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# Every Student Can Succeed

## Sample Lesson

### **Study Teams and Group Activities**

If you register as an individual, ask a colleague or spouse to participate with you in discussion assignments. If that is not possible, use group activities for your own personal reflection.

### **Application Assignments and Access to a Classroom**

If you are an administrator, counselor, or do not currently have access to a classroom, instead of reporting on implementation of application assignments describe how you plan to use the course concepts in your environment.

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## Session #1

# Every Student Can Succeed: An Introduction

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### LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

By watching Video Program #1 and completing this session's learning activities, you will:

- Understand the scope and sequence of this course.
- Explore the key concepts that the course will address.
- Reflect on your current teaching practices.
- Establish a course goal to create warm, strong relationships with our students.

### READING ASSIGNMENT:

Please read the foreword, the preface, and chapter 1 in the course text "*Every Student Can Succeed*."

### PREPARATION:

In order to focus your thinking as you begin this session, please read the following excerpt from *The Glasser Quality School: A New Approach to Character Education* by Dr. William Glasser.

Character education flows from relationships that are created in a school when choice theory and competence based education are combined with the golden rule.

Character education is an integral part of a Glasser Quality School because the staff and students practice the golden rule – do unto others, as you would have others do unto you. It starts when the staff begins to practice the golden rule even if they know it will take time for the students to reciprocate. In school this rule acts in the same way it does for parents at home: it sends the strong message that we, the staff, care about you. But in school, where there is a job to be done, and the golden rule conveys another important staff message: we succeeded in school so we will make every effort to teach so you, too, will succeed in school. Character education is very difficult to implement in schools where students are unsuccessful and lonely.

The basic premise of choice theory is that you and your students choose everything you do, the good, the bad and the ugly. The key word, therefore, is "choice." Choice applies to us, not to anyone else, which means, I can only choose for myself, you can only choose for yourself, I can't choose for you and you can't choose for me. If I see you doing something I don't like, I can only choose what I can do in that situation. I can't choose what you can or should do. What I can do (and almost everyone does it all the time), is choose to try to control you and get you to do what I want. I can criticize, blame, threaten, and punish. But if you don't want to change and you are willing to suffer anything I can do to you, I cannot control your behavior and I destroy our relationship in the process. Nothing that even remotely relates to the golden rule can ever be part of this controlling choice.

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Therefore, if we want to assure ourselves of good relationships with the important people in our lives, for example with a child, parent, husband, wife, teacher, student, boss or employee, we will choose to practice the golden rule. For good character, there is no other choice. But if character education is our goal, I hope we are willing to accept that there is no alternative to doing all we can to create warm, strong relationships with the students we teach. There is nothing in the golden rule that I know that allows for exceptions. As you qualify or make exceptions by saying that this student is too difficult or that student is too lazy, the golden rule turns to brass. Choice theory teaches that the most important task of our lives is doing all we can to get along well with the people around us. Choice theory also teaches that above all we prize the happiness that always accompanies warm, close relationships with the important people in our lives. For teachers those people include the students they teach. Choice theory says that no matter what students do, the teachers can choose to behave in ways that, if they and their students are close, keep them close and, if they are not close, persuade them to move closer. The more teachers choose to do this, the more they will be involved in character education.

I realize that if you are teaching in a school where the students are very hard to get along with, this may seem to be more of a burden than you are willing to bear. But the whole purpose of a Glasser Quality School based on choice theory, competence based education and the golden rule is to reduce or eliminate that burden. In these schools, within a year, most of the students are working for competence and are beginning to be a joy to teach. You can't help but remember the students you have had who were a joy to teach; Glasser Quality Schools become filled with students like these. It is certainly different but it is not harder to teach in a Glasser Quality School; it is easier and more fun.

Following choice theory, teachers will learn to replace the deadly habits with what I call the seven caring habits: supporting, encouraging, listening, accepting, trusting, respecting and negotiating or mediating differences. Since all of us enjoy being treated this way, the caring habits are the embodiment of the golden rule. Since by nature we are social creatures, once we learn choice theory, we become continually aware of how supportive this theory is to all relationships.

This means that if I have an argument with you, I will try to subordinate what I want to our relationship. I will try to do what I can, not just to help you, or myself but also to help our relationship. When I help our relationship, I am helping both of us. When I only help you, or myself one of us may be satisfied but our relationship is usually harmed. I can choose to live a "me life" because I can only control my own behavior, or a "we life" because I am always concerned about preserving our relationship. But I will try to avoid a "you life" because I cannot control you. The best I can do for you is not allow you to control me. The best way to avoid your control is to use the caring habits. I can teach by example, and we then stay close.

### **Teach Students Choice Theory**

If the school is based on choice theory, it is important that both staff and students understand it. Experience has taught that students learn it easily and enjoy using it. There is material now available, to teach the concepts to children as young as four. They are taught the five basic needs and how all their behavior is aimed at satisfying one or more of them. They are taught that the external control that harms all their relationships is based on their need for power and to avoid using external control or having it used on them, they can satisfy their need for power by gaining and giving respect. This is easy to do in a Glasser quality School in which the golden rule is taught and practiced.

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An important concept that students learn from choice theory that is so valuable is how much we need each other. The need for love and friendship is in our genes. Every aspect of character education flows from getting along well with each other and staying connected by avoiding external control. Therefore, every problem that may arise in the school is settled by students talking with each other and with their teachers. Before they learned choice theory, they and the adults involved, mostly attempted to solve problems that occurred at home or at school by using external control. The more they did this, the less chance they had to solve the problem and the more damage was done to all their relationships. Now with choice theory, every problem becomes an opportunity to improve character and get along better with each other.

The bottom line of character education is that with choice theory and the competence based classroom, every student succeeds in school, enjoys school and is continually being prepared to use their education to build character and contribute to our society. Choice theory based character education creates mentally healthy, competent, productive and caring young men and women who are ready and willing to take on the demands of an ever-challenging world.

### **PREPARATION:**

Please consider the following questions with respect to the above article. If you are taking this course as a member of a study team, discuss your answers with your colleagues. If you are taking this course as an individual, consider the implications your answers might have for your teaching situation.

1. In the article, Dr. Glasser states that there is nothing in the golden rule that allows for exceptions. How does this statement relate to the practices of labeling and stereotyping students?
2. Do you believe that Dr. Glasser is arguing for teachers to treat all students in the same manner? Or, is he suggesting that teachers treat each child individually based their unique needs? Explain your position.
3. Dr. Glasser has stated that an important concept that students learn from choice theory is how much we need each other. In your opinion, how could this concept be taught to your students?
4. Dr. Glasser states that above all we prize the happiness that always accompanies warm, close relationships. Does your personal experience confirm or deny this statement? Explain your answer.

### **VIDEO PROGRAM:**

View the video program for this session entitled, "Every Student Can Succeed: An Introduction." The running time for the video is approximately 25 minutes.

### **VIDEO PROGRAM OVERVIEW:**

The video program for this session features Dr. Glasser, educational consultants, administrators, and teachers presenting their views on what must be done to ensure that all students succeed in schools. This program also presents an overview of the 15 videos that make up the video portion of this course.

1. Every Student Can Succeed: An Introduction

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- Interviews with educators about ensuring the success of all students.
2. Competency Based Classrooms: Part One.
    - Choice theory and competence.
  3. Competency Based Classrooms: Part Two.
    - Success and healthy relationships.
  4. Competency Based Classrooms: Part Three.
    - The seven deadly habits.
  5. Competency Based Classrooms: Part Four.
    - Connections, competence, and success.
  6. Competency Based Classrooms: Part Five.
    - Assessment, grades, and success.
  7. Teaching for Success: Social Studies and Literature
    - A lesson in a 5<sup>th</sup> grade about totem poles and choice theory.
    - A literature lesson in a 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> grade about stereotyping.
  8. Teaching for Success: Reading and Language Arts
    - A kindergarten reading lesson about farm animals.
    - Language arts and math post office activity in a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade.
  9. Teaching for Success: Literature and Self-Evaluation
    - A 5<sup>th</sup> grade lesson that teaches choice theory through literature.
  10. Teaching for Success: Science Games and Simulations
    - A 7<sup>th</sup> grade lesson on ecosystems that ends with a game of Jeopardy.
  11. Teaching for Success: Math and Useful Work
    - A 4<sup>th</sup> grade mathematics lesson taught in a shopping activity.
  12. Teaching for Success: Poetry and Cross-Grade Teaching
    - A lesson for 1<sup>st</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup> grades on writing biopoems,
  13. Teaching for Success: Spanish and Quality Work
    - A high school foreign language class discusses quality work.
  14. Teaching for Success: Learning About Basic Needs
    - A 5<sup>th</sup> grade class presents skits about basic needs to 3<sup>rd</sup> graders.
  15. Teaching for Success: A Quality School
    - A documentary visit to the Grand Traverse Academy.

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## VIDEO AND READING FOCUS QUESTIONS:

Please consider the following questions with respect to the information presented in the reading assignments and video program for this session. If you are taking this course as a member of a study team, discuss your answers with your colleagues. If you are taking this course as an individual, consider the implications your answers might have for your teaching situation.

1. Review the six criteria for becoming a Glasser Quality School listed in the text on page 2. Now, consider your own teaching situation. Which of the criteria do you feel is most important in your teaching to ensure that all students can succeed? Explain your answer.
2. Consider this following statement by Dr. Glasser; “Getting down to basics, the most important human problem, maybe the only human problem, is long-term unhappiness. Does your own experience and that of your friends and family confirm or deny this statement? How?”
3. Consider this statement: “If we wish to have all students succeed, we must relate better to them and explain to them why what we are asking them to learn is worth learning.” In your current approach to instruction, do you explain the usefulness of what you are teaching? Why? Why not?
4. Review the outline for the video program for this session. Which of sessions 2-15 do you believe will be most applicable to your teaching situation? Why?
5. With respect to your answer to #4, what would be a reasonable, reachable goal for you to achieve by the end of this course? How could you determine whether that goal was achieved?

## APPLICATION ASSIGNMENT:

Your application assignment for this session is to refine the goal you have set for yourself in response to the Video and Reading Focus Questions.

First, write your goal here:

### Survey:

The next part of this assignment will help you identify those aspects of your approach to teaching that align with Dr. Glasser competency-based, success-oriented educational philosophy. Next, please read and respond to each of the following statements using the following scale.

- 0 = neither disagree or agree
- 1 = strongly disagree
- 4 = somewhat disagree
- 7 = somewhat agree
- 10 = strongly agree

My teaching goals and methods address a variety of student learning styles.

0 1 4 7 10

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Sharing my knowledge and expertise with students is very important to me.

0 1 4 7 10

Activities in my classroom encourage students to develop their own ideas about content issues.

0 1 4 7 10

I use small group discussions to help students develop their ability to think critically.

0 1 4 7 10

My students design one or more self-directed learning experiences.

0 1 4 7 10

Examples from my personal experiences often are used to illustrate points about the material.

0 1 4 7 10

I guide students' work on course projects by asking questions, exploring options, and suggesting alternative ways to do things.

0 1 4 7 10

Developing the ability of students to think and work independently is an important goal of mine.

0 1 4 7 10

I often show students how they can use various principles and concepts.

0 1 4 7 10

My learning activities encourage students to take initiative and responsibility for their learning.

0 1 4 7 10

My students take responsibility for teaching part of the class sessions.

0 1 4 7 10

I often solicit student input about how to improve my teaching and their learning.

0 1 4 7 10

Students set their own pace for completing independent and/or group projects.

0 1 4 7 10

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Students can make choices among activities in order to complete course requirements.

0 1 4 7 10

Students describe me as a "coach" who helps them solve their own academic and behavior problems.

0 1 4 7 10

Now review your scores. The higher your scores, the closer you are to an approach to teaching that is in concert with Dr. Glasser's quality school teaching concepts and practices.

**Survey Analysis:**

What are the areas of teaching strengths suggested by the survey results? (Statements with higher scores.)

What improvements are suggested by your survey analysis? (Statements with lower scores.)

**Refining Your Course Goal:**

What existing strengths can you capitalize on to help you achieve your course goal?

How can this course address areas where improvement is needed?

Who can provide support that will help you reach your goal?

How will you know you achieved your goal (observable indicators)?

**PROGRESS REPORTING**

To conclude your learning activities for this session, please turn to the Progress Report form for Session #1. Progress Report forms for all sessions are placed together in the back of this Course of Study book for easy removal.

**Session Note:**