Lesson for
The Virginity Question: No Need to Stress

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
By the end of this lesson, students will be able to
1) Define the word “virgin.”
2) Describe at least three situations in which the label of virgin may be problematic for teens.

TIME NEEDED
80 minutes (If need be, this lesson can be split into two 40-minute classes.)

MATERIALS
• Copies of “The Virginity Question: No Need to Stress”—one per student
• Copies of “The Meaning of Virginity: A Case Study”—one per student
• Copies of “Virginity Scenarios”—one scenario per group of four students
• Index cards or scrap paper—one per student
• Pens or pencils—one per student

PREPARATION
Write each of the following stem sentences on a piece of newsprint or the chalkboard.

• Sex is . . .
• Being a virgin means . . .
• Being abstinent means . . .
• Being sexually active means . . .

PROCEDURE
1. Introduce the topic by explaining that many teens have questions about sexual behaviors and virginity. Explain that teens not only have questions about what “virginity” means, but also how they apply the concept to their lives. [2 minutes]

2. Distribute an index card or scrap piece of paper to each student along with a pen or pencil. Explain that you will reveal four partial sentences, one at a time, and students are to write the first thing that comes to mind on their paper. Explain that there are no correct or incorrect answers, just individual opinions. Read each sentence stem as you reveal it on the newsprint or chalkboard.

   • Sex is . . .
   • Being a virgin means . . .
   • Being abstinent means . . .
   • Being sexually active means . . .

   [3 minutes]

3. Next, explain that you will read each stem sentence again and ask for a few volunteers to share their responses with the large group. Read each stem sentence one at a time and call on three or four volunteers to share their opinions. Ask any clarifying questions about student opinions as needed and time permits. [10 minutes]

4. Distribute a copy of “The Virginity Question: No Need to Stress” to each student and read together as a group. Instruct students to then turn and talk with another student seated near them about their reaction to the article. Give students two or three minutes to discuss. [5 minutes]
5. Next, divide students into small groups of four. Explain that each small group will get a scenario about a teen who is looking for advice from other teens. The group is to read the scenario together and then try to determine whether they believe this teen is a virgin or not. The group should all try to agree, if possible, on whether they think this behavior fits their definition of virginity or not. Explain that each group will report back to the larger group both their decision and a brief summary of their thinking. Distribute a scenario to each group and give the groups a few minutes to complete the task. [5 minutes]

6. Call time and gather the group's attention. Ask each group who had scenario A to report back their conclusion and a brief summary of their thinking. Continue with Scenarios B through G until all groups have had a chance to report back. Once each group has reported, ask the entire group the following discussion questions:

- How did it feel to try and decide whether someone else is a virgin or not?
- What did you notice about how people decided if someone was or wasn't a virgin in each scenario?
- Does anyone feel differently about virginity as a result of this activity? If so, why?

[15 minutes]

7. Distribute a copy of “The Meaning of Virginity: A Case Study” to each student. Instruct students to read the case individually and rank the characters based on who acted most responsibly versus who acted least responsibly. Each character should get a different ranking. [5 minutes]

8. Next, divide students into groups of three. Explain that the groups will talk about the scenario, their rankings and try to come to a consensus about the rankings for each character. Allow groups ten minutes to complete this task. (Facilitator's Note: During this time it is helpful to circulate among groups to clarify any questions about the task and facilitate disagreements among group members, if any arise.) [10 minutes]

9. Gather groups' attention and ask the following questions:

- How many groups were able to reach consensus?
- How did it feel to try and agree?
- Using your fingers, show me what rating you gave Nina. Why did you give Nina that particular rating?
- Using your fingers, show me what rating you gave Alex. Why did you give Alex that particular rating?
- Any other characters that you feel strongly about in this scenario?
- What did you learn from this scenario and the discussion?

(Facilitator's Note: Depending on your group, students might have very strong opinions about what characters were most or least responsible for this situation. This is to be expected. The facilitator should ask probing questions to clarify people's opinions and remind group that there is no "right" answer.) [20 minutes]

10. Close the lesson by asking students the following question: What can teens learn about virginity as a result of these activities? Solicit a few responses from the group. Close by reminding students that, in the end, they might not all agree on what makes someone a virgin or not, but being clear about their own personal definition and communicating that with any sexual partners they might have is the most important thing for their own health and safety. [5 minutes]

Special thanks to Teri Tomatich, M.Ed., for her review of this lesson plan.
Virginity Scenarios

SCENARIO A
A girl and guy were getting really hot together, and they decided to have sexual intercourse. It was the first time for both of them, and they didn’t really know what they were doing. The guy put his penis into her vagina just a little bit. It hurt a lot, so he pulled out, and they stopped. Are they virgins?

SCENARIO B
A guy has only received oral sex. Is he a virgin?

SCENARIO C
A girl was drugged and then raped and doesn’t remember what happened beyond knowing she was forced to have sex. Is she a virgin?

SCENARIO D
A girl is a lesbian and has never had sex with someone of the opposite gender, and doesn’t plan to. She has hooked up with a girl. Is she a virgin?

SCENARIO E
A couple has only had anal sex together once because they heard the girl can’t get pregnant that way. Are they virgins?

SCENARIO F
A teen has a physical disability and can’t physically have sexual intercourse. He is sexual in other ways with his partner. Are they virgins?

SCENARIO G
A girl has only given oral sex. Is she a virgin?
The Meaning of Virginity
A Case Study

Nina meets this guy Andre on MySpace. They finally meet in person after weeks of texting and talking on the phone. He is a few years older than she is and really cool. They totally hit it off and hook up a few times. They never have sexual intercourse, but did almost everything else. Andre has to head back to college, and a week after he leaves, Nina gets a cold sore on her upper lip. She doesn't think much of it, since she knows a lot of people who get fever blisters.

Nina talks to her older sister about Andre and whether she could make a long-distance relationship work. Nina's sister discourages her, since he's in college and she never really thought he was good for Nina anyway. Nina tells her sister about how they hooked up. Nina's sister is horrified that they didn't use condoms since they had oral sex. Nina decides not to tell her sister about the cold sore she got after her sister gives her a condom lecture.

Luckily, Nina has health class first period, and they cover sex ed, including sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). Nina is glad to learn that since she's never had sexual intercourse, she can't get pregnant, which is what she is most worried about. She doesn't really pay attention to the lesson about STDs and the risk of getting infections from unprotected oral sex. In Nina's mind, only people who sleep around get STDs.

A couple of months later, Nina finds things have totally cooled off with Andre. But Nina and a good friend of hers, Alex, have been flirting with each other. Nina is not sure whether to risk their friendship for a potential romance that might not work out anyway, but she's so tempted since it feels right.

Nina and Alex end up alone at Alex's house and start talking about what they've done sexually with other people. Nina tells Alex that she's a virgin. She's never had sexual intercourse with anyone, and in her mind, the oral sex she had with Andre doesn't really count as sex. Alex is also a virgin, never having had oral, anal or vaginal sex. Things get really hot between them, and they start having sex together. They agree that since they're both virgins they don't need to use a latex barrier. Alex thinks that having sex for the first time with Nina, who is also a virgin, makes the experience that much more special for them both.

Things continue to be really great between Alex and Nina, and they're both so into each other. They text all the time and spend all their free time together. Everyone comments on how cute they are together as a couple. Then Alex notices a sore on the genitals that's never been there before.

Rate from 1 to 5 who acted most responsibly.

1 = Acted least responsibly ................................................................. 5 = Acted most responsibly

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Andre</th>
<th>Nina</th>
<th>Nina’s Sister</th>
<th>Alex</th>
<th>Nina’s Health Teacher</th>
</tr>
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