

DEAR ABBY...

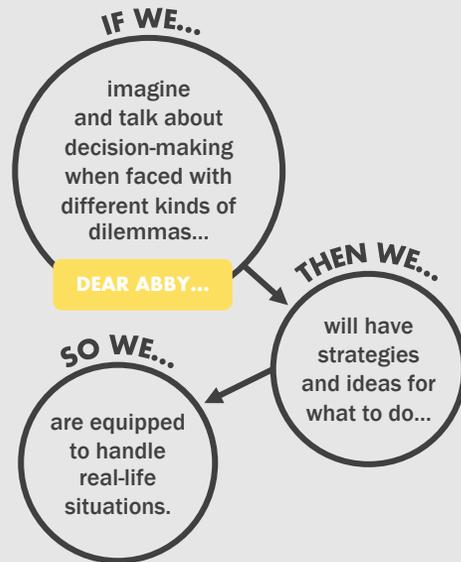
WHAT IS IT? A discussion that uses scenarios to explore character and citizenship.

WHAT IS IT ABOUT? Making responsible/ethical/healthy choices in difficult situations.



SIXTH GRADE

WHY DO THIS?



MATERIALS

Dear Abby Library

THE BIG IDEA

We all have different ideas about how to solve problems, and that's okay—there are many effective ways to solve a problem. We're going to imagine situations, brainstorm what the options are, and identify what we like or don't like about them. Talking about these choices will help us make decisions in the future when problems arise.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Choose a dilemma from the Dear Abby Library (or see Strategy Guide, pages 165-174).
2. Choose one of these activities: Small Group Discussion, Role-Play, Agreement Continuum, or create your own. (See back of card for more information.)
3. Say **THE BIG IDEA** and read the dilemma to the class.
4. Follow these prompts to have a discussion:
 - a. Describe the dilemma and why it's a dilemma. Ask, "What makes this tricky?"
 - b. Brainstorm some options and their outcomes.
 - c. Ask, "What do you like and not like about these options? Why?"
 - d. Finish with a discussion of good solutions that have been brought up. Talk about why some options might be better for some than others.

»» **MUST DO:** Ensure everyone has a chance to participate. Keep questions and conversations open-ended, there does not need to be a right answer.

CAN ADAPT: Use stories from books, a dilemma that arises in the classroom, or other academic materials.



AFTER THE ACTIVITY, DEBRIEF:

- Have you been in a similar situation before? What did you do? How did you feel about the choice you made?
- What's the difference between imagining choices for a character and facing a dilemma in real life?
- What are the different factors you considered when thinking about solutions?
- What other information might you need to better understand the dilemma and the solutions that are possible?
- How do you think other characters in the scenario see the situation? Would they see it the same way or differently? Why?

TIPS FOR SUCCESS



Use pictures or role play to support emergent bilingual learners. Allow students who speak the same language to brainstorm together before sharing with the class.



Consider whether the scenario you choose might be uncomfortable or difficult for any of the students. Talk with the student in advance or choose a different scenario.

ACTIVITY OPTIONS

Sixth grade is a time to continue to explore multiple perspectives about what it means to make a “good” decision, and be a “good” citizen/friend/community member, etc. Use current and historical events as relevant examples of dilemmas.

- **Small Group Discussion:** Ask groups of 3 – 4 students to discuss the dilemma and potential solutions in a group. Feel free to assign roles to them, such as *discussion leader* (who makes sure everyone participates and that the group stays on track); the *questioner* (who asks questions to help the group think of the different ways to approach the dilemma); the *recorder* (who writes down potential solutions); and the *speaker* (who shares the group’s solution with the class during the whole group discussion). As time allows, ask groups to share their solutions with the class.
- **Role-Play:** Ask students to pair up and role play what the different dilemmas and solutions might look like. As time allows, have a few pairs perform for the class.
- **Agreement Continuum:** Present the scenario, and ask students to generate three or four solutions. Then, create different spaces in the room (e.g., each corner of the room) for each solution. Ask the children to gather with peers who feel the same way in the designated space and discuss their solution.