

TEACHER'S GUIDE

Ethical Reflection - The Struggle

This is the teacher's guide for the student handout "The Struggle". The left side of this page is a copy of the student handout with answers as well as space for additions to the activity. The right side lists objectives, grades, directions, and curriculum connections.



Abraham Lincoln has been quoted as saying "*the probability that we may fail in the struggle ought not to deter us from the support of a cause we believe to be just.*"

What do you think Lincoln was referring to when he said this?

Answers will vary. Some may focus around factual events such as slavery, running for president, or the death of his children. Some may focus around hypothetical events. The goal is to make sure students understand the point of the quote.

What type of character traits or values does Lincoln demonstrate in this quote? Explain.

Leadership, perseverance, courage, bravery, honesty, teamwork, responsibility are a few answers. Ask students to explain their answer choices.

Describe an experience that you have had in which you continued to pursue a goal even when you thought you may fail?

You may choose to have students spend time writing this answer and then ask for volunteers to share.

How would you decide whether a cause is just or not?

Use the Steps for Ethical Decision-Making to guide students in thinking about this question. Ask them to give examples of causes that people have rallied around that were just causes and those that were unjust. Have students explain their answers.

Additions: Follow-up activities:

Have students look in the newspaper for stories and events about just and unjust causes. Have students write a one-page summary of their findings and why they believe the cause to be just or unjust.

Have students act out a scene of a cause that was either just or unjust. Have the audience vote on whether the cause was just or not using the Ethical Decision-Making Steps.

Objectives:

Students will evaluate the meaning of just and unjust as it relates to actions.

Students will recognize and discuss the potential in such values as perseverance and courage.

Grade level:

6-12

Directions:

Begin discussion with a review of who Abraham Lincoln was.

Read the quote to the class twice. Have them note their responses on paper during the second reading.

Hand out activity and have students complete.

Discuss in a whole group.

Subject/Material

Connections:

Use this assignment in an English/Language Arts, History, or Civics class. It fits in well as part of a unit on American history, research on Lincoln, units on war and oppression, lesson on persuasive writing, or as part of a group of readings on the human spirit.