



## Power Through Empowerment

In the following lessons students will begin to develop the health skill of analyzing influences through the context of healthy relationships. At the middle school level, relationships with friends, peers, and significant others evolve, especially as students continue to high school. In these lessons, students will analyze influences that affect their relationships with others so they feel empowered to make healthy choices. The key message is that it's healthy to be empowered.

**Lesson Name:** Analyzing Influences & You

**Unit Name & Lesson #:** Power Through Empowerment: Lesson 1

**Grade Level:** 6-8

**Lesson Length:** 55 minutes *(This lesson may need to be implemented over two class periods or adjusted to fit your class time.)*

**Before beginning,** teachers should offer accommodations specifically mentioned in a student's IEP to support their ability to participate in the lesson. A sample list of common accommodations and modifications to aid you in selecting appropriate supports for students can be found in the educational material resources.

### National Standards & Grade-Level Outcomes for K-12 Physical Education:

Standard 2: Students will analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology, and other factors on health behaviors.

2.8.8 Explain the influence of personal values and beliefs on individual health practices and behaviors.

### Lesson Objective(s):

Students will be able to describe how influences affect health behaviors.

Students will be able to discuss and reflect how our internal voice can influence our relationships.

### Essential Question (related to objective):

How does your internal voice influence your behavior?

### Equipment Needed:

- Two buckets/baskets
- Scrap paper
- Easel pad paper
- Tape

### Thought of the Day

How I feel about myself directly affects my behavior.

### Lesson Overview:

Teachers will introduce the health skill of analyzing influences and the relevant skill cues. Although health. moves. minds.™ is not specifically mentioned in the lesson, teachers will introduce the program and explain how the next few lessons relate to the program. Teachers will also guide a discussion on the topic of internal voice and how it can affect one's behavior.

## Instant Activity

Time (minutes)

5

### Activity Progression:

Students will respond to the prompt:

“What are the top five influences on your health? Why did you choose these influences?”

(Activity from *Lesson Planning for Skills-Based Health Education*, SHAPE America, p. 72)

Guide a discussion around the influences students listed.

Ask students to define empowerment in their own words.

Empowerment is the process of becoming stronger and more confident, especially in controlling one’s life and claiming one’s rights.

Tell students that over the next few lessons they will be learning how they can empower themselves to make healthier choices by learning the health skill of analyzing influences.

Analyzing influences is the ability to analyze both internal and external influences that might affect health-related decisions.

Today will focus on introducing the skill, skill cues and discussion around one’s internal voice.

**Example Script:** “Tell me in your own words what you think the word empowerment means. [Allow for students to answer.] Empowerment is the process of becoming stronger and more confident. When we are more confident and stronger we can make healthier choices because we feel secure in who we are as a person.

Today we are going discuss how outside influences and even how our internal voice can affect how we make health-related decisions.”

### Definitions:

- Analyzing influences is the ability to analyze both internal and external influences that might affect health-related decisions.
- Empowerment is the process of becoming stronger and more confident, especially in controlling one’s life and claiming one’s rights.

### Checks for Understanding:

- How would being empowered allow me to make healthier choices?

## Empowerment

**Empowerment is the process of becoming stronger and more confident, especially in controlling one’s life and claiming one’s rights.**

Grades 6-8



## Learning Activity 1

Influence Snowballs

Time (minutes)  
10

### Checks for Understanding:

- How are influences similar when making healthy and unhealthy decisions?

### Activity Progression:

1. Ask students for a health-enhancing behavior that students their age might be engaging in. Write the behavior in the middle of a circle on the board. Ask students to write one influence they think might affect a middle schooler's decision to engage, or not engage, in the health behavior on the board (e.g., parents, friends, etc.). After writing the influence, students are to crumple up the papers like snowballs and throw them into a bucket.
2. Repeat the activity with a second behavior, but this one should be a risky health behavior. Be sure to use a second bucket to keep the two sets of influences separate.
3. Ask the students to grab a "snowball" from the first bucket. Have students share the influences written on their papers. Write up each unique influence on the board around the health behavior. If an influence is repeated, place a check mark beside it.
4. Repeat with the risky behavior influences.
5. Have students share their observations about what is on the board. Ask students:
  - Are there similar influences for the health-enhancing and risky behaviors? What does that tell us?
  - Are there differences?
  - Which do you think are the strongest influences?
  - Why do you think certain influences have more check marks than others?

(Activity from *Lesson Planning for Skills-Based Health Education*, SHAPE America, p. 74)

## Learning Activity 2

Skill Cues

Time (minutes)  
5

### Cues:

- Identify the influence
- Analyze the influence
- Examine factors and impact
- Consider an action plan

### Checks for Understanding:

- What are the four skill cues for analyzing influences?

### Activity Progression:

Introduce and explain the skill cues for analyzing influences.

(Activity from *Lesson Planning for Skills-Based Health Education*, SHAPE America, p. 65)

#### Example script:

“So, we have started to identify different influences that might affect our decisions around healthy behaviors. Next, we are going to learn the skill cues to help you better identify influences that might affect you and your decisions.”

Go through the following skill cues and explain each one:

#### Identify the influence

##### Analyze the influence

How do I know it is influencing me?

What messages am I receiving from this influence?

Is this a positive or a negative influence?

How much is this influencing my thoughts, values, beliefs, or actions?

##### Examine factors and impact

How are other factors interacting with this influence?

How might these factors affect my thoughts, values, beliefs and behavior choices?

##### Consider an action plan

Do I need to do anything about this influence?

What is the best plan of action for handling this influence in my life?

(Skill cues image from *Lesson Planning for Skills-Based Health Education*, SHAPE America, p. 65)

## Analyzing Influences

The ability to analyze both internal and external influences that might affect health-related decisions.

Grades 6-8



## Learning Activity 3

Internal Voice as an  
Influence

Time (minutes)  
20

### Checks for Understanding:

- How does someone's self-esteem affect their health?

## Thought of the Day

How I feel about myself  
directly affects my  
behavior.

Grades 6-8



### Activity Progression:

Ask students to reflect about the Thought of the Day:  
How I feel about myself directly affects my behavior.

Create a classroom discussion from students' answers.

Ask students if they agree or disagree and create a discussion:

Agree or Disagree: You will make better decisions the more you value yourself.

Explain that the voice they hear the most is their own.

### Example script:

“Who do you hear most in your head? Probably yourself. Most of us are always having an internal conversation with ourselves. Earlier we saw how outside influences can affect our decisions, but your own thoughts and self-esteem can influence your behavior as well as outside influences.”

Discuss the following questions/scenarios:

- Give an example of a parent who is constantly negative to their child. (You are a pain, you're stupid, you will never be anything, etc.) How will that child feel about him or herself?
- What if the parent is nurturing, loving, and positive? (You are great, I love you, you will do better next time, etc.) How will the child feel about himself/herself?
- Are you nurturing, loving and positive to yourself? Are YOU the positive or negative parent?

- What does your internal voice say to you? Students do not have to answer this question out loud but should answer this question to themselves. If your students keep a writing journal, have them respond in their journals. Give some of the following as potential thoughts people might think about themselves:

- I'm smart
- I'm pretty/handsome
- I'm ugly
- I'm stupid
- I'm OK
- I'm weak
- I'm a good friend
- I'm nothing
- I'll never be loved
- I deserve to be loved
- I deserve to be treated well

Have students pair up with a random partner (e.g., someone who was born in the same season as them). Ask them to share how a person's internal thoughts can influence their relationships with others, such as friends, parents or other classmates and peers.

**Extension opportunity:** Give each student a piece of construction paper and a marker. Have them write a positive “I” statement and have them post it somewhere in the classroom where they can see it.

## Learning Activity 4

Impact of Influences

Time (minutes)  
10

### Checks for Understanding:

- How do influences affect our health behaviors?
- Walk around the room reading the responses on sticky notes. Start small discussions with students about their responses to gauge their understanding.

### Activity Progression:

Post each of the following questions on large pieces of easel paper around the room (one question per paper).

Give students sticky notes and allow them to write their answers and stick them on the paper:

- How do peers and peer pressure influence our relationships with others?
- How do personal values and beliefs influence our relationships with others?
- How does technology influence our relationships with others?
- How do life events influence our relationships with others?
- How might influences change during our lifetime?
- What influences do our families have on our lives?

After about five minutes, review all of the written answers.

(The list of bulleted questions is modified from *Lesson Planning for Skills-Based Health Education*, SHAPE America, p. 74)

Closure

Time (minutes)

5

**Activity Progression:**

Review the day's lesson and share with students that over the next few lessons you will continue to practice the skill of analyzing influences, especially when it comes to relationships.

Have students reflect in a journal or on a piece of paper about the day's lesson and what they discussed with their partner.



**Lesson Name:** Analyzing Influences and the Power of Words

**Unit Name & Lesson #:** Power Through Empowerment: Lesson 2

**Grade Level:** 6-8

**Lesson Length:** 50 minutes *(This lesson may need to be implemented over two class periods or adjusted to fit your class time.)*

**Before beginning,** teachers should offer accommodations specifically mentioned in a student's IEP to support their ability to participate in the lesson. change to: A sample list of common accommodations and modifications to aid you in selecting appropriate supports for students can be found in the educational material resources.

### **National Standards & Grade-Level Outcomes for K-12 Physical Education:**

Standard 2: Students will analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology, and other factors on health behaviors.

### **Lesson Objective(s):**

Students will be able to analyze influences on their own behaviors.

Students will be able to describe and reflect on how outside messages can influence health behaviors.

### **Essential Question (related to objective):**

How do messages influence someone's ability to make healthy choices?

### **Equipment Needed:**

- Pictures of stick figures (print out one for each student)
- Tape/glue sticks

### **Thought of the Day**

Kind words do not cost much.  
Yet they accomplish much.  
— Blaise Pascal

### **Lesson Overview:**

Teachers will model the skill of analyzing influences as well as giving students the opportunity to practice the skill themselves. Teachers will have students engage in an activity to help them visualize how negative and positive messages can have an effect on someone emotionally and influence health behaviors.

## Instant Activity

## Time (minutes)

5

### Cues:

- Identify the influence
- Analyze the influence
- Examine the influence
- Consider an action plan

### Activity Progression:

After students take their seats, ask them to write down the skill cues for analyzing influences from the previous class. Encourage students to write down any terms, questions, or concepts that they remember, even if they can't remember the skill cues exactly. This process can help with retention of material when students are encouraged to recall what they remember even if it isn't completely correct.

(Activity from *Lesson Planning for Skills-Based Health Education*, SHAPE America, p. 76)

Review the skill cues as a class.

#### Identify the influence

##### Analyze the influence

How do I know it is influencing me?

What messages am I receiving from this influence?

Is this a positive or a negative influence?

How much is this influencing my thoughts, values, beliefs or actions?

##### Examine factors and impact

How are other factors interacting with this influence?

How might these factors affect my thoughts, values, beliefs and behavior choices?

##### Consider an action plan.

Do I need to do anything about this influence?

What is the best plan of action for handling this influence in my life?

(Skill cues image from *Lesson Planning for Skills-Based Health Education*, SHAPE America, p. 65)

## Learning Activity 1

Modeling the Skill Cues:  
Web of Influences

Time (minutes)  
5

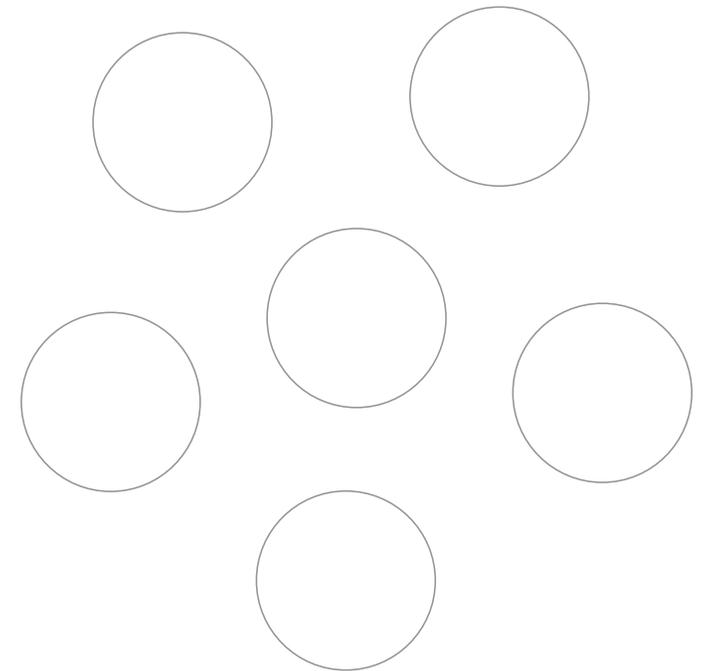
## Checks for Understanding:

- How are different influences connected?

### Activity Progression:

Walk students through the skill cues of analyzing influences. Be sure to allow students to give input for each of the steps.

1. Draw a circle in the middle of the board. Ask the class to pick a health-related behavior they do or don't engage in. It can be healthy or unhealthy. For this example, we will use "not using drugs."
2. Draw smaller circles around the circle, and write all the people or things that influence your behavior (the influences can be positive or negative). Try to come up with three to five influences. Examples: parents, spiritual (consider your district's policies before choosing this as an example), social media, friends.
3. Identify, by including a "+" or "-" sign, whether the influences are positive or negative. Keep in mind that an influence might be positive and negative depending on the situation.
4. Have students guide you to draw lines from the behavior to the influences. Students will decide on a system of their choice to indicate the strength of each influence on the behavior (e.g., different colors, types of lines, symbols, etc.). For example, a double line means a stronger influence than a single line while a dotted line is the least influential.
5. After you have drawn all the lines from student responses, have students come up with messages they receive from their strongest influences about this behavior. Tell students to keep in mind that the message may not always be easy to recognize and might not be something that is told directly to you. For example:
  - Spiritual – A higher power will judge me.
  - Social media – Everyone uses drugs to have a good time.
  - Parents – They would be disappointed or get mad at me; I could get grounded; They won't trust me.
  - Friends – Some friends use drugs and it doesn't hurt them and they have fun; Some friends don't use drugs at all and they are still fun.
6. Have students look at the web you have created, ask them if they think there are any other connections that exist between the influences. For example, is there a connection between the influence of media and your peers? Represent these connections between the influences with lines.



(Activity from *Lesson Planning for Skills-Based Health Education*, SHAPE America, p. 78)

## Learning Activity 2

Web of Influences

## Time (minutes)

10

### Checks for Understanding:

- How do personal influences affect your own health-related behaviors?
- How can influences affect health-related decisions in relationships?

### Activity Progression:

Have students repeat steps 1 to 6 above but use a behavior of their choice.

Then, have students do the activity again with the health behavior of being friends with someone who mistreats them.

After completing this activity, have students write a short statement about:

- How reflecting on personal influences has helped them learn more about themselves, (or not, if they don't feel that it did).
- How influences can affect decisions in relationships.

## Learning Activity 3

Analyzing the Power of Words

Time (minutes)  
25

## Checks for Understanding:

- How do outside messages influence health-related behaviors?

### Activity Progression:

Print out copies of a stick figure and hand one to each student. Instruct the students that this person's name is "Sam" and s/he is having a tough day, but they must rip the paper (girl/boy) with each of the following comments:

- Sam's mom says, "You are so lazy and slow this morning ... well, actually every day!" Students will now rip a piece of paper from the picture.
- Sam's sister says, "You are wearing that today??? You don't look good in that shirt." Students will rip another piece of paper from the picture.
- Sam's friend says, "You really shouldn't be invited to the party Friday. Just kidding!" Students will rip another piece of paper from the picture.
- Sam's teacher says, "I don't know what's going on, but you need to get it together or you're not going to pass this class." Students rip another piece of paper from the picture.

Ask the students to tell you how Sam now looks. Potential responses:

- Awful
- Not together
- Like they are hurting
- Wounded

Guide students through the discussion to understand that although words don't physically tear in real life, they can tear us emotionally. So, tearing Sam is a metaphor.

Tell students it's time to put Sam back together with the power of positive words. For each positive comment, students should put back one piece of the torn paper.

- Sam's mom says, "I love you" and gives her/him a hug.
- Sam's sister says, "You look so cute today."
- Sam's friend says, "I'm so glad you are coming to the party with me Friday. You are fun to hang out with."
- Sam's teacher says, "You have been working hard in this class. You have perseverance!"

Ask the students to tell you how Sam looks now. Potential responses:

- Better than she/he did before
- Scarred

Quote the thought of the day: "Kind words do not cost much. Yet they accomplish much." Have students reflect on the quote and share their thoughts in relation to the activity.

### Example script:

"Let's look at the thought of the day: 'Kind words do not cost much. Yet they accomplish much.' Thinking about the activity we just completed and the thought of the day, how do you think those negative messages Sam heard can influence his/her choices around health-related behaviors?" [Allow students to respond]

Guide students through a discussion about how influences from family and friends and their messages can affect how someone feels about themselves and their ability to make healthy choices in the future.

**Closure**

**Time (minutes)**

5

**Activity Progression:**

Review the day's lesson.

Ask students to identify the skill cues for analyzing influences.

Have them write a 5-7 sentence reflection about how the power of words, or influences of others, can affect a person's ability to make healthy choices.



**Lesson Name: My Values and Beliefs**

**Unit Name & Lesson #: Power Through Empowerment: Lesson 3**

**Grade Level: 6-8**

**Lesson Length: 50 minutes** *(This lesson may need to be implemented over two class periods or adjusted to fit your class time.)*

**Before beginning,** teachers should offer accommodations specifically mentioned in a student's IEP to support their ability to participate in the lesson. A sample list of common accommodations and modifications to aid you in selecting appropriate supports for students can be found in the educational material resources.

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### **National Standards & Grade-Level Outcomes for K-12 Physical Education:**

Standard 2: Students will analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology, and other factors on health behaviors.

2.8.8: Explain the influence of personal values and beliefs on individual health practices and behaviors.

### **Lesson Objective(s):**

Students will be able to identify their own personal beliefs and values.

Students will be able to create a rubric around healthy relationships.

### **Essential Question (related to objective):**

What are my personal values and beliefs?

### **Equipment Needed:**

- Projector
- Laptop/computer
- Speakers
- My Values and Beliefs worksheet

### **Thought of the Day**

When your values are clear to you, your decisions become easy.  
— Roy E. Disney

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### **Lesson Overview:**

Students will continue to practice the health skill of analyzing influences. First students will identify their values and beliefs, then analyze a scenario.

**Instant Activity**

**Time (minutes)**

5

**Activity Progression:**

After students take their seats, have them write their responses to the following prompt:

“List three people or items that are very important to you. Think of people or items that make your world better because they are in it.”

(Activity from *Lesson Planning for Skills-Based Health Education*, SHAPE America, p. 79)

Explain to students that through the previous lessons they have been exploring influences on health behaviors. Now, they will explore their own personal values and beliefs and how those values and beliefs influence the relationships they have with others.

**Example script:**

“I’m sure some of the people you listed in the Instant Activity influence the decisions you make or your values and beliefs. We are going to learn more about values and beliefs today.”

## Learning Activity 1

Skill Practice: My Values and Beliefs

Time (minutes)  
20

## Checks for Understanding:

- What are values?
- What are beliefs?

### Activity Progression:

Ask students to define value and belief. Summarize their responses on the board.

- Value – Something that you think is important in life.
- Belief – An opinion you have about something or someone that you understand to be true.

#### Example script:

“Today we are going to identify our own values and beliefs, but before we do that we need to make sure we know what a value is and what a belief is. Let’s define what a value is first. What do you think a value is? [Take responses from students and summarize them into a list on the board.] Great stuff! So, from what I hear it sounds like we agree that a value is something that you think is important in life. [Write the definition on the board.]

“Let’s do the same thing for a belief. What do you think a belief is? [Take responses from students and summarize them into a list on the board.] Alright, good work again! The difference between a value and a belief is that a belief is an opinion. Based on what everyone said, do we agree that a belief is an opinion you have about something or someone that you understand to be true? [Have students give a thumbs up for agree, thumbs down for disagree or thumb to side for not sure.] I saw mostly thumbs up, so we now have a definition for belief. [Write the definition down for a belief.]

Introduce the next activity.

“We’ve been learning about analyzing influences and how external messages can affect our internal messages to ourselves, as well as how all that can influence our health behaviors.”

“Today we are going to specifically identify our own values and beliefs and how they could potentially affect our health and health behaviors.”

Have students complete the My Values and Beliefs worksheet below.  
My Values and Beliefs – Lesson 3 (Activity from *Lesson Planning for Skills-Based Health Education*, SHAPE America, p. 82)

Identifying values and beliefs can be difficult for students. Provide a list of examples that students can choose from.

Sample list of values with definitions:

- Honesty – Telling the truth
- Commitment – Making a promise and following through on it
- Loyalty – Devotion or faithfulness to someone or something
- Fun – Enjoyment
- Respect – Considering other people’s feelings, wishes, rights, or traditions before you act
- Responsibility – Doing the things you are expected to do
- Justice – Treating all people fairly, no matter who they are
- Courage – Doing what you know is right even when it is hard to do
- Integrity – Sticking to your values despite what others might think
- Excellence – Doing the best you can
- Citizenship – Supporting and being a good member of your community
- Teamwork – Working with other people to achieve a goal

Sample belief statements:

- I believe that it doesn’t matter if you win or lose in a game.
- I believe it is important to always tell the truth.
- I believe you should always listen to your parents.
- I believe it’s important to have fun.
- I believe taking care of my body is a priority.

**Optional:** Under the “My Values” section of the worksheet, create a third column, “Why is this a value for me?” In this column, students briefly explain why this is something important to them or who may have influenced them to have that as a value.

Be sure to have students save this worksheet for the next lesson.

**Learning Activity 2**    **Time (minutes)**  
Skill Practice: What    20  
Would You Do?

**Skills Cues:**

- Identify the influence.
- Analyze the influence.
- Examine factors and impact.
- Consider an action plan.

**Checks for Understanding:**

- How do our personal beliefs and values affect our behavior?

**Activity Progression:**

Tell students they are now going to analyze a situation and determine how factors might be influencing behaviors.

**Example script:**

“Now that we have identified some values and beliefs that are important to us, we are going to watch a clip from ABC News called ‘What Would You Do?’ I want to you to keep in mind your own values and beliefs and what you would do in the situation shown in the clip.

What Would You Do?: Mean Girls clip from ABC News website:  
<https://abcnews.go.com/WhatWouldYouDo/video/girls--32064758>

After watching the video clip, have students answer the following questions on the back of their “My Value and Beliefs” worksheet.

- What would you do if you were a bystander in this situation? Why?
- What values in your life affect your decision?

Allow time for students to answer the prompts and then share out their responses. The goal is to talk about how personal values affect our behaviors and how external factors might make us act against our values.

Questions to help guide discussion:

- What would you do if you were in the group and witnessed the bullying by your friends?
- Would it be easy to go against your friends to stand up for the victim?
- Why do you think some people might go against their values?
- What would you do if you were the girl eating ice cream?
- Why do you think some people might let themselves be mistreated? (This is an opportunity to review the last couple of lessons on external and internal messages.)

(Activity adapted from *Lesson Planning for Skills-Based Health Education*, SHAPE America, p. 82)

Closure

Time (minutes)  
5

**Activity Progression:**

Share the Thought of the Day: “When your values are clear to you, your decisions become easy.”

Ask students if they agree or disagree with thumbs up for yes, thumbs down for no, or thumbs sideways for not sure.

Have students share out to explain why they agreed or disagreed.

**Example script:**

“It’s important to know our personal values and beliefs because it can make decisions easier, but it doesn’t always mean it will be easy. However, when you can identify your personal values and beliefs clearly, you can allow yourself to live by those beliefs and values, which helps you make better decisions daily, especially around your health.”

**Checks for Understanding:**

- Do our personal values and beliefs always mean we will do what we think is right?

**Thought of the Day**

**When your values are clear  
to you, your decisions  
become easy.**

Grades 6-8





**Lesson Name: Deal Breakers and Past Decisions**

**Unit Name & Lesson #: Power Through Empowerment: Lesson 4**

**Grade Level: 6-8**

**Lesson Length: 50 minutes** *(This lesson may need to be implemented over two class periods or adjusted to fit your class time.)*

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### **National Standards & Grade-Level Outcomes for K-12 Physical Education:**

Standard 2: Students will analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology, and other factors on health behaviors.

2.8.8: Explain the influence of personal values and beliefs on individual health practices and behaviors.

### **Lesson Objective(s):**

Students will be able to use their personal values and beliefs to create a relationship rubric.

Students will be able to analyze influences that affected a decision in a past situation with a friend or romantic partner.

### **Essential Question (related to objective):**

How do my own personal values and beliefs influence me?

### **Equipment Needed:**

- Relationship rubric
- Analyzing a Past Decision worksheet

### **Thought of the Day**

The most courageous act is still to think for yourself. Aloud.  
– Coco Chanel

### **Lesson Overview:**

Students will have the opportunity to apply the skill of analyzing influences by reflecting on a past situation with a friend/romantic partner. They will also create a rubric to help them determine relationship deal breakers and how those relate to their own personal beliefs and values. Teachers should connect empowerment with analyzing influences and how it helps to make healthier choices.

**Instant Activity**

**Time (minutes)**

5

**Activity Progression:**

Have students answer the following questions:

- **What are qualities or behaviors you would like in a friend or significant other?**
- **What are qualities or behaviors you would not like in a friend or significant other?**

For younger students, you may choose to focus on the aspect of qualities in a friend instead of a significant other.

## Learning Activity 1

Feedback and Reinforcement:  
Friendship/Dating Rubric

Time (minutes)  
20

## Checks for Understanding:

- How do my own values and beliefs influence the relationships I'm in?

### Activity Progression:

Review the Instant Activity. Have students share the good qualities they would want in a friend/significant other. Some examples:

- Respectful
- Trustworthy
- Have fun together
- We get along
- Gives me compliments
- Good communicator
- Honest
- Helpful to each other
- Supportive
- Funny
- Comfortable

Have students share qualities they would not want in a friend/significant other. Some examples:

- Says mean things to me
- Calls me names
- Hits or pushes me
- Tries to scare me (intimidation)
- Controlling
- Poor communication
- Makes me do things I don't want to do
- Always right – other person is always wrong
- Fight a lot
- We always do what they want to do
- Doesn't listen to me
- Talks about me to other people

Students will use the responses from the Instant Activity to create a Friendship or Dating (for older students) rubric.

Have students circle or highlight the top five qualities they want in a friend or partner.

Have students draw a table with four columns and six rows on a piece of paper or make worksheets to print. Label each column with the following:

- Qualities I would like in a friend/partner
- Why are these qualities important to me?
- Qualities I would NOT like in a friend/partner

Have students put under the “Qualities I would like ...” column the top five qualities they circled. Then have students explain why each positive quality is important to them.

Next students will add the negative qualities in the third column, “Qualities I would NOT like...”

Explain to students that the qualities they have identified could be considered “deal breakers,” meaning that if a friend or partner did not possess those qualities the student would not be their friend/romantic partner.

Last, have students take out the worksheet from the last class, “My Values and Beliefs.” Have them look at what they wrote on the worksheet and what they identified in their rubric. Have students answer the prompt:

- How do the qualities I do/don't want in a friend/romantic partner compare to my own values and beliefs?

Emphasize to students the importance of knowing ahead of time the qualities they want in a friend or romantic partner. Questions to pose for discussion:

- How do your own values and beliefs influence the type of people you will be friends with or date?
- Do you want to be friends with people who have different beliefs and values as you? Why or why not?
- What are some benefits of knowing what you want in a friendship/romantic relationship?

Ideally this would lead to a discussion about setting standards for ourselves and how we allow others to treat us.

### Example script:

“Each of you have identified what qualities you want and don't want in a friend or romantic partner. It's a good thing to be aware of our own values and beliefs because that helps us set standards of what we will and won't accept from people. This is important to be able to do as you continue through school. It won't always be easy! As we talked about before, sometimes we may go against our own values and beliefs because of outside factors. But, having a strong sense of who you are and what you believe will be helpful in hard situations.”

**Learning Activity 2**  
Assessment:  
Analyzing a Past Decision

**Time (minutes)**  
20

**Checks for Understanding:**

- What influences resulted in your decision?

**Activity Progression:**

Have students apply the skill of analyzing influences to a past decision they made.

Have students reflect on a time when they were in a situation where they had to make a decision. The situation should specifically involve a friend or significant other. If a student is having trouble thinking a specific situation with a friend/significant other, allow them to choose another scenario. It can be a positive or negative scenario. Then have them answer the following:

1. Briefly describe the scenario in a few sentences.
2. Who was there?
3. What did you decide to do?
4. What were some internal influences that contributed to your decision?  
(Think about your internal voice.)
5. What were some external influences that contributed to your decision?
6. Would you make the same decision today? Why or why not?

Have students use the relationship rubric they created to “score” the friend /significant other from their scenario. They should check off in the blank columns which qualities their friend/ significant other possess.

Students will answer the following:

- How many good qualities does your friend/significant other have?
- How many negative qualities does your friend/significant other have?
- Do you think the positive or negative qualities in your friend/significant other influenced the decision in your scenario?

**Closure**

**Time (minutes)**

10

### Activity Progression:

Review the definition for empowerment.

State the Thought of the Day: “The most courageous act is still to think for yourself. Aloud.”

– Coco Chanel

Ask students if they agree or disagree. Why or why not?

Allow students to think for a moment on the Thought of the Day.

After a couple of minutes, have one student stand on one side of the room if they agree and have another student stand on the opposite side if they disagree. Try to have the two students have polar opposite positions.

Have the rest of the class stand in a line between the two students based on how much they agree with each position. Students can discuss among themselves why they feel the way they do. Students should talk with other students who feel the way they do.

Next, choose a student from each cluster to summarize the group’s position. Students are allowed to change their mind once they hear a group’s position and can move to another group if they choose.

Emphasize to students how being empowered is about being stronger and more confident and making better choices, especially in friendships and relationships.

### Example script:

“Being empowered is about being stronger and more confident and make better choices, especially in friendships and relationships. One way to do that is being able to understand how influences can affect our choices.”

“Once you get better at analyzing your influences and how they affect you, you can better stick to your own personal beliefs and values, making it easier to make healthier choices. Middle school may be tough for some, but you have the skills to get through it and make healthy choices! And remember, I’m always here to talk through anything with you if you need help, if you want to vent, or if you just want someone to talk to.”

- **Empowerment** is the process of becoming stronger and more confident, especially in controlling one’s life and claiming one’s rights.

### Checks for Understanding:

- How does being empowered allow me to make healthier choices?

## Thought of the Day

**The most courageous act  
is still to think for yourself.  
Aloud.— Coco Chanel**

Grades 6-8

