss how focus and a positive attitude can help students attain their goals.

### Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

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Have students list the skills that they have gained during this course.

Have students choose one skill and illustrate (write, draw, dance, sing, etc.) how it will be useful to them in the future.

### Writing in Your Journal

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Ask students to write about how they have used the following skills during the past year: teamwork, self-reliance, communication, decision making, problem solving, and goal setting.

Have students draw themselves as a tree to show how these skills will grow with the student as they get older.

### Using Technology

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Have students conduct research on the internet about a person who has overcome obstacles.

Have students prepare short presentations on how the person they chose overcame obstacles and achieved their goals.

## Homework

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Have students consider the obstacles that they anticipate facing on their way to achieving their goals. Have them create sculptures that represent these obstacles out of household recyclables and odds and ends.

Have students present their sculptures to the class.

## Additional Resources

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Have students read “Let Go of the Idea That Gentle, Relaxed People Can’t Be Superachievers” in *Don’t Sweat the Small Stuff...and It’s All Small Stuff* by Dr. Richard Carlson.

Discuss the difference between being relaxed and being lazy.

# PLAYING BY THE RULES

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## AGENDA

- Starter
- Pen Pass
- Not a Surprise
- Students' Court
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

### Objectives

Students will discuss the importance of learning rules in order to participate successfully in school and in life.

Students will recognize that learning about and following rules are matters of personal responsibility.

Students will conduct mock trials in order to determine responsibility and resolve conflicts.

### Materials Needed

- Two pens or pencils (Part I)
- One copy of the “Court Cases” activity sheet for each student, cut into four strips (Part III)

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**Starter (3 minutes)**

Begin class by presenting the following dilemma:

Suppose you belong to a drama group. One of the rules is that everyone must come to practices in order to take part in the performance. The “star” rarely shows up for practices, but some people think they need the “star” in order to be successful. Should this person be allowed to participate in the performance? What do you think?

Encourage a few students to explain their answers. Take a poll of students to see how many agree that it’s fair that the “star” shouldn’t be allowed to participate. Comment on the results.

Tell students that today they are going to discuss why learning about and following rules is important for everyone.

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**Part I Pen Pass (10 minutes)**

Purpose: Students become aware of the importance of learning the rules in order to participate successfully in school and in life.

**1. Students participate in a group activity.**

Have students sit with you in a circle. Sit with your legs crossed in some manner, either at the knees or ankles. Don’t be obvious about this or call attention to it in any way.

Tell students that you are going to pass two pens around. Explain that the goal is for students to pass the pens on to the person sitting next to them correctly. Say, “Pay attention to what I do, because you have to copy it exactly in order to pass on the pens correctly.”

Take one pen between your thumb and middle finger and pass it to the left with the tip pointing away from the student. Then, pass the other pen in exactly the same manner to the right.

As each student passes on the pens, say whether or not they did so correctly. If students have passed on the pens in exactly the same manner and have their legs crossed as you do, then they have completed the task correctly. Don’t stop the activity to discuss right or wrong methods; just have students continue passing the pens.

**2. Students discuss the activity.**

Invite students who passed the pens correctly to explain the trick. Then, begin a discussion by asking:

- How did you feel when you didn't pass the pens correctly? (Students might respond that they felt confused or frustrated.)
- Why was it frustrating? (Students might mention not understanding what they were doing wrong.)
- Was it even more frustrating when you figured out what you were supposed to do? Why? (Students might say, "If I had known about crossing my legs in the first place, I could have done it correctly.")

Say, "Would you have crossed your legs from the beginning if you had known? Of course you would have. It's important to know the rules of a game if you're going to play it well, and it's frustrating to find out that the reason you failed is that you didn't know the rules."

Ask students what they needed to do in order to figure out how to pass the pens correctly. Prompt them to recognize that the rules were not explained in detail, nor were they written out; students needed to observe and follow what you and others were doing.

Explain that the same idea can be applied to school and to life in general. Point out that it's important to know what the rules are in order to follow them successfully. Say, "Let's talk about rules—ones that you know about and ones that you don't know about—and how you can figure them out."

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## **Part II Not a Surprise (15 minutes)**

Purpose: Students recognize that learning about and following rules are matters of personal responsibility.

### **1. Students discuss general rules they know.**

Point out to students that they know about many rules and can anticipate many rules that are common sense.

Engage students in a discussion about "common sense" rules they know and how they can find out more about these rules. Prompt the discussion by asking such questions as the following:

- What about showing up for practices if you are a member of a drama group? Would you consider showing up for practices to be a "common sense" rule?
- How would you find out more about this rule? For example, how would you know what to do if you must miss practice for any reason?
- How would you find out about the consequences for not attending practices?

Invite students to give other examples of common sense rules and continue the discussion in a similar manner. Prompt them if necessary to point out common sense rules about such things as showing up for school; being on time; using appropriate language in school; not pushing, shoving, or fighting others; respecting others; respecting what belongs to others; and so on. Be sure to discuss ways that students can find out more about specific rules, and about the consequences for choosing not to follow them.

## **2. Students discuss responsibility and accountability.**

Focus attention on personal responsibility and accountability by asking questions such as the following:

- Why do you think some people choose not to follow rules? Who is responsible for their decisions?
- Is it hard to follow rules when others are not following them? Why?
- What might happen if everyone did not follow rules? Give an example.

Guide students to acknowledge that if they decide not to follow a rule, they are personally responsible for the decision and must be prepared to accept the consequences.

## **3. Students reflect on the importance of following rules.**

Remind students that rules are a necessary part of life at all ages—at home, at school, on the job, and when they are living on their own. Emphasize that it is their responsibility to learn more about the rules that affect them in order to follow these rules successfully.

Working with examples that the class has previously discussed, explain how playing by the rules will help students become successful:

- Being where you are supposed to be on time shows others that you are a reliable person.
- Using appropriate language and behavior shows that you respect yourself and others.
- Learning about and following rules show that you are a responsible person.

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## **Part III Students' Court (20 minutes)**

Purpose: Students conduct mock trials in order to determine responsibility and resolve conflicts.

### **1. Students prepare role plays.**

Divide the class into four groups. Give each group one of the scenarios from the “Court Cases” activity sheet. Explain that each group is to read its scenario, and then prepare it as a mock court case for the class.

Tell groups to first choose members to play the roles of the people involved in the dispute. Explain that the rest of the group members will be the panel of judges.

Give groups about three to five minutes to prepare their role plays. Students involved in the dispute should work independently to prepare their arguments. At the same time, the judges will discuss the case among themselves and decide how they will resolve it.

## 2. Students role-play the situations.

When the groups are ready, invite the Case #1 group to perform its scenario. After it has finished, call on members of the audience to tell whether they agree or disagree with the judges' decision and to explain why. Prompt students to point to details of the case to support their opinions.

Continue in this manner with the remaining three cases. If time permits, engage students in a discussion about the similarity among the judges' decisions in all four cases.

Before dismissing students today, tell them to be sure to bring their folders with all of their work for this course to the next class session.

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## Conclusion (2 minutes)

Ask students if they could relate to any of the people involved in the court case disputes. Invite a few volunteers to respond. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- Rules are a necessary part of life.
- It is your responsibility to learn about rules that affect you.
- It is up to you to decide whether you will follow rules. You must accept the consequences if you decide not to follow them.

## Student Assessment

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1. List three rules that you follow every day.
2. List the consequences that you would suffer if you did not follow these rules.
3. Define "accountability." Why is it important?

## LESSON EXTENSIONS

### Using Quotations

“Obedience is the mother of success and is wedded to safety.”

Ask students to describe the meaning of this quote. Ask students to give examples of how obedience can lead to success and security.

### Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

Have students read the “I Really Need a Job” activity sheet.

Have students create a list of jobs that would be in line with their values.

### Writing in Your Journal

Have students write about what the world would be like without rules, and which rules they would like to abolish.

Have volunteers share their work with the class.

### Homework

Have students write a list of rules that they would impose if they were king or queen of a small country.

Allow students to stand and declare their rules.

### Additional Resources

Have students review the school’s code of conduct.

Have students discuss the code of conduct, the need for it, and whether they believe that students adhere to it.

# COURT CASES



## CASE #1

Kevin was babysitting one afternoon at a neighbor's house. He left his cell phone at home, and wanted to call a friend who was visiting relatives in another country. He asked if it was okay to use the phone, and the neighbor said yes. Kevin didn't say he would be making an international call.

Kevin ran up a big charge on his neighbor's phone bill. The neighbor says that Kevin owes him an afternoon of babysitting to pay for it. Kevin says that he doesn't owe anything because he had permission to use the phone.

## CASE #2

Megan brought some firecrackers to school. She gave a few firecrackers to Julia and dared her to light one in class. Julia said that she would only set it off if Megan set one off too.

Julia set off a firecracker, but Megan didn't. Julia was suspended from school. Julia claims that Megan is the one who should be suspended, since she brought the firecrackers to school. Megan claims that since Julia lit the firecracker in class, she is the one who should be suspended.

## CASE #3

Robert's soccer team supplies uniforms and shoes for the players. They are supposed to be worn to practices and games. Robert doesn't like them.

At the first practice, Robert said he forgot his uniform and shoes. The coach let him play anyway. At the second practice, Robert said his uniform was in the wash, and his shoes were in his mother's car. The coach benched him. When Robert showed up without his uniform and shoes the third time, the coach sent him home.

Robert claims that the coach didn't warn him and that the coach is unfair. The coach says that if Robert won't wear his uniform and shoes, then he can't play.

## CASE #4

Keisha finished her math test early. She was bored and began drawing and writing on a page of her notebook. She kept looking at her friend in the next row. Her friend finally looked at Keisha and mouthed, "What are you doing?" Keisha held up her notebook and her friend bent toward her to look. The teacher gave both girls failing grades.

The teacher claims that the girls were cheating. The girls claim that they weren't doing anything wrong.

# I REALLY NEED A JOB

I really need a job. The problem is, I'm only 14. Any ideas about how I can make some money?

M. F., 14, Georgia

It's almost impossible to get hired when you're under 16, but if you're really ambitious and a little creative, you can be the boss by starting your own business! Daryl Bernstein, who wrote a book about small-business ideas when he was 15 called *Better Than a Lemonade Stand* (Beyond Words Publishing), advises: "First, think about your skills and what interests you. Love animals? Maybe a dog-walking business would be right for you. Always wake up early? Start a wake-up service. Next,

map out what supplies you'll need (a pooper scooper and plastic bags for dog walkers, a phone for wake-up calls), what to charge and how much time you have to do it. Make some fliers to advertise with and you're set." Another tip? Listen when adults around you start complaining about things they never get done. Whether it's gift-wrapping, organizing photo albums or delivering dry cleaning, there's plenty to do if you really want to make money.

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# PRESENTING YOURSELF

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## AGENDA

- Starter
- Looking Back
- Me Today
- Dear Stranger
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

### Objectives

Students will review information they have learned about themselves.

Students will identify categories of personal information and write current information about themselves.

Students will write letters in which they present information about themselves in order to achieve an imaginary goal.

### Materials Needed

- Students' folders with notes and activity sheets from this course (Part I)
- One copy of the "Star Power" activity sheet for each student (Part II)

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**Starter (3 minutes)**

Ask students to imagine that they have a pen pal whom they have never met. Call on volunteers to name some things that they would want to know about this person. As students respond, write their answers on the board.

In addition to physical characteristics, prompt students to identify such personal information as age, birth date, favorite subjects in school, hobbies, interests, and so on.

Say, “When people don’t know you, it’s important to focus on the characteristics that will give people information about who you are. What you look like on the outside is always interesting information, but who you are on the inside is what really matters. Today, we’re going to talk about characteristics that make you unique.”

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**Part I Looking Back (15 minutes)**

Purpose: Students review information they have learned about themselves.

**1. Students recall personal information they have identified.**

Have students take out their folders for this class. Explain to students that they are going to review what they have learned about themselves and the power they have to succeed.

To begin a review of what students have learned about themselves, ask the following questions about the information they wrote about themselves at the beginning of the course.

- Who can find copies of the “Cloud Nine” activity sheet—the first activity sheet that you completed in this class? Does the picture you drew then still represent a long-term goal or dream you have for the future? If not, think about what you might draw now.
- Who can find the “Bingo” activity sheet? Does it still represent your talents and strengths? Have you developed other talents and strengths during your time in this course?
- Can you find your papers from the “Valuable Squares” activity? Are your values the same, or have they changed?

**2. Students recall skills they have developed.**

Invite students to continue to browse through their folders. Encourage them to make observations and comments about specific skills they have focused on during the course, such as communicating effectively, making informed decisions, setting stepping-stone goals, handling stress, managing time, using resources, taking notes, solving problems, conflict resolution, and so on.

Point out that in every Overcoming Obstacles class, students have learned more about themselves and developed a variety of skills that will help them achieve their goals.

Have students think about ways that they have changed and skills that they have developed during their time in this course.

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## Part II Me Today (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students identify categories of personal information and write current information about themselves in each category.

### 1. Students discuss different kinds of information.

Have students recall the discussion from the Starter about what they might want to know about a pen pal they have never met. Explain that in the future, students will be asked to present information about themselves to people they don't know.

Say, "Someday, you may be asked to fill out an application to join a group or take part in an activity. You will certainly be asked to fill out applications for schools and for jobs. These applications will ask for information about you. They will ask for the kinds of information that you have learned about yourself throughout this course. They will also want to know other kinds of information—just as you would wish to know other kinds of information about a pen pal you have never met."

Invite students to suggest the kinds of information that they think people might want to know about them.

### 2. Students write information about themselves.

Distribute copies of the "Star Power" activity sheet. Ask students if they think that this activity sheet summarizes the different kinds of information they just discussed. Point out that this activity sheet lists categories of information that show who a person is and what they have accomplished.

Explain that you will go over each category and give students time to fill in information about themselves. Suggest that students refer to their previously completed activity sheets, which they just reviewed.

Guide students to complete the "Star Power" activity sheet. Suggest that if students need more room to write, they can number the categories and write information on the back of the activity sheet. Ask the following questions about each category:

- **Personal Facts:** What is your name? How old are you? When and where were you born?
- **Education:** What grade are you in? What school do you currently attend? What other schools have you attended?
- **Strengths and Talents:** What are your favorite subjects in school? What are your best subjects in school? What else do you do well?
- **Hobbies and Interests:** What do you enjoy doing outside of school?
- **Life Experiences:** What activities do you participate in? What special responsibilities do you have (or have you had)?
- **Goals and Dreams:** What have you achieved this year? What are you planning to do next year? What else would you like to do in the future?

Point out that students have just made an outline of important facts and information about themselves. Explain that these categories organize the information and allow students to present themselves in a positive manner.

Say, “It is important to put your best foot forward and present yourself positively if you want to achieve your goals. Take the time to think about your strengths, abilities, interests, and achievements as you grow and change in the years to come.”

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### Part III Dear Stranger (15 minutes)

*Purpose:* Students write letters in which they present information about themselves in order to achieve an imaginary goal.

#### 1. Students focus on an imaginary situation.

Ask students to take out writing materials. Tell them to imagine that they have a chance to achieve one of their wildest dreams. All they have to do is write a letter that explains why they should be chosen for this opportunity. Suggest that students use information from the “Star Power” activity sheet to introduce and describe themselves to a person they don’t know, but who can grant their wishes.

#### 2. Students compose their letters.

Give students the remainder of the class time to write their letters. If time permits, invite volunteers to read their letters aloud.

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### Conclusion (2 minutes)

Remind students that they discussed some keys for success at the beginning of the course—confidence, perseverance, a positive attitude, and the willingness to work and learn. Ask students how far they think they have come in acquiring these characteristics. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- Every student has the power to achieve their goals.
- Present yourself positively by focusing on facts and information that describe your strengths, abilities, interests, and achievements.

### Student Assessment

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1. List two ways that you are different now than you were at the beginning of the course.
2. List three skills you have developed during this course.
3. What is one goal you have for the future? Explain how you will use your skills to help you achieve this goal.

## LESSON EXTENSIONS

### Using Quotations

Have students find a quote that represents who they are. Ask them to write one or two sentences explaining why they chose that quote.

Have students share their quotes. Then, have them discuss how they think they might change in the future.

### Addressing Multiple Learning Styles

Have students write an autobiography or create a time line detailing what they imagine their lives will be like through the age of 30.

Ask students to share their work with a partner.

### Writing in Your Journal

Have students write about their favorite lessons or activities from this class and identify the most valuable skill they have learned.

Have students discuss their favorite moments from the Overcoming Obstacles course and share the most valuable skills they've learned.

### Using Technology

Have students browse the Overcoming Obstacles website at [www.overcomingobstacles.org](http://www.overcomingobstacles.org) and read the testimonials posted, along with the history of the Community for Education Foundation.

If appropriate, have students send an email describing their favorite activities from the course and the skills they've learned to [info@overcomingobstacles.org](mailto:info@overcomingobstacles.org).

## Homework

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Have students create “me bags” by decorating and filling a bag with pictures and objects that represent who they are and who they want to be.

Divide students into groups. Have them present their bags to their groups.

## Additional Resources

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Have students read *Oh, the Places You’ll Go!* by Dr. Seuss.

Ask students to discuss how a positive attitude about the future can affect their lives.

# STAR POWER

*Personal Facts:*

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