



Kids Creating Social Change

Lesson Title: All Falls Down
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Time: 45 minutes

Learning Objectives:

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

1. List at least two ways gender roles impacts sexual decision-making.
2. Describe at least one societal pressure facing each gender related to sexual decision-making.
3. Explain how couples with good communication can decrease the pressure of gender role stereotypes.

Materials:

Copy of the Scenarios USA Video "All Falls Down"

- The film is available at www.scenariosusa.org or by calling 866.414.1044

TV/VCR

Newsprint –one sheet per each group of six students

Newsprint –one sheet prepared

Markers –one per each group of six students

Slips of paper or index cards prepared –one per each pair of students

Copies of the provided worksheet: Couple Questions –one per each pair of students

Masking Tape

Preparation:

Before teaching this lesson, make sure to preview the video "All Falls Down" so that you are familiar with the characters, their relationships and multiple story lines. Also review the final page of this Lesson entitled "Laying the Groundwork" which includes suggested Ground Rules.

On each slip of paper or index card, write the names of one couple from the video (Tyrone & Quiana, Sharod & Nycole and Portia & Shawn) so that there is an equal number of each.

On a piece of newsprint write "One myth I wish the other gender knew wasn't true is . . ."

Procedure:

1. Introduce the lesson by asking, "When it comes to sex, what are some ways that guys are supposed to act?" Solicit some sample responses from students and write them on one half of a piece of newsprint.

Then ask, "When it comes to sex, what are some ways that girls are supposed to act?" Again, solicit some sample responses from students and write those on the other half of the newsprint. Explain that most of these are examples of what is called **gender role stereotypes, ways that people are anticipated to act within society based on whether they are male or female.**

Lastly, ask, "How do these gender role stereotypes impact sexual decision-making?" Solicit some sample responses and explain that the lesson is going to explore this issue more fully.

2. Distribute an index card to each student and instruct them to anonymously complete the following sentence that you have written on newsprint, “One myth I wish the other gender knew wasn’t true is . . .” Collect the index cards. (**Facilitator’s Note:** Read the index cards after you start the video and select two or three from each gender that are particularly insightful to read aloud at the end of the activity.)

3. Divide students into groups of six and have the groups sit together so they can complete the assigned task. Once the students are in their small groups, ask students to form three pairs by partnering with one person in their small group. (**Facilitator’s Note:** If you don’t have a group evenly divisible by six, form one group of four or five.)

4. Next, explain that you will show a video called “All Falls Down” written by teens and produced by an organization called Scenarios USA. Explain that in the video there are three teen couples and each pair will be watching a specific couple and then complete a worksheet based on their observations of their couple. Distribute slips of paper or index cards with the couples names so that each pair in a small group has a different couple from the video. The result should be that in each small group, the three pairs are each looking at different couples from the video.

5. Play the video (running time approximately 13 minutes). Next distribute copies of the worksheet **Couple Questions** so that each pair has one. Instruct students to complete the worksheet based on the couple they have been assigned. Give them three to five minutes to complete.

6. When time is up, instruct the pairs to share with the rest of their small group the answers from their Couple Questions worksheet. Allow groups five minutes to share their answers among their groups.

7. Next, instruct each small group to brainstorm the following two lists and record their responses on newsprint. Give each small group one piece of newsprint and a marker.

What pressures were the guys facing to become sexually involved?

What pressures were the girls facing to become sexually involved?

Give students five minutes to complete brainstorming these two lists.

(**Facilitator’s Note:** It is important to circulate among the small groups to listen to their brainstorming and get a sense of their thoughts. These insights might be helpful to refer to later in the discussion.)

8. When time is up, ask each group to choose and then share the biggest pressure they feel facing the guy characters and the girl characters in the video. Record the list of pressures from each small group on newsprint at the front of the room. Next, ask the following questions:

How do the pressures from gender role stereotypes impact sexual decision-making?

What were some examples from the video that highlight these points?

In your opinion, which couple seems healthiest? Why?

What characteristics help make a relationship healthy?

How might good communication between two partners help decrease the pressure of gender roles?

(Facilitator's Note: Usually Portia and Shawn's relationship will be identified as the healthiest. Make sure that characteristics such as trust, honesty, respect and communication are highlighted. If students don't make the connection on their own, make sure to stress that couples who can communicate honestly, who talk about the reality of gender roles, can often negotiate healthy sexual decisions together.)

9. Lastly, remind students about the sentence they completed at the beginning of the activity, "One myth I wish the other gender knew wasn't true is . . ." Explain that you will read some sample responses from each gender but will not have time to read them all. Read the index cards you have selected. Ask for any reactions to these statements.

WORKSHEET: Couple Questions

Name of Our Couple: _____ & _____

1) What gender role stereotypes did the male character face?

2) What gender role stereotypes did the female character face?

3) What decisions did each character make during the video and why?

4) Were those decisions healthy or unhealthy in your opinion?

5) If the characters made any unhealthy decisions, what could have helped them make more healthy choices?

LAYING THE GROUND WORK

The “All Falls Down” Lesson Plan is designed to utilize critical thinking and dialogue to promote teenagers’ self –awareness and understanding of relationships and sexual health. This lesson will provide adolescents with a forum to discuss their own opinions and choices, hear others’ viewpoints, and to analyze the behavior of the characters they see in the films. This process will encourage the sharing of valuable information and the development of skills that can help young people make positive decisions that will affect their health and their lives. Much of the dialogue that is generated may involve sensitive subjects. Therefore, it is useful to introduce **Ground Rules** that may be posted in the classroom. These may need to be referred to regularly, particularly when sensitive issues arise. As an ice-breaking activity, teachers can allow students to develop their own ground rules and help them discuss their importance. Such a list may include the following:

1. **Right to Pass:** We will respect ones choice to abstain from the discussion.
2. **Respect:** We will listen attentively to what others have to say, allowing one person to speak at a time.
3. **Sensitivity:** We will recognize that it may be difficult for our classmates to share stories about themselves and their feelings.
4. **Supportiveness:** We will not criticize other people, although we may disagree with their point of view.
5. **Understanding:** We will be aware that others may differ in their religion, cultural background, or in other ways and we will, therefore, be thoughtful about the comments we make.
6. **Confidentiality:** We will not repeat anything that is shared within the group to anyone outside of the group. While we may talk about the content of the group discussion, we will not identify who has raised a particular issue or who has disclosed a personal story or feeling.

Teachers may also offer students an **Anonymous Question Box** in which they can insert questions before or after class. If this is done, it is important for teachers to be prepared to recognize, in some appropriate fashion, all issues that are raised and to let students know that:

- No question is wrong or silly
- Anyone who contributes a question to the box will remain anonymous, and
- All questions will be addressed, either by the primary instructor or a facilitator who is invited to cover specific issues.

SCENARIOS USA—A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

Scenarios USA is an award-winning non-profit organization dedicated to helping youth make smart and healthy decisions about their lives by giving them a creative forum to explore who they are and how they see the world. The Scenarios USA films are all written by youth and produced in partnership with top Hollywood professionals.

Directors who have worked with Scenarios include Doug Liman (*The Bourne Identity*), Michael Apted (*Gorillas in the Mist*), Tamara Jenkins (*Slums of Beverly Hills*), Jim McKay (*Our Song*), and Ben Younger (*Boiler Room*). The winning writers participate in all aspects of the production of their stories and attend a premiere of their films in New York City. The finished films are used by school teachers, community groups, and after-school programs across the country to facilitate discussion and present information connected to teen sexual health. In addition, Scenarios films have been seen on MTV, Showtime, PBS, and Oxygen. Scenarios USA has been recognized with Porter-Novelli’s Award for Excellence and Innovations in Social Marketing, Council on Foundations Award for Excellence in Film & Digital Media, and numerous honors from film festivals.