

What If...?

A Lesson Plan from *Rights, Respect, Responsibility: A K-12 Curriculum*

Fostering responsibility by respecting young people's rights to honest sexuality education.

NSES ALIGNMENT:

Students will be able to:

PR.12.CC.4 – Describe the signs of pregnancy.

PR.12.INF.2 – Analyze internal and external influences on decisions about pregnancy options.

PR.12.INF.3 – Analyze factors that influence decisions about whether and when to become a parent.

PR.12.AI.3 – Access medically-accurate information about pregnancy and pregnancy options.

PR.12.AI.4 – Access medically accurate information about prenatal care services.

PR.12.CC.5 – Describe prenatal practices that can contribute to or threaten a healthy pregnancy.

TARGET GRADE:

Middle School – Lesson 8

TIME: 50 Minutes

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Projector and screen
- Computer with Internet access and audio equipment
- White board and markers
- “*Why Would Someone Choose?*” worksheets (one per each group of 3 students)
- **Homework:** “*Pregnancy Website Hunt*” (one per student)

ADVANCE PREPARATION FOR LESSON:

- Log into your Google account using your district ID and password so that you have access to the following videos:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XUcNmU-ucCY>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?t=2&v=8gBboJIHuhw>
- Have the videos queued up and ready to go for the start of class.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

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

1. Name at least two symptoms of pregnancy. [Knowledge]
2. Explain the three choices a person has when they learn that they are pregnant. [Knowledge]
3. Describe at least two reasons why a person might or might not choose each of the options. [Knowledge]
4. Define “prenatal care.” [Knowledge]
5. Access medically accurate information about pregnancy options, including prenatal care. [Knowledge; Skills]

A NOTE ABOUT LANGUAGE:

Language is really important and we’ve intentionally been very careful about our language throughout this curriculum. You may notice language throughout the curriculum that seems less familiar - using the pronoun “they” instead of “her” or “him,” using gender neutral names in scenarios and role-plays and referring to “someone with a vulva” vs. a girl or woman. This is intended to make the curriculum inclusive of all genders and gender identities. You will need to determine for yourself how much and how often you can do this in your own school and classroom and should make adjustments accordingly.

PROCEDURE:

STEP 1: Once students are settled, start the video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XUcNmU-ucCY>. Play the video until 1:30 when Emily texts, “I’m seriously stressed.”

Say to the class, “**Today’s lesson is about pregnancy, how someone knows whether they’re pregnant or whether their partner is pregnant, and once they do know, what their choices are.**” (4 minutes)

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STEP 2: Say, “Let’s start with the idea of getting tested for pregnancy. It was smart that Emily did this. Sometimes, people get tested because they realize they didn’t use any protection when they had vaginal sex, or because the condom slipped off or broke, or because someone forgot to take a pill, and so on. And sometimes, sadly, people will get tested because they were sexually assaulted and need to know whether the assault resulted in a pregnancy.

Other times, people think they have not done anything that might have caused a pregnancy. Abstinence is the only 100% effective method of preventing pregnancy, and if someone was not abstinent and was engaged in some kind of sexual activity, they might have put themselves or their partner at risk for pregnancy. People might not realize that there was any risk involved in what they did with their partner, until a person starts experiencing symptoms. What have you heard are some early symptoms that might tell someone they are pregnant?”

Record responses on the white board with a marker, probing for the following:

- Nausea or throwing up for seemingly no reason, especially in the morning
- Urinating/peeing more frequently
- Sensitive or painful breasts
- Fatigue
- Dizziness
- Abdominal cramping
- Missing a period or a very light period when that’s not typical for that person

Say, “The problem with these symptoms is that all, except for the last one, can also be signs that a period is coming. That’s why people too often ignore these symptoms, possibly forgetting that they had unprotected sex and might need to think about whether a pregnancy was possible.”

Say, “There’s a lot of information available about pregnancy symptoms and testing. But there are three main points you need to know: [Write summaries of each on the board.]

1. A pregnancy test is the only way to know for sure if someone is pregnant. It’s common to miss periods, particularly during the teen years, and it’s possible to be pregnant and still have some spotting—which can look like a light period. Pregnancy testing is important—you just need to know when to take the test! Most home pregnancy tests say they are accurate around 3-4 days before the next period is supposed to happen (because if someone is pregnant, they won’t get their period).
2. There are more options than you think! A home pregnancy test is one—you can get them at many stores. And you don’t have to be the one who might be pregnant—if you think your partner, friend, or sibling might be pregnant, anyone of any age and gender can buy a test. Tests are also available at a doctor’s office, a health clinic, or the pharmacy chains that have clinics, such as CVS or Rite Aid.
3. Most importantly, there is no minimum age for getting a pregnancy test. As long as you can pay for it, you have the right to purchase one at a store or get one from a clinic or doctor’s office. If you need help purchasing a test, a local health clinic like often provides pregnancy tests for no or low cost to young adults.” (6 minutes)

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STEP 3: Say, “In the video we just saw, Emily finds out she’s pregnant and they both just kind of assume she’s going to have the baby and they’re going to become parents.” Write “Become a Young Parent” on the white board. Say, “Many people do make this choice, regardless of whether they’re teens or adults. There are also two other choices someone who is pregnant has the right to consider—what are they?” Probe for and write on the board, “Place a Baby for Adoption” and “End a Pregnancy,” i.e., have an abortion.”

Break the students into groups of three, and ask each group to decide who in the group will be the writer. Go around the room and randomly assign the “*Why Would Someone Choose?*” worksheets, making sure there are equal numbers of each of the three worksheets distributed to the groups. Explain that each group will have one of the three options listed on the board. In their groups they’re going to be asked to complete their worksheets by listing the reasons why a teenager might choose to do this option, and why they might not. Tell them they will have about 5 minutes in which to come up with their two lists. (9 minutes)

Note to the Teacher: While the students are working, erase the board and set up three new columns to record the next set of responses, one for each option.

STEP 4: After about 5 minutes, stop the groups. Ask the writer from one of the “Become a Young Parent” groups, the “Place a Baby for Adoption” groups, and the “End a Pregnancy” groups to come to the board and write what they recorded on their sheets. Once they have finished writing, go through each list and ask the remaining groups what they would add from their lists that hasn’t already been mentioned.

Say, “Each of these options has reasons why someone would want to do it, and reasons why someone would not want to do it. In the end, it is every pregnant person’s right to choose what they do about their pregnancy. In California, all of these options are legally available to people of any age. Another thing that each option has in common is the need to decide as early in the pregnancy as possible. That’s because if a person chooses to become a parent or place the baby for adoption, they need to start what’s called prenatal care as soon as possible. ‘Pre’ means before and ‘natal’ means ‘birth,’ so this is all the things that the person does to take care of themselves and the fetus as it grows inside the uterus. Does anyone know some of the things they should do?”

Write any ideas on the board, probing for take certain vitamins, go to the doctor/clinician regularly for checkups, get a lot of sleep, exercise, etc. Then ask, “To keep healthy, what are some of the things a person who is pregnant should NOT do?” Write any ideas on the board, probing for “smoking, drinking alcohol, eating certain foods, exercising obsessively, etc.”

Say, “The earlier a pregnant person starts doing these healthy things and avoiding these unhealthy things, the healthier they and the fetus should be throughout the pregnancy. Now, if they choose not to continue the pregnancy and have an abortion, they also need to do that as early in the pregnancy as possible. Minors in California have the right to obtain an abortion without notifying their parents or any other adult if they do not wish to.” (17 minutes)

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STEP 5: Say, “I want to show you another video about a topic we tend to hear less about, adoption. This is one young person’s experience of placing their baby for adoption and the couple who adopted the baby.”

Show the video, which should have been queued up to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?t=2&v=8gBboJIHuhw>. Process using the following questions:

- **What are your reactions to the video?**
- **What did you think of the relationship between Callie and Kristen and Brian?**
- **What, if anything, would you change about the relationship between them and baby Leo?**

Say, “They said in the video that this was an example of an ‘open’ adoption. That means when the birth parent or parents have some kind of contact with the adoptive parent or parents and baby. What that looks like, however, is different in every case. This was a particularly open open adoption! One thing to keep in mind, though, has to do with their discussion near the end about what they’d do if they disagreed on something. Do you remember what Brian said? He said, ‘In the end, they’re Leo’s parents and the decision’s up to them.’ This is important to keep in mind—because someone who places a baby for adoption may still be the child’s biological parent—but they’re not their child’s legal parent. That means all the rights and responsibilities relating to the care and future of the child is up to the adoptive parents to make, even if they disagree.” (12 minutes)

Explain to students that California has another option for new parents if they do not want to keep the baby and have not planned to go through a formal adoption process. The Safely Surrendered Baby Law allows a parent or legal guardian of a newborn baby to legally surrender the baby within the first 72 hours of birth to a person at a designated “safe surrender site” such as a hospital or fire department. This law was created due to the increasing number of newborn infant deaths due to abandonment in unsafe locations and is intended to protect the well-being on an infant without punishing the parent/guardian. More information can be found at www.babysafe.ca.gov.

STEP 6: Introduce the homework assignment, which is a website hunt for students to find specific information about pregnancy online. Answer any questions and distribute the “Pregnancy Website Hunt” homework sheet. (2 minutes)

RECOMMENDED ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING OBJECTIVES AT CONCLUSION OF LESSON:

The in-class activities and videos will achieve Learning Objectives 1-3. The homework assignment will fulfill Learning Objectives 4 and 5.

HOMework:

Students will be asked to complete the “Pregnancy Website Hunt” in which they are assigned several websites and given questions about pregnancy to which they must find the answers to on those sites.

Why Would Someone Choose to Become A Young Parent?

Instructions: In the space below, please list as many reasons why you think a teenager who discovers they are pregnant might choose to become a young parent, and why you think they might choose not to.

Reasons a Teen Might Choose to Become a Young Parent	Reasons a Teen Might Choose NOT to Become a Young Parent

Why Would Someone Choose to Place A Baby for Adoption?

Instructions: In the space below, please list as many reasons why you think a teenager who discovers they are pregnant might choose to place a baby for adoption, and why you think they might choose not to.

Reasons a Teen Might Choose to Place a Baby for Adoption	Reasons a Teen Might Choose NOT to Place a Baby for Adoption

Why Would Someone Choose to End A Pregnancy?

Instructions: In the space below, please list as many reasons why you think a teenager who discovers they are pregnant might choose to have an abortion, and why you think they might choose not to.

**Reasons a Teen Might
Choose to Have an Abortion**

**Reasons a Teen Might Choose
NOT to Have an Abortion**

Pregnancy Website Hunt!

Homework (Lesson 8-7)

Name: _____ Date: _____

Instructions: Answer the questions below, using any of the following three websites. Be sure to include the link to where you found the information!

- <http://www.plannedparenthood.org/teens>
- <http://www.plannedparenthood.org/learn/pregnancy/prenatal-care>
- <http://sexetc.org>

1. How does a person take a pregnancy test?

Link where I found this information:

2. What are some suggestions for how a young person or couple should tell their parent(s) or caregiver(s) about the pregnancy?

Link where I found this information:

3. What tends to happen during a prenatal care visit?

Link where I found this information:

4. One new thing I learned about pregnancy is:

Link where I found this information: