

It's In the Bag - Relationships

1. Present enough bags for all member of the class to have one plus one extra. Each bag should contain something different (e.g. candy bar, magic marker, pad of paper, string of paper clips, dollar bill).
2. Ask students to choose one bag simply on the basis of looks.
3. Now the students can pick up their bags to check weight. They may keep the bag they have, trade with another volunteer, or trade for the extra bag.
4. Instruct the students to feel each bag to determine the shape of the object within. Again they may keep the bag they have, trade with another person, or trade for the extra bag.
5. Ask students to look in their bags to see what they have. Again they may trade with someone else if they wish.
6. Explain that each person has made decisions based on various pieces of information.
7. Discuss the following questions:
 - How did you first decide on a bag?
 - How did each piece of information affect your decision?
 - How do you feel about the decision you made?
 - Do you want to re-think the decision?
 - How do you make decisions about other things?
 - How does the process of making decisions in this example apply to everyday decisions?

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Variations can be created to connect this activity to human sexuality. On the front of the bags, put a variety of pictures of males and females. The bag should be folded down twice. This allows you to put three labels on the bag. Have them do this as a group activity to avoid any issues with sexual orientation. Looking at the pictures only, each group chooses a bag based on the looks of the person only. A spokes person for the group goes and stands by the bag. This can lead to discussions on physical attraction and stereotyping by looks. Now the spokes person of the group is allowed to pick up the bag and read the first label on the back. The first label deals with a social stereotype such as:

- ❖ Your date is considered a skank.
- ❖ Your date is considered a jock.
- ❖ Your date is involved in student government.
- ❖ Your date is a cheerleader.
- ❖ Your date is considered a skater.
- ❖ Your date is considered a Goth.
- ❖ Your date gets all A's

You can come up with any of your own depending on stereotypes at your school. This can lead to discussions on stereotyping groups and the problems that occur. Now each groups determines if they are going to trade their bag or keep the one they have.

Now they can lift up the next fold and read the label. This label deals with personal beliefs and values such as:

- ❖ You have caught your date telling several lies to stay out of trouble.
- ❖ Family is important to your date.
- ❖ You know your date has had sex with at least two of your friends.
- ❖ You have heard rumors that your date does drugs.
- ❖ Your date loves to party.
- ❖ Your date has several educational goals that they are determined to reach.
- ❖ Your date has the same religion as you and goes to church regularly.

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Again the group determines if they are going to trade their date or keep the one they have. Now they may unfold the bag to read the last label. This label deals with sexual information about the date such as:

- ❖ Your date will only consider having safe sex in a loving committed relationship.
- ❖ Your date does not believe in premarital sex.
- ❖ Your date has two older sisters who have gotten pregnant.
- ❖ Your date has admitted that they have herpes. However, they do not have an outbreak now so it is safe to have sex.
- ❖ Your date has been pressuring you to have sex after only 3 weeks. You may have to give in if you don't want to lose them.
- ❖ Your date wears a birth control patch.
- ❖ Your date thinks that oral and anal sex are safe alternatives to vaginal sex. Plus, you would still be considered a virgin right?
- ❖ Your date wants to remain abstinent.

Again groups may trade bags or keep the bag they have. Now they may open their bags to find a note inside that deals with consequences of their decisions and candy for the group that relates to the consequences. Such as:

Congratulations! A "Hundred Grand" for having safe sex or remaining abstinent. (100 Grand candy bar to indicate nothing stood in the way of reaching their goals. It would probably have more impact if a dollar bill was also placed in the bags in which no negative consequence was present.)

Your girlfriend is going to have a baby. What now! (Baby Bottle Candy, Baby Ruths, or Cry Babies)

- ❖ You are a sucker! You fell for the oldest trick in the book. Keep your fingers crossed that you or your partner are not pregnant or do not contract an STD.
- ❖ Keep your fingers crossed that you or your partner are not pregnant or do not contract an STD/STI. (Suckers)
- ❖ Everyone is snickering at you for giving in so easily. Keep your fingers crossed that you or your partner are not pregnant or do not contract an STD. Stay Safe! (Snickers)
- ❖ A thick milky discharge was your first sign that you have an STD! (Milky Way)
- ❖ You have a red hot STD! Your first symptom was burning when you pee! (Hot Tamales)

Adapted from this activity at the Kansas Dept. of Ed Conference, June 2013 presented by Debra Noakes