



# 6-12TH GRADE: WHAT DO I STAND FOR?

## GREEN GUIDE TRANSPORTATION UNITS

Transportation Location: three lessons, history/science (3-6)

Pollution and Evolution: one lesson, science (6-8)

3-D Bike Maps: one lesson, science (6-8)

Marketing Strategy and Transportation: two lessons, health/art (6-12)

The Cost of Transportation: one lesson, science (6-12)

What Do I Stand For?: one lesson (6-12)

Travel Journal: three lessons (6-12)

History of Transportation: two lessons (9-12)



SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS  
**CURRICULUM**

Find our curriculum online at : [http://www.saferoutestoschools.org/green\\_curriculum.html](http://www.saferoutestoschools.org/green_curriculum.html)

# TEENS GO GREEN



Safe Routes to Schools is a program of the  
Transportation Authority of Marin.

Part of the *Marin Safe Routes to Schools Curriculum*. Engaging lessons K thru 12 that include applicable state educational standards.

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## LESSON ONE

### WHAT DO I STAND FOR? (Values Clarification)

*Grade 6-12, 10-15 minute ice-breaker or 50 minute full lesson, classroom setting.*

#### INTRODUCTION

“What do I Stand For?” is an activity that invites students to explore their beliefs, values, and their willingness to take action in response to environmental problems, particularly by using green transportation.

The purpose of the activity is to create a safe environment for students to honestly and critically explore their values with each other vis-à-vis ecological problems and green transportation. Students actively hear the perspectives of others and take a proactive stand for their beliefs while being open-minded toward the beliefs of others.

#### OBJECTIVES

**Students will be able to:**

- **Express the relationships between values and behaviors.**
- **Bring awareness to the variety of values held in the culture of their classroom in the context of ecological issues and green transportation.**
- **Critically self reflect and discuss values and related behaviors vis-à-vis the environment and transportation choices. Develop communication skills and open-mindedness in dialogue with people that hold different point of views to their own.**
- **Recognize their values and their culture’s values are a dynamic process that involves change and choice.**

#### MATERIALS

- What is a value? Resource information for the teacher (Appendix A)
- List of value statements (Appendix B)
- Five numbered signs (Appendix C)
  - #1 - Strongly Agrees
  - #3 - Agrees
  - #5 - Agrees & Disagrees or Undecided
  - #7 - Disagree
  - #10 - Strongly Disagrees

#### PROCEDURE

This unit revolves around value statements that a teacher calls out one-by-one. Students respond by taking a stand. Students take a stand by physically moving toward one of the five signs placed around the room, which best reflects their thoughts, beliefs, and feelings about the statement under consideration.

The signs around the room serve as a continuum from strongly disagreeing (#1) to strongly agreeing (#10) with a statement. Students are allowed to express why they chose their stance, and given to opportunity to reconsider their position.

- 1. Print and tape the signs. Print the five signs (Appendix C) and tape them in order from 1 to 10 around the room.**
  - Place them high enough on the wall so when students gather next to it, everyone in the room will still be able to see the sign clearly.
  - Make sure that there is enough room between the signs so when students assemble in groups by them, the groups can still be distinguished from each other.
  - If the room is big enough, leave one wall empty. This will be the neutral gathering point for students between the discussions.

**STRONGLY  
AGREE**

**STRONGLY  
DISAGREE**

## PROCEDURE CONT.

### 2. Introduce the concept of a value.

- A *value* is an idea that points us to what is important to us and that we might feel strongly about (refer to Appendix A).
- Explain to the students that today we will be doing an activity about our values.
- Ask students to pay close attention to the room they are in (i.e. what is on the walls, hanging from the ceiling, resting on the desks, etc.) and report what appears to be really important to the people that belong to this room.
- Explain that we will be exploring the culture of this particular group. Values can include concepts such as: scientific inquiry, concern with the environment, treating each other well, and being educated.
- Our values lead to actions. For instance, if a sports team holds team work as a value, compromising for the sake of the team would be more important than personal desires.
- For older students discuss how cultural groups and their values overlap so that the students of that classroom are affected by the cultural values of their family, the cultural values of Marin County, and the cultural values of an industrialized society. Students then can identify values in which we were raised as compared to the values that we grow into as we come in touch with new cultures and new understandings.

### 3. Introduce the activity.

Here is a detailed outline of the activity for your information. Use it as a guideline to introduce the class.

- a. I have a list of statements, which I will read one at a time. I will read the statement twice to make sure everyone understands it.
- b. Then you will have about 30 seconds to quietly reflect on your thoughts and feelings about the statement under consideration. It is important that you do this quietly and not share your opinion with others because we are interested in exploring what everyone *really* thinks about these issues and to limit the influence of peer pressure.
- c. When I give a signal, each one of you will have to take a stand. You take a stand by *quietly* walking to one of the five signs around the room. These signs create a continuum of opinions from strongly disagreeing to strongly agreeing (point them out and read all five signs aloud).

As you take a stand you may find yourself alone or with a group of other students. I encourage you to stand up for what you really think is right and not to move around the room based on your friendships. This is how one builds character.

AGREE

undecided

DISAGREE

### PROCEDURE CONT.

- d. Now we will take a few minutes to discuss and understand the different points of views. Note that this activity encourages differences to come to the surface. We will not judge other people or make them feel bad because one of the values of this particular activity is diversity and tolerance to difference.

If tolerance is a value for you and/or the school as well, mention this too.

I will ask some questions but you are invited to raise your hands and ask each other questions as well.

- e. While a discussion is taking place critically reflect on your ideas and beliefs. We engage in this activity not to prove how right we are and others are wrong but to go deeper in our understandings about what is really important to us and to our fellow class members.

During the discussion you are free to move between positions as an expression of your critical reflection. Values change as we change. Allow yourself to be changed by what you hear but only after reflecting and critically thinking about it.

#### 4. Read a value statement.

Use the list of value statements as a resource that you can add to and edit as you please. You can read the statements in order or choose the ones you think will stir and inspire your class the most. Read a statement twice and allow about 30 seconds for

students to quietly reflect on it and decide what do they stand for. Keep an eye on students that are staying close to their friends and gently remind the group to do this activity as individuals.

#### 5. Engage in a short discussion.

There is no time set for each conversations because there are many variables involved. Do your best to keep the momentum going. The activity is not meant to delve deep into one particular theme but to allow students to start thinking about these issues vis-à-vis their values.

It is impossible to predict how a discussion will unfold and what questions would be appropriate and stirring. Much of it depends on the age, maturity, interests, and inner dynamics of the group. Nonetheless, here are some general questions you might want to include in your discussions.

- What do you stand for when deciding to stand here? (To start a conversation, it is useful to ask this question of a student with a strong opinion and then a student from the opposite side or to ask a student who is standing alone)
- What do you think about what (*name the student*) said?
- Based on this value, how are you moved to act? How does it affect your behavior?
- How do you think you came to believe or think this? Does it come from your family, television and movies, your culture, etc?

# WHAT DO I STAND FOR?



LEND A HAND

## PROCEDURE CONT.

- e. Can you find any value in what you heard by (*name of student*)?
  - f. Can you give us an example from your own life about what you are describing? If not, maybe there is someone you know personally that has believes this or has taken action?
  - g. Has anyone been moved by something spoken in this discussion or even feeling moved to change positions? (Emphasize that someone can be moved to see something in a new light without needing to necessarily change opinions and positions.)
- 6. Bring students to the neutral wall and repeat previous procedures.** If there is enough room, ask all students to gather by the neutral wall and then repeat the previous procedures as many times as you have time for. If the room is small, have students stay at the location while you read the next value statement.

- 7. CONCLUSION.** Leave at least 5 minutes to wrap up the class. Ask students what they learned today about themselves, the environment, their fellow classroom students, or about cultural values. The purpose of this class was not to present students with more information about environmental degradation or significant opportunities of sustainability but to allow what they already know to be looked at through the prism of their [often unvoiced] values. What we hold to be important affects our priorities, habits, and activities, which in turn, affect the planet and the species that we share it with. In this activity students are encouraged to learn from each other.

## ICE-BREAKER, SHORT-VERSION

This lesson is best done in tandem with the unit titled, *Bringing Science to Life*. The combination of the two units allows for an exploration of students values that is then supplemented with critical information about the environment and ways that we can make a difference.

If time is a challenge and the two full lessons cannot be implemented, the unit on “*What Do I Stand For*” can be adapted as an ice-breaker for *Bringing Science to Life*. In this case the lesson will be only 10 to 15 minute long. It will include a very brief introduction of the activity and one or two opportunities for students to respond to value statements including very short discussions between them. Appendix A: What is a Value?

## APPENDIX A

### WHAT IS A VALUE?

#### Resource information for the teacher

**1. A value must be chosen freely.**

If it is something that is used to guide one's life, it cannot be dependent on some authority figure enforcing the value. It must be free from coercion.

**2. A value is always chosen from among alternatives.**

Obviously, there can be no choice if there are no alternatives from which to choose. (It makes no sense, for example, to say one values eating. One really has no choice in the matter. On the other hand, many of us value what we eat!)

**3. A value results from a choice made after thoughtful consideration of choices.**

Impulsive or thoughtless choices do not lead to values. For something to guide one's life meaningfully, it must come about by carefully weighing the consequences. Only then can we make intelligent choices.

**4. When we value something, it has a positive quality for us.**

We prize it, cherish it, esteem it, respect it, hold it dear. Values flow from choices we are glad we made.

**5. When we have chosen something freely after consideration of alternatives, then we are proud of our choice, glad to be associated with it; we are willing to affirm our values publicly.** We may even want to champion them.

**6. When we have a value, it shows up in every aspect of our living.** We spend money on things we value. We budget time and energy for our values.

**7. Values tend to have persistence and assume a pattern in our lives.**

They are not one time occurrences.

Source: *Values and Teaching (1966)* by Rath, Harmon and Simon. Published by C. E. Merrill Books: Columbus, Ohio.

## APPENDIX B

### VALUE STATEMENTS

1. I usually follow the majority when making a decision or forming an opinion.  
(\* \*\* This is a good statement to begin with)
2. My parents always drive me to school and I don't feel that there is any problem with that.
3. The actions of one person biking or walking to school can make a big difference.
4. Biking and walking to school can help me be more independent.
5. It is useless to learn about environmental problems. The problems are too big and there is nothing I can do to change the situation.
6. Our transportation habits are not a big problem for the environment.
7. The most important factor to consider when choosing a mode of transportation is how fast it gets me places.
8. The most important factor to consider when choosing a mode of transportation is how comfortable it makes me feel.
9. Solving environmental problems is primarily the government's responsibility.
10. Stimulating the car industry and getting more cars on the road provides jobs for a lot of people. When the economy is bad, making sure that people have jobs is more important than protecting the environment and wildlife.
11. I personally feel a sense of responsibility to help with our environmental problems and I feel that I do something about it when I use green transportation.
12. The laws the federal government has passed to control pollution are sufficient to ensure safe air and water for future generations.  
  
Note to teacher: These include: (a) Senate Bill 375: Develop regional reduction targets for greenhouse gas emissions (b) Assembly Bill 32: Reduction of harmful emissions (i.e. tail pipe emissions to 1990 levels) (c) National Environmental Protection Act (d) California Environmental Quality Act: identifying and mitigating harmful environmental factors due to construction.
13. I am willing to compromise on my comfort when I really believe it is what's right
14. I should always have the freedom to choose how I get around. I don't owe anything to anyone.