

WELCOME TO *ELEMENTARY DECISION SKILLS*

Welcome to *Elementary Decision Skills*, and thanks for your interest in promoting the study of character and ethics in young children. Ethics is an ongoing process; it is the study of “doing the right thing.” In this curriculum, students examine their responsibilities to others in a group, their shared ethical values, the difference between right and wrong, and the nature of right-versus-right ethical dilemmas. Our research shows that students face these kinds of dilemmas all the time:

- Should I tell on a friend or should I say nothing and remain loyal? Which is more right?
- Should I pay attention to my immediate needs at the expense of needs I may have down the road, or vice-versa? Which is more right?
- Should I help a small group at the expense of a larger group, or should the greatest number always win out? Which is more right?

Elementary Decision Skills is designed to help teachers lay the conceptual groundwork for understanding and resolving the tough right-versus-right dilemmas that face each of us every day. Rather than dictating a formula, this framework encourages divergent, critical thinking and provides students with experiences and language that will open their eyes to the rich ethical fabric of the world around them.

HERE IS WHAT YOU WILL FIND IN THIS BINDER

TEACHER’S GUIDE

Before working with the lesson plans in *Elementary Decision Skills*, please review the Teacher’s Guide for an explanation of the curriculum’s goals, the intended learning outcomes, and a description of the way the concepts build on one another. The Teacher’s Guide also discusses developmental considerations, integration into content areas, reflection activities, assessment, and related classroom strategies. It also includes a suggested time frame for working with the curriculum.

LESSONS

Elementary Decision Skills is also available for K–2 age groups. Both *Elementary Decision Skills* K–2 and *Elementary Decision Skills* 3–5 take youngsters through a series of developmentally appropriate activities for exploring some basic concepts of ethics and personal

responsibility. *Elementary Decisions Skills* K–2 activities are not the same as those in *Elementary Decision Skills* 3–5. Teachers may also want to purchase the K–2 curriculum just to have on hand some “younger” activities that may be relevant. Similarly, sixth-grade teachers will find much of the 3–5 material useful, but may also want to refer to our secondary-level curriculum, *Building Decision Skills*.

ELEMENTARY DECISION SKILLS AT A GLANCE

LESSON NUMBERS	CONCEPT
1–2	Awareness
3–4	Values
5–8	Decision Making

The following icons in the upper right corner of those pages meant to be duplicated cue teachers to the intended use of the page:



WORKSHEET



HANDOUT



READING



A NOTE TO PARENTS

Lessons in the curriculum target concepts and related skills. Ideas from one lesson build on learning from previous lessons. Each lesson contains the handouts, worksheets, and instructions necessary to carry out the lesson. Teachers are encouraged to adjust any materials as needed, including the use of some worksheets and handouts as overheads for the whole class to view together.

Every lesson is organized as follows:

1. Lesson Contents
2. Lesson Plan
3. Activities
4. A Note to Parents

In addition, simple assessment tools have been provided:

TARGET CONCEPT	PAGE NUMBER
• Awareness	67 (end of Lesson 2)
• Values	97 (end of Lesson 4)
• Decision Making	187 (end of Lesson 8)

RESOURCES

A glossary of key terms defined in easy-to-use language is included in this section. (This is a reference for teachers. Each lesson plan also signals key terms your students will need to know.) In addition, this section contains a list of organizations other than the Institute for Global Ethics that are involved in the topics of character education and ethics.