



PURPOSE

To highlight that there is an intrinsic social element to our humanity.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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

1. Recognize that humans are social, relational beings.
2. Identify ways in which our relationships make us who we are

MATERIALS & RESOURCES

- *How Many Squares* image

VOCABULARY

- **social**: The characteristic of human beings to form relationships with other human beings
- **interdependence**: The characteristic of human beings to need other human beings and to be needed themselves

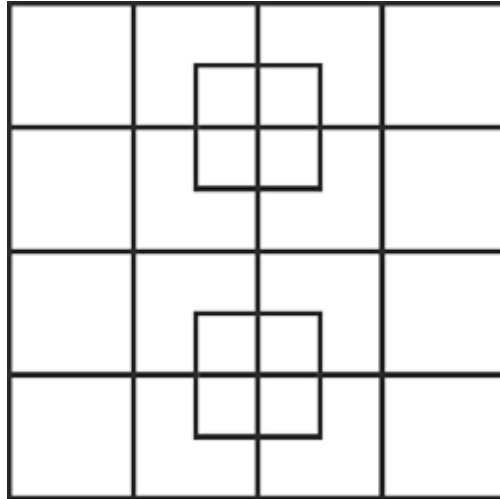
PROCEDURE

Step 1: Review the previous lesson, with the following questions:

- What are some excellent choices that make someone a Hero?
- Do we think that people who become heroes do it all by themselves? Or do they need the help of other people?
- Can we all think of times someone else helped us make an excellent decision? How about times when others prevented us from making an excellent decision?

Step 2: Introduce the theme of the lesson by doing the following activity with the class, then discuss the follow-up questions.

Do the “**How Many Squares**” activity with the class. Draw or project the figure depicted below on the board.



Have the students individually write down on a piece of paper how many squares they count. Then go around the room and have them share their answers. These will typically range anywhere from 17 to 36. Now have them pair up with a neighbor and go through the same exercise again. Then have them get into groups of 4 or 5 and repeat the exercise once again. As the groups get bigger you should see them get closer to the correct answer of 40.

Explain: The point of the exercise is to demonstrate our interdependence. When everyone is trying to guess the number on their own, most people will not find them all. However, individual students can help each other to find squares that others have missed. The best way for everyone to win is to work together. In this game, just like in real life, the best way for success is to embrace that we are dependent on others and work together.

Ask:

- Who are some people we are dependent on? Who are some people dependent on us?
- In which ways are human beings dependent upon one another?

Write on the board:

- **interdependence:** The characteristic of human beings to need other human beings and to be needed themselves.

Explain: Human beings need many different things. We need food in order to eat, we need water in order to drink, we need shelter in order to stay warm, etc. We also have higher needs like a need to know the truth, a need to make the best decisions, and a need to encounter beautiful things. For all of these needs and more, we need others to help us attain them and they need us for the same reason.

Step 3: Help students understand that others play a role in forming us as individuals.

After the students have been introduced to the idea of interdependence, write on the board:

- **social:** The characteristic of human beings to form relationships with other human beings

Explain: Because human beings are interdependent, we are constantly sharing feelings, thoughts, beliefs, and choices with those around us. This creates a situation where the people around us are always influencing who we are and who we are becoming. We should always hope to use this influence in the most excellent way by directing others to be the most excellent people they can be.

Activity: Have the students brainstorm and write down several traits, beliefs, or even mannerisms that they believe to be a part of who they are. After they have written a handful down, ask them to think about and then write down who could have influenced them to have that trait, belief, or mannerism.

Ask:

Has anyone been influenced by their parents? How so?

Has anyone been influenced by their classmates? How so?

Has anyone been influenced by their friends? How so?

Has anyone been influenced by their teacher? How so?

Has anyone been influenced to be excellent by anyone else?

Step 4: Play the Circle game

Activity: The purpose of this game is to illustrate how much we share in common with others. Have the entire class line up in a circle. Everyone should take off their shoes which serve as a place holder. One by one, students should move to the middle and say something about themselves, i.e. “I like to read”, “My favorite color is the color red”, “My favorite school subject is math”, etc. When a statement applies to someone standing in the circle, they have to leave and find another pair of shoes to stand besides fast. It becomes like a game of musical chairs. The last person who does not get to a pair of shoes becomes the new person in the middle.

Step 5: Summarize: Today continues our journey through understanding of the dignity of the person. In our last lesson, we looked at how our dignity is related to our ability to make excellent choices. Today we learned that human beings are dependent on one another, and this result in a situation where they form relationships and influence one another. In the next lesson, we will consider how this social aspect is central to building friendship.

FOLLOW-UP & HOMEWORK

None.

SUPPLEMENTS

None.