

Lesson 1: Introductory lesson

PURPOSE

To prepare students to successfully participate in the curriculum.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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

1. Understand the purpose of the Human Dignity Curriculum.
2. Get to know each other and share their expectations.

MATERIALS & RESOURCES

- Hidden Treasure
- Topics of the HDC
- Introductory Questionnaire
- The Class Portrait

VOCABULARY

- No new vocabulary

PROCEDURE

Step 1: Start the lesson by introducing yourself and playing the [Hidden Treasure](#) ice breaker game with the students. Write several icebreaker questions on the sticky side of post-it notes and stick them to the board. Each student takes turns choosing 1 sticky note and answering the question on the back.

Sample questions you can write:

What is the scariest thing you've ever done?
What is the bravest thing you've ever done?
What country would you like to visit, and why?
What is the best band in the world and why?
What is your favourite school subject and why?
What three items would you bring on a deserted island?
What is your favourite day of the week?
What is something that a classmate has done for you that you appreciated?

Feel free to add additional questions according to the interests of the class.

Step 2: Introduce the purpose of the course.

Ask students what they expect to learn in the course and what they think the Human Dignity Curriculum is all about.

After listening to students' comments, explain that the course primarily deals with the following questions:

- a) Who am I?
- b) What am I capable of?
- c) What can I become?

In other courses, students are mostly learning about the world around them. In this course, they have the opportunity to learn about themselves. Knowing oneself is the first step in determining how to live a good life, how to have authentic friendships, how to deal with problems, and how to give and receive respect.

Knowing oneself is the basis of understanding what one is capable of and what one can become. If someone can truly live excellence in everything they do, they can become excellent as a person. One purpose of this class is to learn how to become excellent. During the course of the following lessons, the students will learn what this means.

Step 3: Divide the students into groups and give each student the [Topics of the HDC](#) worksheet. Ask the groups to choose up to seven topics that they would like to discuss in the course of the curriculum. The groups should agree on the final list of topics. After all groups finish working, ask them to share their results with the rest of the class.

Explain that the curriculum will deal with the following topics:

1. Hierarchy of being: what makes humans special compared to all other living beings
2. Human dignity: the special value of every human person
3. Subject vs. objects: how to treat everyone (including oneself) with respect
4. Power to think: how to develop excellent critical thinking habits
5. Freedom for excellence: how to make excellent choices and become excellent
6. Creativity: learning to creatively solve even the most difficult problems
7. Friendship: developing excellent friendships
8. Habits of excellence: developing habits that make us excellent
9. Heroism: learning about persons who are excellent and learning from them
10. The Mission: how to find the purpose in everything that one does

Tell students that there will be a fun final quiz at the end of the course.

Step 4: Give students the [Introductory Questionnaire](#) and ask them to fill it out individually. Afterwards, ask the students to share some of their answers. Afterwards, ask the students if anyone would like to volunteer to share some of their answers with the class.

Step 5: Ask the students to draw [The Class Portrait](#). Each student should write down their name on a piece of paper, fold it, and place it in a box. Mix the papers and ask each student to select one. Everyone should open the paper, read the name, and write that name on a separate post-it note. They should also write one positive thing about that person on the post-it note. Next, all post-it notes should be pasted around [The Class Portrait](#) available in the materials and placed on the wall.

Step 6: Summarize. Review the purpose of the course and the main topics the students will learn about. Note that in the next class the topic is human dignity.

TOPICS OF THE HDC

Discovering my dignity	Learn history	Make good decisions
Receiving respect from other people	Inventing things	Being humble
Learning about people who changed the world	Treating others with respect	Not talking back to older people
Becoming the best version of myself	How to be successful in life	Developing good manners
Forming excellent habits	Obeying rules	Improving critical thinking
Making jokes	Learning how to be polite	Improving relationships with colleagues
What makes me special	Improving public speaking skills	Learning about great personalities
How to improve in school	Studying English	Finding my mission

Introductory questionnaire

Please fill in the Introductory questionnaire before the first lesson.

A. Expectations

1. What do you expect to learn from this curriculum? What skills do you hope to gain?

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2. How would you rate your level of interest for attending this curriculum from 1 (lowest) to 10 (highest)?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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3. What do you hope the curriculum will not contain? What do you hope will not be present in the classes?

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4. Do you have anything else you would like to share regarding the curriculum, the classes, or something else?

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Introductory questionnaire

B. Competencies

Do you agree with the following statements? Circle the number from 0 (strongly disagree) to 10 (strongly agree), depending on how much you agree with the statements.

B.1. Opinions and values

5. People cannot make good choices if they are angry or hurt.

Strongly disagree			Do not agree, nor disagree						Strongly agree	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

6. Human dignity is connected to possessing enough material goods.

Strongly disagree			Do not agree, nor disagree						Strongly agree	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

7. Humans are the same as animals, just a bit more developed.

Strongly disagree			Do not agree, nor disagree						Strongly agree	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

8. Heroism is not possible for normal people.

Strongly disagree			Do not agree, nor disagree						Strongly agree	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

9. Humans can solve even the most difficult problems.

Strongly disagree			Do not agree, nor disagree						Strongly agree	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

10. When I make decisions, I consider long-term consequences of my actions.

Strongly disagree			Do not agree, nor disagree						Strongly agree	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Introductory questionnaire

11. People with lower social status have less human dignity than those with a higher status.

Strongly disagree			Do not agree, nor disagree						Strongly agree	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

12. If a person pursues only selfish interests, they can end up hurting others and themselves.

Strongly disagree			Do not agree, nor disagree						Strongly agree	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

B.2. Behaviors

13. When I need to make important decisions, I take some time to reflect on them.

Strongly disagree			Do not agree, nor disagree						Strongly agree	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

14. I tend to consider how my actions affect other people.

Strongly disagree			Do not agree, nor disagree						Strongly agree	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

15. I tend to acknowledge both my strengths and weaknesses.

Strongly disagree			Do not agree, nor disagree						Strongly agree	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

16. I hang out with some people just because it will make me more popular.

Strongly disagree			Do not agree, nor disagree						Strongly agree	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

17. In difficult situations, I prefer the better solution over the easier one.

Strongly disagree			Do not agree, nor disagree						Strongly agree	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Introductory questionnaire

18. I am actively trying to develop better habits.

Strongly disagree			Do not agree, nor disagree						Strongly agree	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

19. It is important to know the purpose of the things I do.

Strongly disagree			Do not agree, nor disagree						Strongly agree	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

20. I try not to put myself above other people.

Strongly disagree			Do not agree, nor disagree						Strongly agree	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

21. I believe that my choices affect the world.

Strongly disagree			Do not agree, nor disagree						Strongly agree	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

THE CLASS PORTRAIT

