
LEARNING ACTIVITIES/TEACHING STRATEGIES:

NOTE: This topic is the application of the critical thinking skills covered in Topic D—in some ways it could be considered an extension of that topic. Nevertheless, the students will need the foundation of the materials in Topic D to build upon in these activities.

Introductory Activity for Topic:

Have students listen to *The Gambler* by Kenny Rogers. From the song, have the students answer the following questions:

- What is a gambler?
- What items do gamblers use to gamble?
- Why does a gambler gamble?
- Are teens ever gamblers? Why? or Why Not?
- How do teens gamble?
- How does good judgment relate to gambling?

Using the overhead transparency provided on page I-E-14, explain the meaning of the following quote:

"Some people are brave,
and some people just don't know any better."

The above quote expresses that the brave know the consequences of what they have to do and take those risks to save themselves or others, or perhaps to better themselves or others. The people who don't know any better take risks without ever thinking about the consequences and it is by luck that things work out. However, one day luck will not be with them and they will find themselves in serious trouble or even dead. To illustrate this point, below are some other famous sayings that can be used:

- "Fools rush in where wise men never go."
- "There is no fool like an old fool!"

1. Define the term *good judgment* and identify skills necessary to make good judgments.

1-1 Definition of Terms

Define the terms *judgment*, *good judgment*, and *poor judgment*.

JUDGMENT:	The process of forming an opinion or reaching a conclusion based on the available material.
GOOD JUDGMENT:	Using the critical thinking process to form an opinion or reach a conclusion.
POOR JUDGMENT:	Not using the critical thinking process to form an opinion or reach a conclusion.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES/TEACHING STRATEGIES - CONT'D.

Using the teacher background information, **USING GOOD JUDGMENT**, provided on page I-E-15, discuss how poor judgment is often used when we allow our habits to be taken to the extreme. Examples: credit, drugs, alcohol, sexual urges, sports, etc. All of these can be pursued to the extent that everything else in our lives becomes excluded. The result is a state of crisis which can be very stressful and/or damaging.

In order to make good judgments, the critical thinking process must be employed. Refer back to the materials in Unit I Topic D and build upon those concepts.

Overhead transparency patterns for these definitions are provided on pages I-E-16 through I-E-18. Some car patterns depicting good and poor judgment are provided on pages I-E-19 and I-E-20. These can be enlarged for maximum effectiveness.

2. Differentiate between making a decision and using good judgment.**2-1 Decision Making vs. Good Judgment**

Discuss the difference between making a decision and using good judgment.

Refer to the materials provided in guidelines for activity 1-1 and the teacher background information provided on page I-E-15. Using the overhead transparency pattern provided on page I-E-21, explain that the critical thinking process leads to good judgment, and good judgment leads to good decisions.

For example: If you are driving down the road and come to a railroad crossing that has the lights flashing--
the critical thinking process directs your judgment about what would be best to do under the circumstances, then your judgment directs your decision as to whether to stop and wait, or try to beat the train.

2-2 Best Interest Test

The teacher can introduce this activity by stating that it is always wise to stop and ask yourself a few questions when making decisions and/or judgments. Have the students complete the **BEST INTEREST TEST** student activity guide (page I-E-22) to help them recognize their personal decision-making patterns. If the student(s) cannot identify a decision they have made recently for the activity, the teacher may have to provide a contrived situation such as the one on the following page.)

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You want to tryout for the _____ team at school, but first you have to have a certain grade point average to be eligible. You are barely below the requirement, and if you work hard for the next month or so, you can bring it up. Tryouts begin in about a month. Two weeks ago your language arts teacher gave you an assignment that would require some homework each day in order to complete it. This assignment would be a third of your grade for the term, and it was due yesterday. During the first week after the assignment was given, you were busy working on a school dance, you had concert tickets for one night, and your family went to your grandmother's to visit that weekend. When the second week arrived, you came down with a bad cold and didn't feel very well, so you continued to neglect the assignment. Although the assignment was due yesterday, it was no where near completion because you only began working on it the night before. You needed this grade to bring up your grade point average.

3. Examine how lack of using these skills can cause a crisis.**3-1 Types of Risks**

Using the teacher background information, **TYPES OF RISKS**, on page I-E-23, discuss the categories in which various risks fall. The students can begin the **TYPES OF RISKS** student activity guide (page I-E-24) while this information is presented and complete it after the discussion.

3-2 Anorexia/Bulimia Example

Use the complications of anorexia and bulimia as an example of not using good judgment skills. The poor judgment behind eating disorders generally has several bases of poor judgement, such as:

- low self-concept and/or self-image
- need to please others
- putting health and/or life at risk for looks
- jeopardizing the future

Explain how poor judgments often build upon each other and can become a cycle that is very difficult to break.

Anorexia and bulimia are good examples of self-defeating behaviors. Many self-defeating behaviors are in the high-risk category. Other examples that could be used are procrastination, substance abuse, tobacco use, inability to be wrong, etc.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES/TEACHING STRATEGIES - CONT'D.**4. Establish responsibility for personal judgments and consequences.****4-1 The Alligator Story**

Read **THE ALLIGATOR STORY** (page I-E-26) to the students. After the story, divide the class into groups of five or six. Each group must rank each character in the story from bad (1) to the worst (5), using the corresponding student activity guide (page I-E-27).

The teacher can make an overhead transparency of the chart so that all of the class can see how their classmates ranked the characters. This will add a focal point for the discussion while addressing the following questions:

- What wrong did each character commit?
- Did Abigail use good judgment in making the decision that she did? Why or why not?
- What if we were to say that Ivan was the worst?
- Is helping someone the same as butting into someone's business?
- What categories of risk did each character take?
- What alternatives could Abigail have chosen?
- What steps in the critical thinking process could Abigail have taken?
- How would the story be different if Abigail would have thought ahead, reviewed the consequences and then made the decision?
- Was Abigail forced into a crisis because of poor judgment? If so, how?
- What consequences did Abigail pay for her decision?

**MAJOR
CONCEPT:**

Discuss the fact that for every decision made there is a natural consequence. Responsible adults take the consequences of their decisions, whether good or bad. Good judgement has been used when the consequences can be applied to other situations to yield a positive outcome.

After the discussion is completed, assign the girls to rewrite the story from Abigail's point of view and the boys to rewrite the story from Will's point of view. When they are through writing, have students share their stories with the class.

4-2 A Bargain with the Devil

Have the students read **A BARGAIN WITH THE DEVIL** (pages I-E-28 and I-E-29) and answer the related Thought Questions. Discuss how wasting resources can be considered a lack of good judgment or simply poor judgment. Discuss the fact that we all have a responsibility to use resources wisely.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES/TEACHING STRATEGIES - CONT'D.

4-3 "We're Not Born..." Saying

Prepare a banner, large poster, or overhead transparency (page I-E-30) that says:

***WE'RE NOT BORN WINNERS OR LOSERS;
WE'RE BORN CHOOSERS.***

The teacher will need to lead the students in understanding that while they do have the ability and freedom to make their own decisions, the consequences that often result from their choices are very much out of their hands. Also, frequently they have no control over the people they are with, and/or of many situations they may find themselves faced with.

Relate these situations to establish the message:

1. You can choose to drink and drive;
You don't choose to get in an accident and seriously injure someone close to you.
2. You can choose to ignore your homework;
You cannot control your grade as a result of your choice.
3. You can choose to be sexually active;
You have no control over what a teenage pregnancy or STD would do to your life.

Discussion items: If you knowingly make risky choices, at least be aware of the possible consequences and think about the risks involved.

A very important way to exhibit responsible behavior is to take responsibility for your decisions.

Nondecision is a decision to let someone else be in charge of your life. When you fail to make decisions for yourself, you become vulnerable to whatever direction comes your way and from whatever source. Nondecision can become an excuse for many things, but is basically a form of poor judgment.

The yellow (or amber) traffic light exemplifies the warning light in our decision-making process--caution should be taken before proceeding. That precaution should include critical thinking, making good judgment, and sound decisions.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES/TEACHING STRATEGIES - CONT'D.**4-4 Decisions and Consequences**

Use newspaper articles, personal stories, or the examples of situations provided (page I-E-31) for the students to use as they complete the student activity guide, **DECISIONS AND CONSEQUENCES**, (page I-E-32).

The students can work in small groups, with each group being given a situation in which they must make a decision. Students are to brainstorm all possible positive and negative consequences to the situation and then make their decision. Later, each group can share its situation and decision with the rest of the class.

5. Analyze common judgment situations and apply the critical thinking process.**5-1 Risky Business**

Using the handout, **RISKY BUSINESS**, (page I-E-33) as a guide, discuss how understanding the risk factors that come with various occupations is important when selecting an occupation. Good judgment can be used in pursuing life's careers.

ALTERNATE STRATEGY: Have the students guess what occupations have the highest risk factors. Then have them compare their answers to the handout.

Have the students complete the **RISKY BUSINESS QUESTIONS** student activity guide (page I-E-34) and determine the risk factors for careers they are considering for themselves, those of their parents, etc.

5-2 Judgment Situations

Divide the class in half and give each group a copy of the student activity guide, **JUDGMENT SITUATIONS**, (page I-E-35). Assign each group to defend a different position in each situation--for or against. Use the situations to apply good judgment skills.

The teacher will need to emphasize that using good judgment is a learned skill. Students will benefit by practicing the thought processes involved in making good judgments. The teacher should stress the advantage of discussing alternatives to each situation and help the students realize that their individual values have a substantial impact on the decisions they make in these practice situations. The more discussion and options discussed, the better.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES/TEACHING STRATEGIES - CONT'D.

6. Identify activities some teenagers pursue that might be considered indicative of poor judgment or risk-taking behaviors.

6-1 Roller Coaster Video

Show the student the video, Roller Coaster Thrills, as a means of introducing risk-taking behaviors. Information for purchase is provided in the resource section of this topic.

6-2 Was It Worth It?

Have the students read the story, **WAS IT WORTH IT?**, (page I-E-36) and answer the questions on the corresponding student activity guide (page I-E-37). Discuss how hobbies or interests pursued in life can be risky and sometimes life-threatening. Discuss some things that should be taken into consideration before making the decision to become involved in some hobbies or interests.

Some risk-taking behaviors to consider might be:

- eating disorders
- shop-lifting
- vandalizing other's property
- wasting money or other resources
- being sexually active
- not obeying laws and regulations of community/school/home
- teen suicide
- sluffing school/being tardy
- being dishonest
- using drugs, alcohol, tobacco
- running away



RESOURCES:**Videos:**

The Boy Who Liked Deer, 18 min. Learning Corporation of America, 1350 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY, 10019. A boy discovers the pain that vandalism brings.

How to Be a Good Kid, 24 min. Perennial Films, c/oP.R.I., 930 Pitner Avenue, Evanston, Il. 60202. Explores the dynamics of teen behavior and decision making.

Pack Your Own Chute, 30 min. Ramic Productions, 4910 Birch Street, Newport Beach, CA 92660. This is the story of a risktaker who learns to skydive. It illustrates the necessity of believing in yourself before you can achieve.

Roller Coaster Thrills, (short) 1994. Publishers Choice Videos, Box 4169-Dept. EL20-PF, Huntington Station, NY 11746. This is a video of rides on all of the big roller coasters in the U.S.A.

Teenagers and Tough Decisions, 1991. Pinnacle Communications, 8711 E. Pinnacle Peak Road # 226, Scottsdale, AZ 85255. This is a real world look at peer pressure, safe sex, money, families and divorce, drugs and alcohol, and teen stress.

Integrity, Power Surge Series, Media International, 5225 San Fernanco Road West, Los Angeles, CA 90039. 1-800-477-7575. Lying, cheating on tests, stealing... what's the big deal? Everyone else does! Ernesto is a professional boxer and he says you are just cheating yourself. Cheri refuses to cheat. And Olympic Champion Madeline Mimms says your integrity is the key to how you feel about yourself and who you will become.

Books:

Glenn, H. Stephen, *Seven (7) Strategies for Developing Capable, Responsible, Respectful, Resourceful Students*. Prima Publishing, 3000 Lava Ridge Ct., Roseville CA 95666. 1988. ISBN: 0-76151-356-6.

Audio Tapes:

Glenn, H. Stephen, *Developing Judgment*. 30 minutes. Prima Publishing, 3000 Lava Ridge Ct., Roseville CA 95666.