

LifeSkills Training

Promoting Health and Personal Development



**SAMPLE
LESSON**

Student Guide 1

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Program Recognition

Exemplary Program

U.S. Department of Education

Model Program

Blueprints for Violence Prevention

Center for Substance Abuse Prevention

Office of Juvenile Justice and
Delinquency Prevention

Blueprints for Violence Prevention

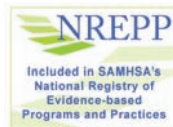
Office of National Drug Control Policy

Programs That Work

National Institute on Drug Abuse

Top Tier

Coalition for Evidence-Based Policy



Program Overview

The new edition of Botvin *LifeSkills Training* Middle School program is a ground-breaking substance abuse prevention program based on more than 30 years of rigorous scientific research. Now updated with new graphics, references, and statistics, it is proven to be the most effective evidence-based programs used in schools today. *LifeSkills Training* is comprehensive, dynamic, and developmentally designed to promote positive youth development.

In addition to helping children resist drug, alcohol, and tobacco use, the Botvin *LifeSkills Training* Middle School program also effectively supports the reduction of violence and other high-risk behaviors.

Target Audience

Designed for children in grades 6 – 9, the program can be taught in school, community, and after-school settings.

Program Learning Objectives

The Botvin *LifeSkills Training* Middle School program uses a scientific approach and a combination of coaching with peer-interaction and provider-led activities to address the critical factors found to promote substance abuse. This highly interactive program strengthens student resistance skills in the following areas:

■ Personal Self-Management Skills

Students develop skills that help them enhance self-esteem, develop problem-solving abilities, reduce stress and anxiety, and manage anger.

■ General Social Skills

Students gain skills to meet personal challenges such as overcoming shyness, communicating clearly, building relationships, and avoiding violence.

■ Drug Resistance Skills

Students build effective defenses against pressures to use tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs.

Program Structure*

The program consists of 30 class sessions (approximately 45 minutes each session) to be conducted over three years. The curriculum is intended to be taught sequentially to build on skills learned in the previous levels. The first level should be implemented with 6th or 7th grade students, followed by booster sessions (levels 2 and 3).

Level 1 (Grades 6/7): Core Level

15 class sessions plus 3 optional violence prevention sessions

Level 2 (Grades 7/8): Booster Level

10 class sessions plus 2 optional violence prevention sessions

Level 3 (Grades 8/9): Booster Level

5 class sessions plus 4 optional sessions

The program can be taught either on an intensive schedule (two to three times a week) until the program is complete, or on a more extended schedule (once a week).

Although one year of Botvin *LifeSkills Training* has been proven to achieve measurable positive effects, multi-year implementation is strongly recommended. For maximum effectiveness, the entire *LifeSkills Training* Middle School curriculum should be implemented.

- Interactive enrichment teaching techniques
- Updated design, images, and references
- Teacher support through interactive teaching icons, hints, and suggested timing
- Comprehensive implementation suggestions and guidelines
- Revised fidelity checklists and much more.

**NEW
EDITION**

Level 1 Teacher's Manual / Sample Pages

Making Decisions

Unit Timing: 2 sessions, 45 minutes each

Vocabulary

- decision
- influence
- pressure
- persuasive tactics

Key to Teaching Strategies

-  Facilitation
-  Coaching
-  Behavioral Rehearsal
-  Assessment

Materials Needed

- Student Guide (pages 16-21)

Homework for Next Unit

Student Guide – *My Reasons for Not Smoking, Worksheet 5* (page 27)

Special Preparation

- Have students prepared to review their homework assignment on *Everyday Decisions*.
- Select students to participate in the group conformity experiment (page 2.7).

Unit Goals and Objectives

As students get older, they face more complex and more important decisions. The ability to make an independent decision is a skill that requires practice.

This unit is designed to be presented in two sessions so that students have sufficient time to practice the skill.

In this unit students will:

- Demonstrate how decisions are influenced by group pressures
- Discuss reasons why people are influenced by group members
- Identify everyday decisions
- Describe how important decisions are made
- Identify a process for making decisions

Includes
interactive
enrichment
teaching
techniques

Summarized
unit goals and
objectives
provide
background
information.

Group Pressures and Decision Making (25 minutes)

1. Ask students to what extent they think their decisions are influenced by other people. (Example: If some friends told you that you look good in blue, how would this affect the color you wear?)
2. Conduct the group conformity experiment given in **Appendix 1** (see page 2.9).
3. After the experiment is finished, discuss it with students. Provide this definition of *pressure*.

Definition

Pressure is trying to force someone to do something by using overpowering influence or persuasion.

Point to Make

- Pressures from the group to which we belong often influence our decisions.

4. Ask students to describe a situation that occurred recently in which they made a decision to go along with a group as a result of group pressure. (Example: You went along with the group decision to see a movie that you didn't particularly care to see.)

5. Have students give reasons for why people are influenced so much by other people.

Examples

- Don't want to be an outcast
- To feel a part of the popular crowd
- To do things they think are cool or fun
- Don't have confidence in themselves
- Not sure what the right answer is to a problem

Point to Make

- We are often influenced by group members because everyone generally wants to be accepted by the group and not be considered outsiders, different, or unpopular.

Key unit information such as materials, timing, vocabulary, and special preparation is visible at a glance to aid in preparation.

Icons provide quick identification of the interactive teaching skill(s) being used in the activity.

Definitions and key points to make are highlighted in each lesson.

Suggested time is given for each major activity.

Level 1 Student Guide / Sample Pages

Deciding Things on Your Own

As you get older, you make more and more decisions on your own. Some of these may be very difficult. To make the best possible decisions, you need to be aware of the people or things around you that can influence your decisions (such as your parents, friends, TV, movies, and advertisements). You also need to learn an organized method for making decisions. Being aware of the factors that might influence your decisions and knowing how to make them can help you to make the best possible decisions for you.

A Simple Method for Making Better Decisions

Most people make all their decisions in the same way, without realizing the difference between simple choices, everyday decisions, and major decisions. Simple choices (whether to eat vanilla or chocolate ice cream) can be decided based on what you like. Other decisions should be made after carefully thinking about the possible consequences, or outcomes, of different decisions. To do this as well as possible and make the best decisions, learn to use the 3-step method described here.

The 3 Cs of Effective Decision-Making

Step 1: Clarify what decision you need to make.

Step 2: Consider the possible alternatives (think about the different things you might decide to do) and the consequences of choosing each alternative; collect any additional information needed. (If you are trying to solve a problem, think up as many solutions as possible.)

Step 3: Choose the best alternative and take the necessary action. Afterwards, think about whether you were satisfied with your decision.

Student Guides provide essential skill background and information.

Making Decisions

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Step-by-step instructions are highlighted for quick access.

Easy-to-follow activities help students get to skill practice quickly.

Make a list of the most important decisions you have to make regularly at home, school, or with friends.
Check off whether you make those decisions **On Your Own** or whether you are influenced by others. Check all that apply to each decision.

Everyday Decisions WORKSHEET 4

Decisions	On My Own	Parents	Friends	Teachers	Media
At Home					
1. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
At School					
1. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
With Friends					
1. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐



Making Decisions

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Step 3: Choose the best alternative and take the necessary action. Afterwards, think about whether you were satisfied with your decision.



- ➔ Make a list of the most important decisions you have to make regularly at home, school, or with friends.
- Check off whether you make those decisions **On Your Own** or whether you are influenced by others. Check all that apply to each decision.

Everyday Decisions

WORKSHEET

4

Decisions	<i>On My Own</i>	<i>Parents</i>	<i>Friends</i>	<i>Teachers</i>	<i>Media</i>
At Home					
1. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
At School					
1. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
With Friends					
1. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐



Read each of the situations and (1) **clarify** the problem, (2) list and then **consider** the possible solutions (choices) and their likely consequences, and (3) **choose** the best solution.

Putting the 3 Cs into Practice

WORKSHEET

5

Situation 1

Your teacher gave your class a homework assignment that is due the next day and is a large part of your grade for the course. That night there is an important basketball game that all of your friends will be attending. If you go to the basketball game, you won't have time to do your homework, but you know someone who might let you copy her homework.

Problem: _____

Possible Solutions

Possible Consequences

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

My Decision: _____

Situation 2

Your friends want to get together at your house after school when no one is home. They want to drink alcohol. You want to be with your friends, but you know your parents will be angry and you'll get in a lot of trouble if your friends drink at your house.

Problem: _____

Possible Solutions

Possible Consequences

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

My Decision: _____





Choose two decisions that you have to make now or sometime in the near future. Briefly describe the situation and then (1) **clarify** (identify) the decision to be made or problem to be solved, (2) list and then **consider** the possible solutions (choices) and their likely consequences, and (3) **choose** the best alternative.

WORKSHEET

6

My Decision-Making Planner

Situation 1: _____

Problem: _____

Possible Solutions	Possible Consequences
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____

My Decision: _____

Situation 2: _____

Problem: _____

Possible Solutions	Possible Consequences
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____

My Decision: _____

Notes

Making Decisions

Unit Timing: 2 sessions, 45 minutes each

Vocabulary

- decision
- influence
- pressure
- persuasive tactics

Key to Teaching Strategies

- F** ➤ Facilitation
- C** ➤ Coaching
- BR** ➤ Behavioral Rehearsal
- A** ➤ Assessment

Materials Needed

- Student Guide (pages 16-21)

Homework for Next Unit

Student Guide – *My Reasons for Not Smoking, Worksheet 5* (page 27)

Special Preparation

- Have students prepared to review their homework assignment on *Everyday Decisions*.
- Select students to participate in the group conformity experiment (page 2.7).

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- Discuss reasons why people are influenced by group members
- Identify everyday decisions
- Describe how important decisions are made
- Identify a process for making decisions

Introduction

Inform students that today they will be discussing how and why people make decisions, which is the act of making up your mind about something. As people get older, they are required to make decisions that are more and more complicated. It is important to learn to make decisions independently without being influenced by others. Let them know that they will have a chance to practice making decisions using a three-step decision-making process.

F ▶ **Everyday Decisions (5 minutes)**

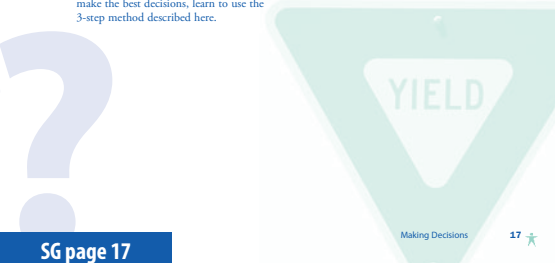
1. Have students refer to *Worksheet 4, Everyday Decisions* in the **Student Guide** (page 18).
2. Ask them to think of and write down at least four or five decisions that they make each week in the following categories: at home, in school, and with friends.
3. Tell them that these may be things that they do with or without giving them much thought; examples include:
 - what to wear
 - how much to study
 - what TV show to watch

Deciding Things on Your Own
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Step 3: Choose the best alternative and take the necessary action. Afterwards, think about whether you were satisfied with your decision.

Making Decisions



SG page 17

➡ Make a list of the most important decisions you have to make regularly at home, school, or with friends.
Check off whether you make those decisions **On Your Own** or whether you are influenced by others. Check all that apply to each decision.

Worksheet 4

Everyday Decisions

Decisions	On My Own	Parents	Friends	Teachers	Media
At Home					
1. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
At School					
1. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
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4. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
With Friends					
1. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

18 Student Guide 1

SG page 18

-
4. Tell students to indicate any source that influenced (that is, affected) each decision or whether they made the decision completely on their own.

Points to Make

- We are involved in decision making everyday. Some decisions are made without much thought, while others require more time and conscious effort.
- Many decisions that we make are influenced by other people.

F► **Difficult Decisions (10 minutes)**

1. Ask each student in the class to describe the most difficult decision they made recently that they are comfortable talking about.
2. Have students tell the class how they went about making the decision and who or what influenced them to make their final choice.
3. Ask students what they think is the best way of going about making any important decision.

F► C► **Making Better Decisions (10 minutes)**

1. Tell students that most people make all their decisions in the same way without realizing the difference between simple choices, everyday decisions, and major decisions. Simple choices (such as whether to eat vanilla or chocolate ice cream) can be decided based on what you like. Other decisions should be made after carefully thinking about the possible consequences or outcomes of different decisions. To do this as well as possible and make the best decisions, it helps to learn to use the 3-step method described on the next page and on page 17 in the **Student Guide**.

2. Describe and demonstrate the 3 Cs of Effective Decision-Making.

The 3 Cs of Effective Decision-Making

Step 1: Clarify what decision you need to make.

Step 2: Consider the possible alternatives (think about the different things you might decide to do) and the consequences of choosing each alternative; collect any additional information needed. (If you are trying to solve a problem, think up as many solutions as possible.)

Step 3: Choose the best alternative for you and take the necessary action. Afterwards, think about whether you were satisfied with your decision.

Example

Step 1: Clarify the decision to be made – what movie to go to.

Step 2: Consider the available alternatives – several different movies that you haven't seen yet.

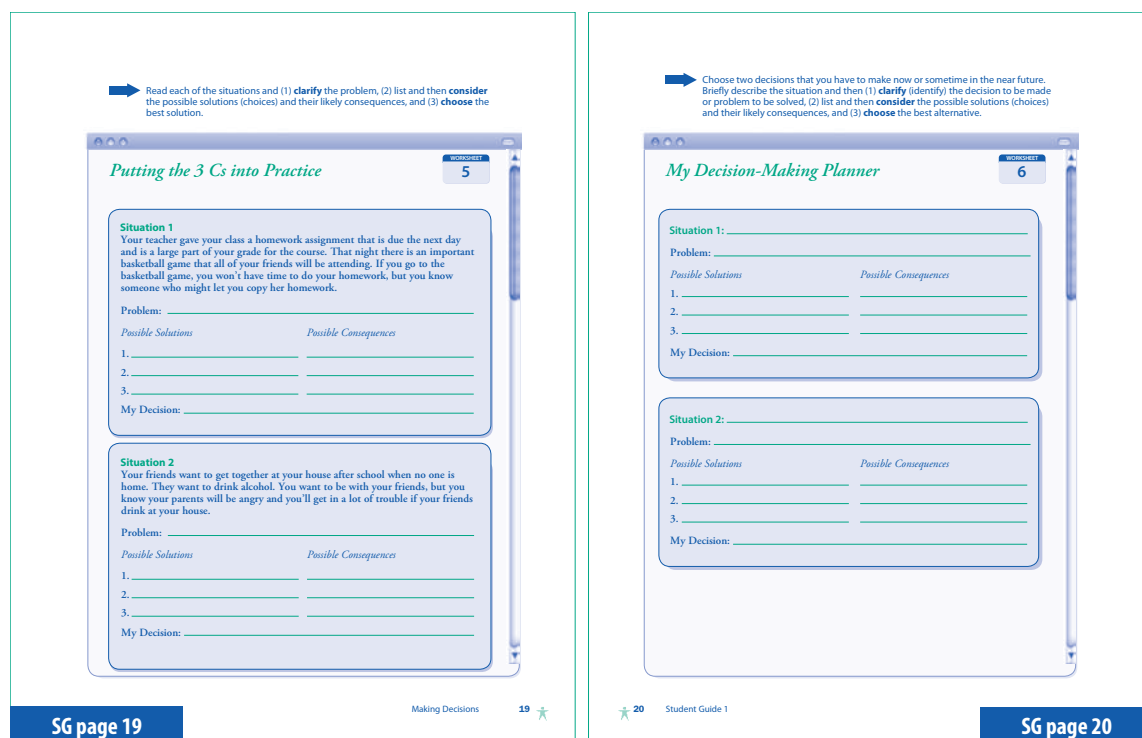
Step 3: Choose the best alternative for you. After the movie, think about whether the movie was what you expected.

BR► **Decision-Making Practice**

Three different practice exercises are provided to help students learn how to make more effective decisions using the 3 Cs approach. These include a scripted practice exercise and two unscripted exercises. In the scripted exercise, students use practice situations provided in the **Student Guide**. In the unscripted exercises, students develop their own decision-making situations.

Scripted Practice (Exercise #1) (10 minutes)

1. Have students fill out *Worksheet 5, Putting the 3 Cs into Practice* in the **Student Guide** (page 19). Have them read the two situations described in the Student Guide and identify the problem to be solved or decision to be made in each one.



2. Next, have students think up and list at least three possible solutions. Then have them list the possible consequences of each course of action.
3. After having considered possible solutions and their consequences, direct students to share their decision (solution) for each situation.
4. Invite students to share their decision-making responses to the situations presented in the Student Guide. This can be done with the class or in small groups.

BR► Unscripted Practice (Exercise #2) (10 minutes)

Ask students to turn to *Worksheet 6, My Decision-Making Planner* in the Student Guide (page 20).

Have students choose two decisions that they have to make either now or sometime in the near future. They should follow the same steps as with the previous exercise.

1. First, they should briefly describe the situation on the worksheet.
2. Then students should identify the problem or decision to be resolved, list three possible solutions, and write down any likely consequences.
3. Finally, they should make a decision and write it down in the appropriate place on the worksheet.

 Unscripted Practice (Exercise #3) (20 minutes)

 Have students develop 10 additional situations that require a decision or involve a problem to be solved. Then have students practice using the 3 Cs method of making decisions. ***Hint:*** Select situations that do not require them to obtain additional information.

1. Ask students to generate a list of common situations that they encounter that require them to make a decision.
2. Write these situations on the board.
3. Randomly select situations from the board and have students take turns using the 3 Cs decision-making method. Have them identify the problem or decision, state at least three possible solutions/options and their likely consequences, and pick one of the options as the solution to the problem or decision to be made.

Each student should be encouraged to go through the three steps of the 3 Cs decision-making method as quickly as possible so that everyone in class has at least one opportunity to practice making decisions.

BR► Group Pressures and Decision Making (25 minutes)

1. Ask students to what extent they think their decisions are influenced by other people. (Example: If some friends told you that you look good in blue, how would this affect the color you wear?)
2. Conduct the group conformity experiment given in **Appendix 1** (see page 2.9).
3. After the experiment is finished, discuss it with students. Provide this definition of *pressure*.

Definition

Pressure is trying to force someone to do something by using overpowering influence or persuasion.

Point to Make

- Pressures from the group to which we belong often influence our decisions.
4. Ask students to describe a situation that occurred recently in which they made a decision to go along with a group as a result of group pressure. (Example: You went along with the group decision to see a movie that you didn't particularly care to see.)
 5. Have students give reasons for why people are influenced so much by other people.

Examples

- Don't want to be an outcast
- To feel a part of the popular crowd
- To do things they think are cool or fun
- Don't have confidence in themselves
- Not sure what the right answer is to a problem

Point to Make

- We are often influenced by group members because everyone generally wants to be accepted by the group and not be considered outsiders, different, or unpopular.

Summary

- We are involved in making decisions every day. Some decisions are made without much thought, and others require more time and conscious effort.
- Pressure from the group of people we associate with often influences our decisions.
- We often let ourselves be influenced by group members largely because we want to be accepted by the group and not be considered unpopular.
- Examples of common tactics used to persuade someone to do something are flattery, presentation of facts, appeal to authority, promise of some future reward or punishment, persistence, and use of guilt.
- When we are being persuaded to do something, we need to make sure we do it only if it is consistent with what we want.

Homework for Next Unit

Student Guide – *My Reasons for Not Smoking*, Worksheet 5 (page 27)

Summary Page



Appendix 1: Group Conformity Experiment

Purpose

Background

This activity is based on the Asch conformity experiment, which effectively demonstrated the strength of peer pressure. The Asch experiment found that people will go along with a group and give a clearly incorrect answer even when they know it is wrong.

This version has been modified to make it more suitable for middle school classroom use. For more information, you can research the “Asch conformity experiment.”

Preparation

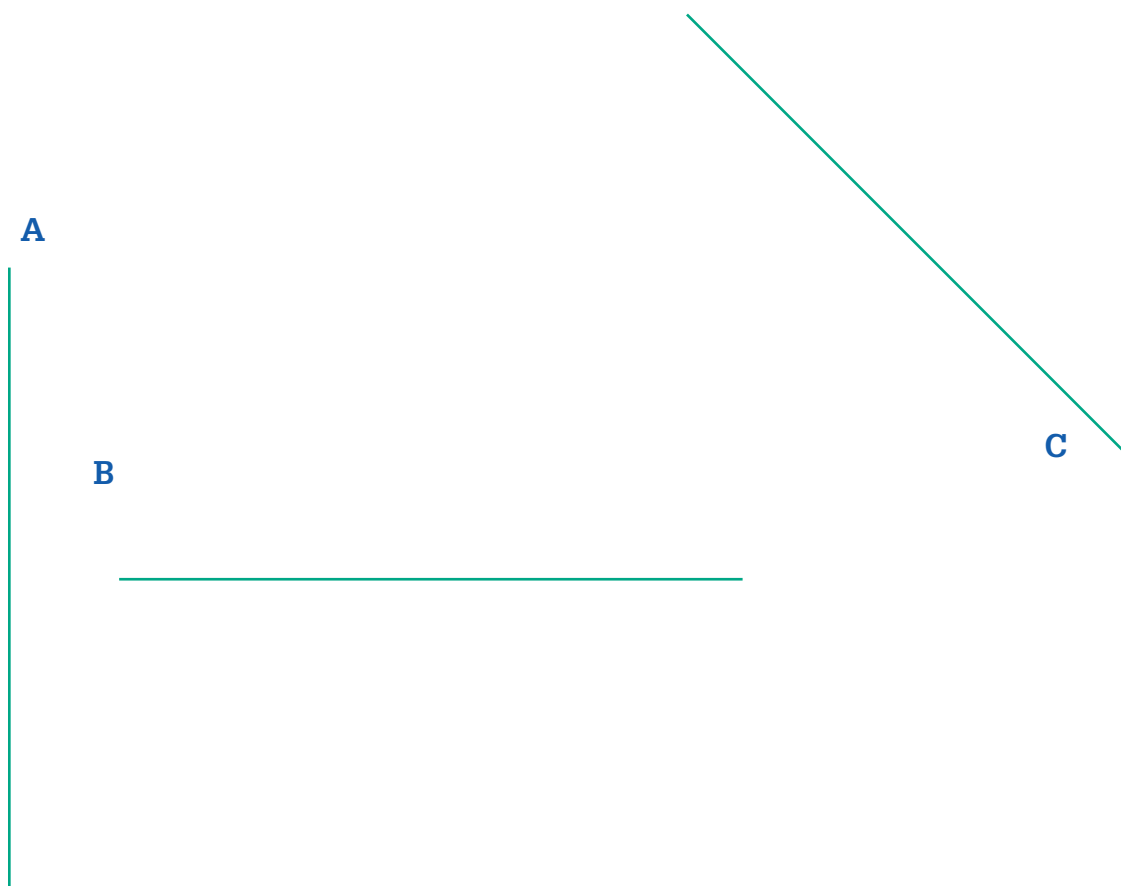
1. Before class begins, recruit 5 students (“Recruits 1, 2, 3, 4, 5”) whose answers are likely to influence the other students. Give the Recruits clear instructions to choose the lines in the order C-A-B. Tell them they must remember the order and not change it.
2. Before class, draw on the board three lines of identical length to match the layout in the diagram on page 2.10. It is crucial to maintain the proportional spacing and angles in the diagram. Label each line.

Note: There should be a tendency for the majority of the class to agree with the order given by the Recruits. The success of the activity, however, does not depend on this, as it is the students’ reactions to peer pressure that is the “teachable moment” here.

Procedure

1. Ask all students to look at the three lines on the board, and have them on their own decide the order of the lines from longest to shortest.
2. Call on seven students in this order: Recruit 1, Recruit 2, any other student, Recruit 3, any other student, Recruit 4, Recruit 5. Ask them how they ordered the lines.
3. Write all seven students’ responses on the board as they give them.
4. Ask the rest of the class to vote on the order of the lines.
5. Inform students that all the lines are the same length and that the Recruits were told what to say.
6. Have students discuss these questions:
 - What made you choose the order you did?
 - What was your reaction when you heard the same five answers? Were those answers different from yours?
 - Were you influenced about the order of the lines as a result of their answers? Why?
 - When else might you experience pressure to conform to someone’s actions (for example, being pressured to smoke a cigarette)?

Appendix 1 *(continued)*



Vocabulary

Word

Definition

decision

the act of making up one's mind

influence

a power indirectly affecting a person or an action

pressure

to force by overpowering influence or persuasion

persuasive tactics

a strategy by which someone convinces someone else to do, think, or say something



Princeton Health Press

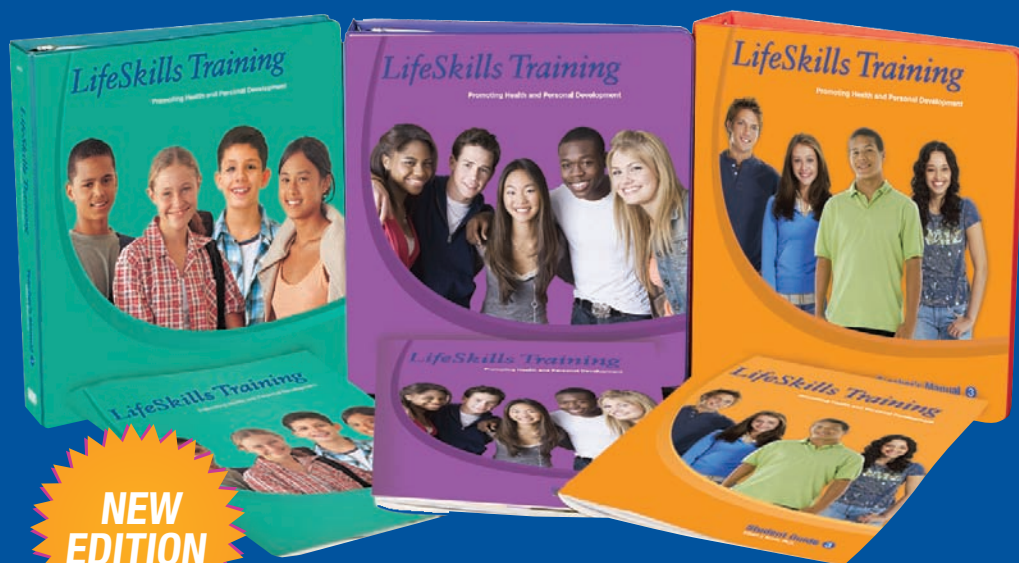
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