



## Grade 9 Sample Lesson Plan: DECIDE Against Violence

### SOLs

Demonstrate healthy decision-making strategies related to weapons

### Objectives/Goals

- The student will generate alternatives to health-related issues or problems *such as violence or weapon use*.
- The student will predict the potential consequences to each alternative on self and other
- *as it relates to violence and weapons use*.
- The student will defend the healthy choice when making decisions *in regard to avoiding violence and the use of weapons*.

### Materials

- A Christmas Story Clip ([http://viewpure.com/jvKw\\_V3e36g](http://viewpure.com/jvKw_V3e36g))
- [A Christmas Story Student Handout](#)
- [Decision Making Practice & Violence](#)
- [Decision Making Comic Strip](#)

### Procedure

- Standard 5 of the [National Health Education Standards](#) states, “Students will demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health.”
- The following rationale behind the standard states, “Decision-making skills are needed to identify, implement, and sustain health-enhancing behaviors. This standard includes the essential steps that are needed to make healthy decisions as prescribed in the performance indicators. When applied to health issues, the decision-making process enables individuals to collaborate with others to improve their quality of life.”
  - The lesson sequence of this unit follows protocol based on the

National Health Education Standards [Characteristics of an Effective Health Education Curriculum](#):

- *“Builds personal competence, social competence, and self efficacy by addressing skills.*
- An effective curriculum builds essential skills -- including communication, refusal, assessing accuracy of information, decision-making, planning and goal-setting, self-control, and self-management -- that enable students to build their personal confidence, deal with social pressures, and avoid or reduce risk behaviors.
- For each skill, students are guided through a series of developmental steps:
  - Discussing the importance of the skills, its relevance, and relationship to other learned skills.
  - Presenting steps for developing the skill.
  - Modeling the skill.
  - Practicing and rehearsing the skills using real-life scenarios.
  - Providing feedback and reinforcement.” ([From the CDC website](#))
- An overview of the lesson sequences for this unit is indicated below:
  - Lesson 1: Introduction of Skill (“Ralphie” Lesson)
  - Lesson 2: Practice of Skill: Violence Situations (“Decision Making Practice”)
  - Lesson 3+: Decision Making Comic Strip (Skills-Based Assessment)
  - **Lesson 1 - “Ralphie”** - modeling the DECIDE acronym for decision-making
    - **NOTE:** This lesson uses a short scene from A Christmas Story to help students walk through the decision making process. The step by step sequence below will help guide you as you view the start of clip, pause for discussion, and resume the clip to see which decision the character has made before having a follow up discussion.
  - Instant Activity - As students enter the classroom, have them respond to the prompt on the board: *“Think back to a decision you recently made. What process did you use to make it? Was it easy or hard, and why? Be prepared to discuss!”*
- After some discussion, make sure your students know WHY decision making is an important health skill. You can paraphrase or show

them some of the rationale from above.

- Next, discuss answers with the students. Make sure your students know WHY decision making is an important health skill. You can paraphrase or show them some of the rationale from above.
- Introduce the decision making model to students, and walk through the steps of the decision making process. Use a student example (one not related to violence or weapons: go with an “easy” or “light” decision), and go through the decision making steps.
  - Step 1: Identify the Decision To Be Made. This can cause confusion among students. This should not be an “either/or” question. It should be open ended.
    - Example Decision: What should I wear to school today?
  - Step 2: Consider Your Options. What options do students have in this situation? You might want to stick with three to keep it simple, but mention to students that there may be many more options in any decision. Go over both positive and negative decisions; while we want students to always make a socially appropriate, healthy decision, we must acknowledge that some students do at least consider making an option that is unhealthy.
    - Example options: (1) Sweat pants and a sweatshirt; (2) fancy dress clothes,  
(3) jeans and a t-shirt
    - Students may suggest other options; these are only examples.
  - Step Three: Identify Potential Positives & Negatives For Each Option
    - The key word here is “potential.” A lot of teenagers make hasty decisions because they think a result is guaranteed when it is not. Often they may make a decision hoping for a result (peer acceptance, etc.) that does not actually happen in the end. We only discuss two potential positives and two potential negatives for each option, but more may come up.
      - Option 1: Comfortable (+), May Look Sloppy (-);  
Option 2: Dressed to Impress (+), Uncomfortable (-);  
Option 3: Comfortable (+), Cold in Winter (-)

- Step Four: Make Your Decision and Take Action. Discuss with students the above information, and help weigh the potential positives and negatives against each other. A decision should be made based on a decision that is socially appropriate and also healthy. Discuss the importance of taking action here: students often know what they *should* do, but they often don't do it!
- Step Five: Evaluate the Decision and Reflect on Your Decision. After the decision is made and students have completed the process, evaluation takes place. Students should reflect on whether the decision they made was the best decision, and why.
  - Sample Questions: What happened as a result of this decision? Is there something I could have done differently? Was the outcome what I expected? (if it was a real life decision) Did this result keep myself safe and healthy? Etc.
- Next, give students the “[A Christmas Story Student Handout](#)” and show the brief 2 minute clip ([http://viewpure.com/jvKw\\_V3e36g](http://viewpure.com/jvKw_V3e36g))
  - Explain to students that they will view a scenario where a character (Flick), is in a peer pressure situation, and has to make a quick decision.
  - You may want to explain the background of the movie/story first. Play the movie clip until Ralphie, the narrator, says “...and went straight for the throat.”
  - Use this time to walk through the first four steps of the decision making model. Allow students to work on the student handout. Solicit responses from the students for each step. Have them explain what they would do and predict what they think Flick will do.
  - Resume the video clip. Allow students to examine the outcomes of the decision. Have them evaluate the decision from Flick's perspective. Make sure to discuss what was mentioned above regarding *potential* consequences: Flick thought that by sticking his tongue to the pole, that he would prove his friends wrong and gain peer acceptance. Did that happen?

- **Wrap Up.** Explain to the students that they can replace the flagpole scene from “A Christmas Story” with any risk situation they may encounter: violence (for this unit), alcohol, other drugs, sexual activity, bullying, etc. No matter what the decision is, the process is the same; it is a skill that can be practiced, too.

**Lesson 2 - Decision Making Practice** - Students will pick from one of three situations involving tobacco use and walk through the decision making model using their practice packet (attached at the end of this document).

- **Handouts:** [“Decision Making Practice & Violence”](#)
  - *Basic Lesson Sequence (Adaptable As Needed: Not An Entire Script)*
- Hand out the [“Decision Making Practice & Violence”](#) handout to each student. Explain that they will be practicing the decision making model by taking time to walk through the process and write out answers. You might choose to have your students work in partners.
  - Allow students to work independently or with a partner. The teacher should circulate through the room, checking on students and answering questions as needed; as well asking students to describe their thought process/work.
  - After students have shared with a partner, bring in the entire class for a discussion.
  - The teacher should collect the handouts from each student and examine to make sure that each step is properly implemented. Students should receive feedback about their work, especially if it is not proficient. Ideally, you’d like to see students choosing to make the most healthy choice.
    - **Lesson 3 - Decision Making Comic Strip** - Please see the [Decision Making Comic Strip](#) hand out and “Comic Strip Rubric” at the bottom of the page for more detailed information. Students will be tasked with creating a comic strip showcasing progression through the decision making process, based on a scenario involving potential violence and/or weapon use. You could have students simply hand draw the assignment. Another option might be to use the free mobile app called Sock Puppets to create a small skit.
    - Students must complete the project planning sheet before they begin to create their actual comic strips; it is advised the teacher

physically checks off the planning sheet before students continue. This will prevent the students from missing important content/skills and also serve as a formative assessment check mark.

- You might want to give students freedom to use as many comic boxes as they want, but some people have suggested using one box for each step of the decision making process. If time allows, a peer review process would be great, too.
- Please consult the attached handouts for additional information.

### References

- [A Christmas Story Student Handout](#)
- [Decision Making Practice & Violence](#)
- [Decision Making Comic Strip](#)
- Andy Horne, 2015 National Health Teacher of the Year
- Lesson adapted from Jeff Bartlett & Danielle LaRocque, Middle School Health Teachers
- DECIDE acronym and Decision-Making practice idea from S. Benes and H. Alperin, 2019,
- *Lesson planning for skills-based health education* (Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.)

### Handout

The next page includes a handout for the lesson. The handout is designed for print use only.

# Decision Making Comic Strip

**Directions:** You will create a comic strip showcasing the decision making process that we have learned about, relating to a situation involving potential violence and weapon use. Please read below for specific requirements, as well as the project rubric. This is an individual project!

The following National Health Education Standards will be assessed during this project:

- **5.12.4** The student will generate alternatives to health-related issues or problems *such as violence or weapon use*.
- **5.12.5** The student will predict the potential consequences to each alternative on self and other *as it relates to violence and weapons use*.
- **5.12.6** The student will defend the healthy choice when making decisions *in regard to avoiding violence and the use of weapons*.

Your comic strip must showcase the following content & skills:

- Shows progression through a decision-making process:
  - Identifies the decision to be made
  - Considers options: what their choices are
  - Determines potential pros (positives) and cons (negatives) for each option
  - Takes action or makes decisions
  - Evaluates or reflects on action

**Situation.** You're at the fireworks during the summer when your friends sneak off into the woods behind the school. You follow them there, and start feeling a little nervous because you don't know many people there. All of a sudden, one of the kids is showing off a handgun . A fellow student in the grade above you comes over to talk and introduces you to the people hanging out. You're offered an opportunity to hold the gun but you don't have any experience with firearms and don't know what to do. You look around and notice that there are people starting to laugh at you. What do you do?

The project has been broken down into the following parts:

- Scenario & Planning:** Read the scenario and fill out the brainstorming chart. Make sure you cover **ALL** of the content and skills listed above!
- Drafting:** Begin to sketch out your comic strip in pencil
- Final Copy:** Add color (colored pencils, markers, crayons, etc.) to your comic strip. Cut out the finished boxes and arrange on a piece of paper.

## Planning Sheet

**Step 1. Identify The Decision To Be Made.** In a complete sentence, identify the specific decision you need to make based on the situation you selected. Be specific!

**Step 2. Consider Your Options.** Create a list of options for your decision. What are your choices in this situation? Come up with three different ideas/choices.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**KEEP IN MIND:** The following questions are good to ask yourself when you're making a decision.

- Does this idea follow my ideas and personal values?
- Will this idea help me stay safe and healthy?
- Does this idea follow family, school, and community rules?
- Does this idea show respect for myself and others?
- Could this really work, that is, is it realistic?

**Step 3. Determine Pros (Positives) & Cons (Negatives) For Each Option.** Fill in the chart below, making notes of at least one positive and negative for each option.

#	Positives / Pros / Advantages	Negatives / Cons / Disadvantages
1		
2		
3		



**Step 4. Take Action and Make a Decision!** Identify which option you went with and, in a complete sentence, explain **WHY** you think this is the **BEST** decision to make!

**Step 5. Evaluate Your Decision.** Was your decision a good decision? What happened as a result of making this decision?

Name:

Period:

Date:

## Decision Making Comic Strip Rubric

**National Health Education Standard 5:** Students will demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health.

- **5.12.4** The student will generate alternatives to health-related issues or problems *such as violence or weapon use*.
- **5.12.5** The student will predict the potential consequences to each alternative on self and other *as it relates to violence and weapons use*.
- **5.12.6** The student will defend the healthy choice when making decisions *in regard to avoiding violence and the use of weapons*.
- **5.12.7** The student will evaluate the effectiveness of health-related decisions *in regard to avoiding violence and the use of weapons*.

Concerns ("Not Yet") Areas That Need Work w/Comments	Criteria ("Proficient") Standards for Performance	Advanced ("Above & Beyond") Evidence of Exceeding Standard w/Comments
	Step 1: Identifies the decision to be made.	
	Step 2: Has at least two options/choices that can be made (NHES 5.12.4)	
	Step 3a: For each of the two options/choices, has one potential positive impact (NHES 5.12.5)	
	Step 3b: For each of the two options/choices, has one potential negative impact (NHES 5.12.5)	
	Step 4: Identifies which choice they will make and demonstrates actions (actually making the decision) (NHES 5.12.6)	
	Step 5: Evaluates the decision: Was it a good decision or a bad decision? How do you know? (NHES 5.12.7)	
	Comic strip is creative, colorful, and unique; comic strip final product is neat, professional, and shows pride in work	

**Grade & Teacher Comments:**

# Decision Making Practice & Violence

The following is a description of the **DECIDE** decision making process:

**D**efine the problem

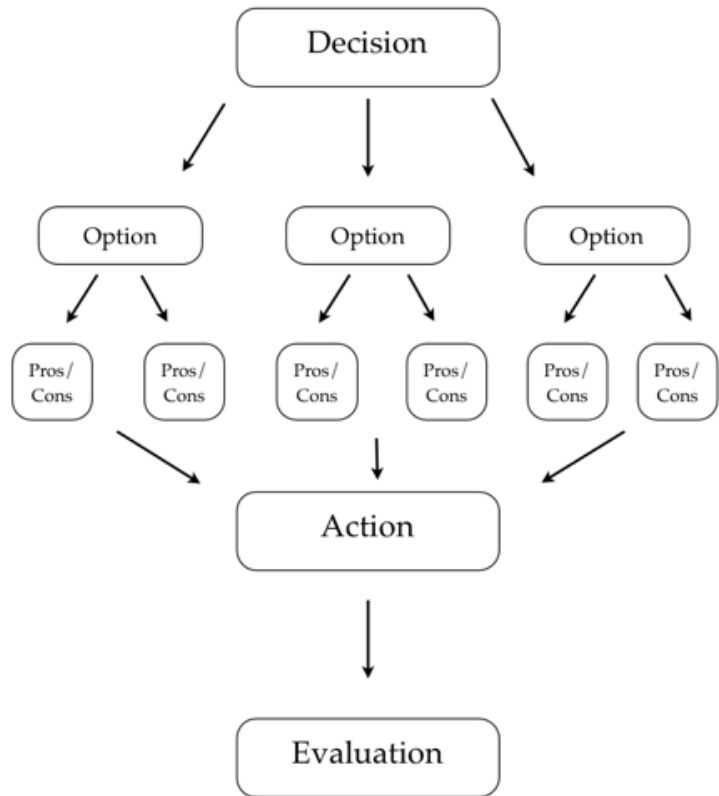
**E**xplore the alternatives

**C**onsider the consequences

**I**dentify your values

**D**ecide and take action

**E**valuate the decision



*A flowchart of the decision making model is pictured to the right*

Name:

Period:

## Decision Making Practice & Violence

**Directions:** Select a potential risky situation from the list below and use the decision making process to make an appropriate, safe decision.

**Situation #1.** It is the summer and you are at a friend's house with a few other people just hanging out. No parents are home and a couple of the boys at the house have started to drink some beers. One of the boys is carrying a handgun in his waist belt and takes it out to show everyone the gun. Unsure if it is loaded or not, the gun is being passed around and now they offer it to you.

**Situation #2.** You are with a couple of your friends driving around town looking for something fun to do. Your friend Thomas is driving and suddenly pulls up to a secluded field on the outskirts of town. He tells everyone he has his father's shotgun in the trunk of his car and that it would be fun to shoot off a few shells this afternoon.

**Situation #3.** You are at a party and everyone seems to be having a good time. All of a sudden you notice your friend Tony getting into an argument with another boy. Things start to escalate with some loud verbal threats. Some of the patrons at the party step in and try to keep the two boys separated. After a few minutes, Tony tells you he is going to his car to get his gun because he says "No one is going to talk to me like that. I'll show him."

*I will use situation number \_\_\_\_\_ for this activity.*

**Step 1. Define the problem.** In a complete sentence, identify the specific decision you need to make based on the situation you selected. Be specific!

**Step 2. Explore the alternatives (options).** Create a list of options for your decision. What are your choices in this situation? Come up with three different ideas/choices.

1.

2.

3.

**Step 3. Consider the Consequences** - Determine Potential Pros (Positives) & Cons (Negatives) For Each Option . Fill in the chart below, making notes of at least TWO positives and negatives for each option.

#	Potential Positives / Pros / Advantages	Potential Negatives / Cons / Disadvantages
1		
2		
3		

**Step 4. Identify your Values** - The following questions are good to ask yourself when you're making a decision. Briefly answer these questions to help you make a decision.

- Does this idea follow my ideas and personal values?
- Will this idea help me stay safe and healthy?
- Does this idea follow family, school, and community rules?
- Does this idea show respect for myself and others?
- Could this really work, that is, is it realistic?

**Step 5. Decide and Take Action!** Identify which option you went with and, in a complete sentence, explain **WHY** you think this is the **BEST** decision to make!

(NOTE: We will not complete step 6, evaluation, in this activity.)

## Scenario #1: Clip from "A Christmas Story"

1. What is the decision to be made?
2. What are Flick's options (choices) in this situation?
3. For each option, please list a positive/pro and a negative/con consequence that could result from that option.
4. What decision would be the best to make, given the above information? What decision did Flick actually make?
5. Evaluate the decision. Was it a good or bad decision? Why?