



PURPOSE

To distinguish humans from other living beings with their power to choose.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson students will be able to:

1. Recognize the power **to choose** as one only we humans have.
2. Apply their power to choose to grow in excellence.

MATERIALS & RESOURCES

- **Good Choice/Bad Choice** flashcards (see Materials)
- **Parents' Help: Good Choices** letter (see Materials)
- Supplemental materials:
 - **"Teen's vision: Help children see clearer," CNN** article
(<http://edition.cnn.com/2013/09/05/health/cnnheroes-gupta-glasses/index.html>)
 - **"Hero: Yash Gupta," CNN** video
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FFwmM2DZ-Ak>)
 - **"Helping homeless kids put their best foot forward," CNN** article
(<http://edition.cnn.com/2013/09/26/us/cnnheroes-lowinger-homeless-shoes/index.html>)
 - **"Hero: Nicholas Lowinger," CNN** video
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=smSEUAYdhtQ>)

VOCABULARY

- **to choose**: the ability to select between options

PROCEDURE

Step 1: Review the previous lessons. Repeat the **Dignity Song**. With time constraints, focus on a handful of students before moving on.

Explain: We've learned about human dignity, which is our unique value as human persons. We've also learned about the powers that all living beings—plants, animals, and humans—share: the

powers to eat, grow, and reproduce. We share some powers with animals—including feeling emotions and using our five senses and the three new senses about which we learned. Let's see if we can remember those new senses. Close your eyes, and use your memory to see the last time that you used any sort of transportation, such as a bus or a car. Tell me about it.

Now, close your eyes, and use your imagination to the place that you would go visit if you could visit any place in the whole world! Tell me about it.

Last time we learned about a special power we do not share with plants nor animals. What is this power? (To think). What is the most excellent way to use this power? (Using the power to think for the good of other people). Ask a few student volunteers to share their invention with the class. How would your invention help other people? What can you do now to prepare to be a great inventor?

Step 2: Teach the power to choose, and start with a hook. Pair students up, and ask them to play **Rock, Paper, Scissors?**. Ask: Why did you choose whether to show rock, paper, or scissors?

Write on the board:

- **to choose**

Explain: Humans have the special power to choose, to choose one action over others, knowing which action they are choosing and why they are choosing it. We chose the specific actions we wanted to show during the action.

As a group, discuss:

- Remember the last time you laughed so hard your stomach hurt? Did you make a choice to laugh so hard?
- Your teacher asks you to bring a box of crayons from one side of the classroom to the other. On the way, you trip on the rug and drop the box, scattering the crayons across the floor. Did you make a choice to listen to your teacher? To trip? To drop the crayons?
- What is the difference between listening to your teacher and accidentally tripping?

Step 3: Teach the importance of choosing excellent actions.

As a class, brainstorm a list of actions that show respect. Write these actions in a list on the board.

Then hand students their own set of the **Good Choice/Bad Choice** flashcards, which they should sort between the two categories. Model the sorting with the class by using two flashcards as an example. For the model cards, ask: Is this a good choice or a bad choice? Does it respect or disrespect another person's dignity? Why?

Then ask students to choose two good choices that they make routinely. Congratulate and encourage them!

Step 4: Summarize: In our last lesson, we learned that we have the power to think: about ourselves, about the world, about ideas! We can do a lot of good for the world when we put our power to think to good use, and think about excellent things. We also have the power to choose, which lets us select excellent actions. We can then grow in excellence ourselves, and can help others grow in excellence also.

FOLLOW-UP & HOMEWORK

Ask students to practice two of their good choices, and to share it with their parents as they practice all week. They can take the *Parents' Help: Good Choices* letter home to explain. Completed assignments can be posted on the wall with stickers.

SUPPLEMENTS

Supplement 1: Share *The Legend of the Dipper*.

Once upon a time, a young girl lived with her mother in a tiny village. They were very happy together, and all was well. But then, one day the mother fell gravely ill. She laid in her bed for days because she was so sick, and the little girl tried her hardest to make her mother feel better. Eventually, the little girl needed to go the spring in the forest to collect more water for her mother to drink, but the girl was so tiny that she could only carry a small, tin dipper. Even though the dipper was small, the little girl knew that it would help her mother, so she grabbed the dipper and she began to run towards the forest.

The little girl ran and ran for what seemed like forever. She finally reached the spring, and she filled her dipper to the brim with the sweet, cold water. Then, the young girl began her long journey home. The way home was long, and the young girl was so tired. She would trip over rocks and stumble over bushes, and some of the water fell out onto the ground. As she was walking, the young girl spotted a small dog in the woods. He looked so tired and hot, and the young girl felt sorry for him. She knelt beside the dog and offered him a little bit of the precious water meant for her mother. As she did this, her small, tin dipper turned into a beautiful silver dipper, but the girl did not even notice. When the dog had drunk enough water, the young girl continued on her way home.

After a while, she encountered an old man walking along the road. The sun was so hot, and the man was very thirsty. He asked the young girl for a drink of water. Even though there

was only a little bit of water left, the young girl knew that she should be kind, so she gave the man a drink. As she did this, the dipper changed from silver to gold, but the young girl did not notice. Once the man had finished his drink, the young girl continued her journey home, but eventually she too became thirsty. She was thirsty and weak from her long journey, but she didn't drink any of the water because she knew her mother needed it more than she did.

Finally, the young girl arrived back at her house. She ran inside and gave the dipper to her mother. As the mother drank, she became healthy and whole once again, and the dipper changed from gold to diamonds, emeralds, rubies, and sapphires. The dipper began to glitter with such beauty, and it was taken up into the sky. Up and up it went until it finally nestled amongst the other stars so all the world could see it. And now, every night when you look up to the stars. Look for the little dipper shining so high up above, and remember the story of the little girl who was brave and kind.

Ask:

- What is excellent about the girl's choice?
- How do choices like this help bring good into the world?
- How can we imitate her choices?

Supplement 2: Tell the story of Yash Gupta. Use the *"Teen's vision: Help children see clearer," CNN* article, and the *"Hero: Yash Gupta," CNN* video, for wider context and preparation.

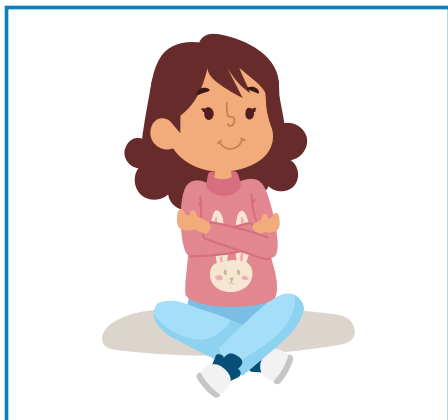
Ask:

- How does this story demonstrate the power of human action?
- Does this action show respect for human dignity? How?
- Does Gupta's action help other people to live excellent lives? How?
- How can you make a difference?

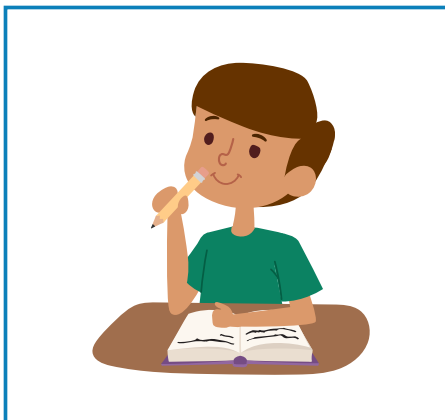
Supplement 3: Tell the story of Nicholas Lowinger. Use the *"Helping homeless kids put their best foot forward," CNN* article, and *"Hero: Nicholas Lowinger," CNN* video, for wider context and preparation.

Explain: Nicholas' story is one example of the way that a simple choice on the part of one individual person can have immense repercussions on the lives of other people. First he donated his old shoes, then he continued this work and made a foundation that provides shoes for children in need.

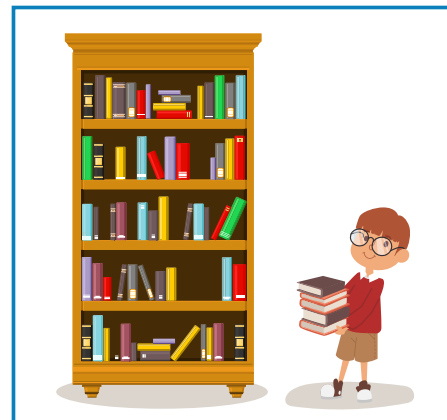
GOOD CHOICE/BAD CHOICE



Sit criss-cross



Do your work



Clean up



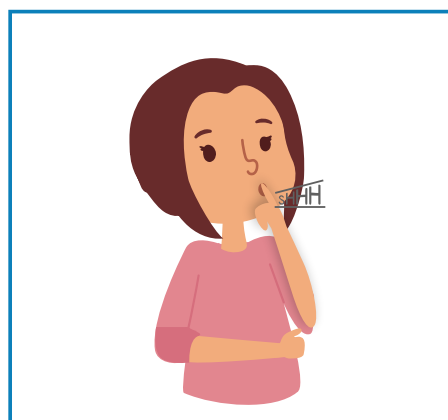
Gentle hands



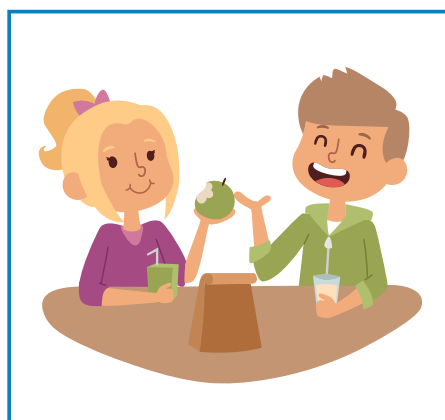
Listening ears



Walking feet



Quiet voice



Share

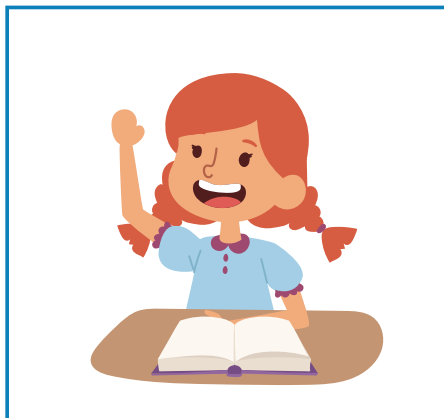


Sit nicely

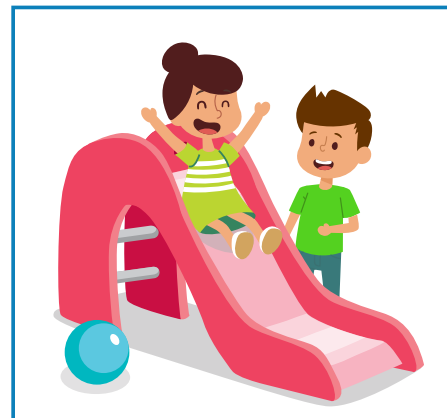
GOOD CHOICE/BAD CHOICE



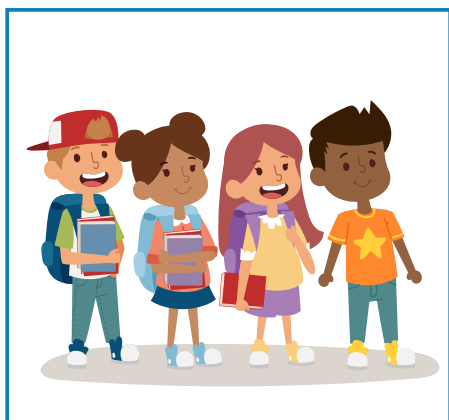
Help others



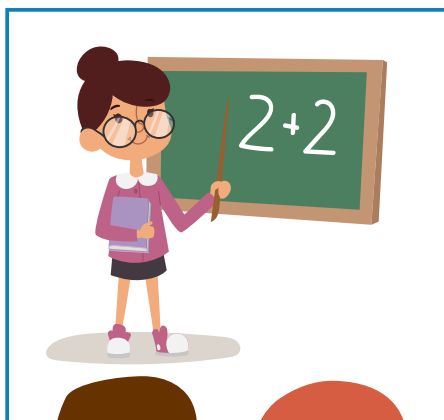
Raise your hand



Play safely



Line up



Pay attention



Hands to self



Interrupting

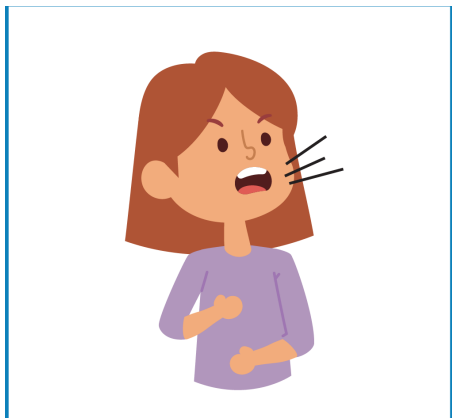


Kicking

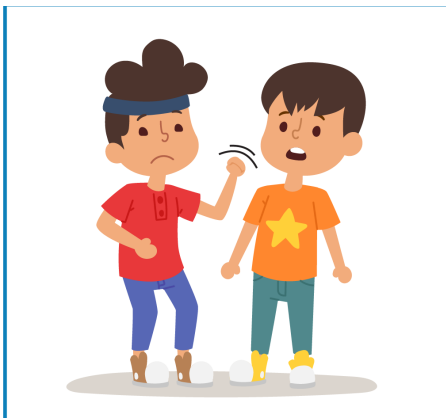


Talking during lessons

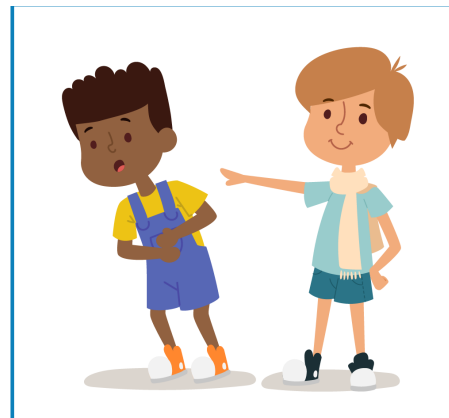
GOOD CHOICE/BAD CHOICE



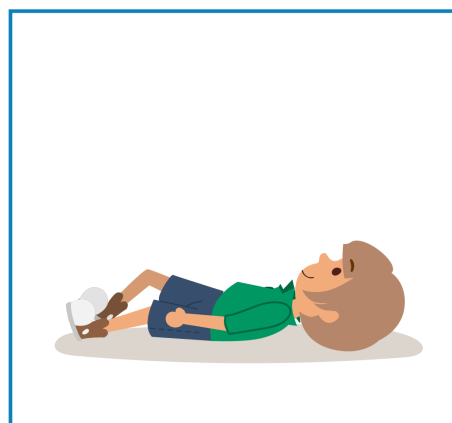
Yelling



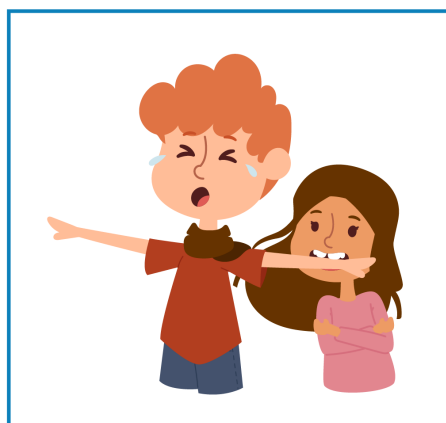
Hitting



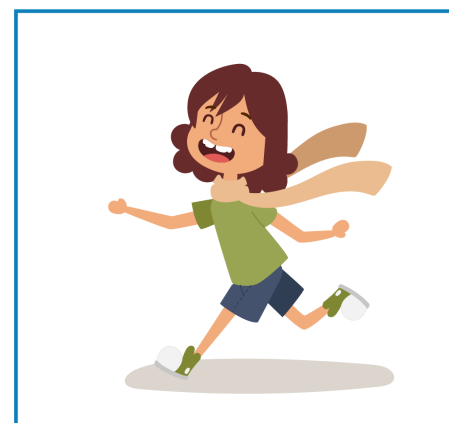
Pushing



Lying down
during carpet time



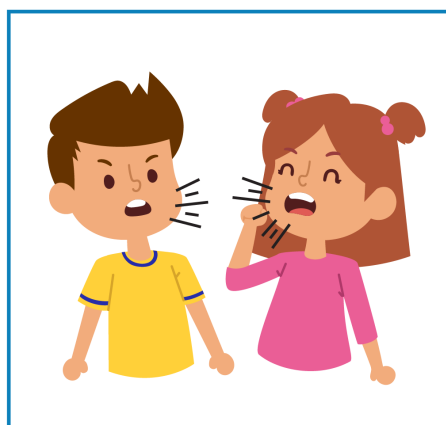
Biting



Running



Throwing



Fighting



PARENTS' HELP: GOOD CHOICES

Dear Parents,

For one of our Human Dignity Curriculum homework assignments, we are asking our first graders to practice two good choices before _____.
(date)

Your kindergartener has chosen to practice these two things. Please sign off when s/he has practiced the chosen actions and return this form to me, so that s/he can be encouraged and congratulated by his/her class.

1. _____ (initial)
2. _____ (initial)

Name: _____

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Grade 1, L4B - Power to Choose



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