

PAM WILSON
UT EXTENSION

MAKING DECISIONS TO LAST A LIFETIME

DESCRIPTION

For 6th through 8th grade students.

This is a lesson designed to help students understand the importance of making good decisions that will not only keep them out of trouble in the near future, but will also help them to consider making good decisions throughout their lives. Using real-life examples of famous and not-so-famous people this lesson will also help them to see how the decisions that others make affects not only themselves, but also those around them.

OBJECTIVES

To help students to identify positive and negative behaviors found in others and in themselves.

To give students examples of good and bad choices, decisions, and consequences.

To introduce students to the Seven Pillars of Character.

To demonstrate to students that being “rich and famous” by today’s standards does not seem to include possessing the characteristics of a Hero OR the Seven Pillars of Character.

TIME REQUIRED TO DELIVER LESSON

One class period of 45-55 minutes

OPENING IDEAS and DISCUSSION

You are at a point in your lives where you’re being introduced to all kinds of things – new friends, new ideas, new freedoms, smoking, alcohol, and perhaps even drugs.

Have you thought about how your decisions now can affect your life in the future?

I want to introduce you to some people that you may know for doing good things, some you may know for doing not-so-good things, and some people you may never have even heard of that have made a difference in the lives of all of us.

At some point in the lesson discuss the colored “signs” about a “digital footprint”, etc.

(A “digital footprint” is an example of an action or behavior that an individual has displayed and placed on the internet on a website such as YouTube. It is an eternal

record of misbehavior or bad judgment that can and will be used against the individual who may someday seek employment or a bank loan, etc.)

Do you have a Hero?

Do you know what makes a Hero?

- Give definition of “Hero” – a person admired for their achievements and noble qualities; one that shows great courage

- Characteristics of a Hero – Seven Pillars of Character
 - Honesty
 - Caring
 - Fairness
 - Responsibility
 - Courage
 - Respect
 - Citizenship

Have you thought about your own role as a Hero?

When we think of heroes we often think of good things, right?

How might you like to be thought of or remembered?

BODY OF LESSON

- Pass out names of famous people

- Ask students to look at photos displayed on tri-fold board “Making Decisions to Last a Lifetime”.
 - Explain the 3 different sections of the board
 - Do you recognize any of the people pictured here?
 - Some of them you may recognize, some of them you may not
 - I’m going to introduce you to ALL of them

- Advise students that as you read the biographies of the people in the photos they are to listen and determine if it matches the name they were given, or if they recognize who you might be reading about. Raise your hand when you think the name you’re holding is being read about. No shouting out!

- Student brings the name card to the display board of that person being discussed

- Continue to elaborate (if time allows) on each person’s biography – there’s SO MUCH TO DISCUSS!!!

- As biographies are read, you may need to give hints or remind the students to listen to the time period, birthdates, etc., in order to recognize who it is

THOUGHTS AND QUESTIONS TO ASK

- Did you know that 90% of young people 10 years and under think that the most important thing they can do in life is to be “rich and famous”?
- Why do you think this might be a bad idea?
- When can it be a good idea? (When you accomplish something GREAT!)
- Do you recognize anyone on the board that might have made that decision - to be merely rich and famous?
- What direction do you see their life taking or having taken?
- You might have adversity and challenges in YOUR life. You may have parents who have divorced or left you. How can you move past this?
 - Who on this board might you look to when seeking a good example?
 - We can look at Peyton Manning as an example of someone who has lived a “charmed life” – a life with two parents who loved each other and stayed together to raise a happy family. But did you know that Peyton’s Dad did not have such a happy family? Somehow though, he managed to “build a bridge and get over it”, determined to create his own happiness, devoted to his family and raising successful children. Discuss Archie Manning – raising sons as leaders after his own tragic discovery of his father who committed suicide
- Others who “built a bridge”
 - John Walsh
 - Beethoven
- Leave students with:
 - Bookmark that has an inspirational phrase such as
 - The value of education
 - The seven pillars of Character
 - “A goal is a dream without a plan” – start planning NOW!