PURPOSE

To distinguish human persons from the remainder of living beings with their power to think.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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

1. Recognize the power to think about their lives and choices as the key to human excellence.
2. Apply this power to think to problem-solving.

MATERIALS & RESOURCES

- ***Power Structures*** handout (see Materials)
- ***Identity*** worksheet (see Materials)
- ***The Mangoes Problem*** worksheet (see Materials)
- ***The Mangoes Problem Solution*** sheet (see Materials)
- ***Riddles*** worksheet (see Materials)
- ***Riddles Solutions*** sheet (see Materials)

VOCABULARY

No new vocabulary.

PROCEDURE

Step 1: Review the previous lesson. Have the students come up with a list of as many different emotions as they can. Have them think about those emotions which are more complicated than mere happiness or sadness. After having them come up with a list, ask how many of them they have experienced in the last few days and what occurred.

Step 2: Introduce the power to think.

Name a few excellent historical figures and ask students to identity two excellent actions each historical figure may have taken. [i.e., Martin Luther King, Jr.; Joan of Arc; Mohandas "Mahatma" Gandhi; Anne Frank]

Then brainstorm as a class a list of things that human persons can *be* that animals or plants can't be. Ask each student to give a brief explanation of what is distinctly human about their answer. [i.e., teacher, doctor, researcher, football player, politician, leader]

Then brainstorm as a class a list of things that human persons can *do* that animals or plants can't do. [i.e., write, read, compose, drive, photograph, pray]

Give each student a ***Power Structures*** handout.

Explain: The reason that human persons are able to become these different kinds of people and create these things which we have listed has to do with the unique human power to think and to know—to know who we want to become and what we want to do. All the listed items require this power, which neither animals nor plants have.

The power to think helps us to know many things, including abstract ideas and values, such as human dignity, love, justice, equality, and personal identity. Ask each student to complete a copy of the ***Identity*** worksheet, identifying their talents, values, goals, and more.

Ask:

- How does your identity compare to another person's?
- How does your identity compare to the identity of an animal?

Step 3: Apply the power to think.

Read students ***The Mangoes Problem***. In groups of 3-4, students should discuss a problem-solving strategy first, and then receive a copy of the sheet in order to solve the problem together.

Ask:

- How did you plan to solve this problem?
- How did you work together to solve it?
- What could you have done better?

Explain: With our power to think, we can look at a problem, examine it from different angles, and determine the best approach to solving it. This unique power also allows us to look at our own selves and understand the dignity of every person, to see that this dignity is best expressed in an excellent life—a life in which we respect our own dignity and the dignity of others with every choice taken.

We can think about who we want to become, and why we want to become that; we can know what we value; and we can think about the particular actions that we need to take in order to get there, growing in excellence along the way. We can also use this power to reflect on our past choices.

Step 4: Summarize: Today, we looked at the human person's power to think, and the way that it distinguishes the human person from all other living beings. With this power, we can understand and respect our own dignity and that of others, and can think about the ways in which the decisions we make in our lives can put us on this path toward excellence. As human persons, we can thus be or do a whole range of excellent things for ourselves, for others, and for the world!

FOLLOW-UP & HOMEWORK

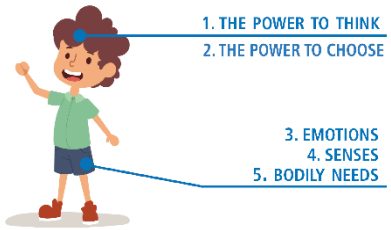
Each student should receive a copy of the ***Riddles*** worksheet, and complete as many of the listed riddles as possible.

SUPPLEMENTS

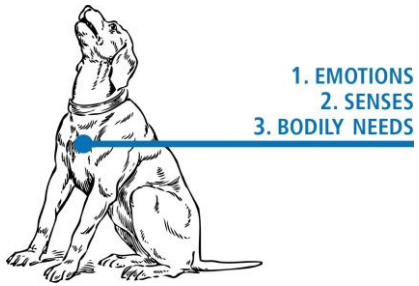
None.

power structures

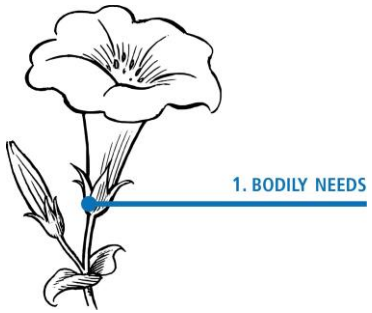
the human person



animals



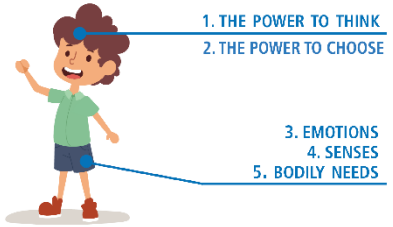
plants



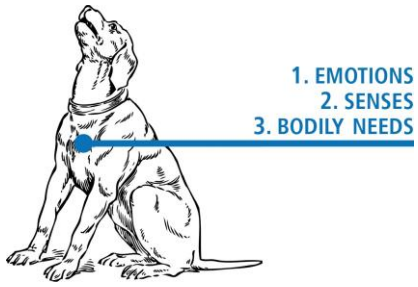
Images: WYA (top); public domain (middle, bottom)

power structures

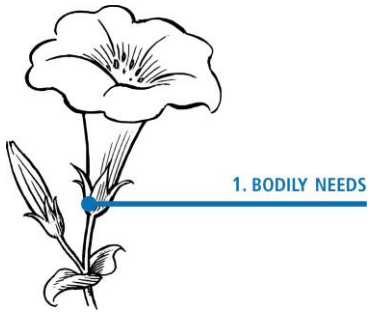
the human person



animals



plants



Images: WYA (top); public domain (middle, bottom)

Human Dignity Curriculum
© 2017 WYA Foundation, Inc.

Human Dignity Curriculum

Name:_____

Date:_____

Identity

Directions: List an answer for each prompt below.

1. three people I care for:

_____

_____

2. a friend who demonstrates human excellence for me:

_____

_____

3. three life goals of mine:

_____

_____

4. language(s) I want to speak:

_____

_____

5. my top three favorite places:

_____

_____

6. one tradition my family has:

_____

_____

7. one good habit I learned at home:

_____

_____

8. something beautiful I made:

_____

_____

9. the most difficult good choice I've made:

_____

_____

10. three words to describe me:

_____

_____

11. if I could write a book, it would be about:

_____

_____

12. my favorite subject at school:

_____

_____

13. the person I want to be:

_____

_____

14. five things I have to do to become that person:

_____

_____

Human Dignity Curriculum

The Mangoes Problem

Directions: Read, and then work with a group to complete, the following problem.

One night the King couldn't sleep, so he went down into the Royal kitchen, where he found a bowl full of mangoes. Being hungry, he took 1/6 of the mangoes.

Later that same night, the Queen was hungry and couldn't sleep. She, too, found the mangoes and took 1/5 of what the King had left.

Still later, the first Prince awoke, went to the kitchen, and ate 1/4 of the remaining mangoes. Even later, his brother, the second Prince, ate 1/3 of what was then left.
Finally, the third Prince ate 1/2 of what was left, leaving only three mangoes for the servants. How many mangoes were originally in the bowl?

Human Dignity Curriculum

The Mangoes Problem Solution

Since the King removed (1/6)x, then x - (1/6)x mangoes are left after his removal. Thus, (5/6) x mangoes are left.

The Queen removed one-fifth of (5/6)x, so (5/6)x - (1/5)(5/6)x, or (4/6)x, mangoes are left after her removal.

The first Prince removed one-fourth of (4/6)x mangoes, so (4/6x - (1/4)(4/6)x, or (3/6)x, man- goes are left after the first Prince's removal.

The second Prince removed one-third of (3/6)x, so (3/6)x - (1/3) (3/6)x, or (2/6)x, mangoes are left.

Finally, the third Prince removed one-half of (2/6)x, leaving 3 mangoes, so (2/6)x - (1/2)(2/6) x = 1/6x = 3. Solving 1/6x = 3 results in x = 18.

Human Dignity Curriculum

Riddles

1) **Why is six afraid of seven?**

2) **Divide 110 into two parts so that one will be 150 percent of the other. What are the 2 numbers?**

3) **There are a mix of red, green and blue balls in a bag. The total number of balls is 60. There are four times as many red balls as green balls and 6 more blue balls than green balls. How many balls of each color are there?**

4) **How many times can you subtract the number 5 from 25?**

Human Dignity Curriculum

Riddles Solutions

1) **Why is six afraid of seven?**

   Answer: Because seven eight nine!

2) **Divide 110 into two parts so that one will be 150 percent of the other. What are the 2 numbers?**

   Answer: 44 and 66.

3) **There are a mix of red, green and blue balls in a bag. The total number of balls is 60. There are four times as many red balls as green balls and 6 more blue balls than green balls. How many balls of each color are there?**

   Answer: Blue balls = 15; Red balls = 36; Green balls = 9

4) **How many times can you subtract the number 5 from 25?**

   Answer: After the first calculation, you will be subtracting 5 from 20, then 5 from 15, and so on.