

Thinking Long-Term

Lesson Objective:

- Students will understand the concept of long-term decision-making and its impact on future outcomes.
- Students will use the S.T.A.R. strategy (Stop, Think, Act, Reflect) to practice making responsible decisions.
- Students will reflect on balancing short-term rewards with long-term consequences.

Materials Needed:



- Copy of Chapter 5: Thinking Long-Term
- Whiteboard/Markers
- Paper and pencils
- S.T.A.R. Decision-Making Worksheet
- You're A Star Strategy Poster
- Home Connection Letter

Introduction to the Topic (10 minutes)

Greeting Outline:

- Welcome the children and have them sit in a circle (if applicable)
- Briefly discuss what it means to think long-term.

Greeting and Circle Time Teacher Script

1. Warm Welcome and Opening Discussion:

- "Good morning, class! Today, we're going to talk about something really important: *responsible decision-making*.
- Wait for the children to settle.

2. Discussion Starter

- "Now, when you think of responsible decision-making, what comes to mind?" Wait for a few children to respond and acknowledge their answers.
- "Have you ever made a choice that felt good at the moment, but later, you realized it might not have been the best decision? [Pause for student responses.] Responsible decision-making means thinking about not just what feels good now, but how your choices can affect you in the future.
- We're going to read Chapter 5 from *The Star Squad: Navigating Fifth Grade Adventures*, where Ollie and his friends have to make a big decision. As we

read, think about the short-term and long-term consequences of the choices they face."

Read the Chapter (15 minutes)

Story Time Outline:



- Read chapter 5 aloud. Encourage students to follow along, paying attention to how the characters weigh short-term fun versus long-term outcomes.
- Ask questions during key parts in the story.

Story Time Teacher Script:

1. Prepare the Students for the Story:

- "The fifth chapter in our novel *The Star Squad: Navigating Fifth Grade Adventures* is called "Thinking Long-Term" (Read the chapter aloud, pausing at key moments to ask questions and engage the children.)

2. Read the Chapter with Emphasis on Key Moments:

- **While reading**, pause during key moments.
- **Ask Questions:**
 - What decision are Ollie and his friends trying to make?
 - Why does Harriet want to audition for the talent show?
 - Why is the science project important for the group?
 - What could be the short-term benefit of auditioning for the talent show?
 - What could be the long-term consequence of not finishing the science project?
 - How does Benny suggest they approach the decision-making process?
 - What does Ollie do to help the group think through their options?
 - Why does Betty say that good grades matter more in the long term than just having fun?
 - What solution does Maya suggest to balance both the talent show and the project?
 - How does using the S.T.A.R. strategy help the group make their decision?

Chapter 5: Thinking Long-Term

It was early November, and the cool air outside hinted that winter was on its way. Inside the classroom, Mr. Jenkins had just introduced a new topic for the students to explore: responsible decision-making. He explained that while it was easy to make choices based on what felt good at the moment, responsible decision-making often involved thinking about the long-term consequences.

“Today, we’re going to practice weighing the short-term and long-term effects of our decisions,” Mr. Jenkins said. “This means thinking about how your choices now might affect you in the future.”

Ollie, Harriet, Benny, Sammy, Buzz, Betty, and Maya exchanged curious glances. They were used to making decisions every day, but they hadn’t really thought about the impact of those decisions over time.

As they gathered for lunch, the friends discussed what they had learned. “I don’t usually think that far ahead,” Buzz admitted. “If I want to do something, I just do it.”

“Yeah, same,” Harriet added. “But I guess it makes sense to think about the future. Like, if I don’t study for a test now because I want to play soccer, I might not do well and then regret it later.”

Facing a Real-Life Choice

Later that week, an opportunity arose that put their decision-making skills to the test. The school was holding auditions for the upcoming winter talent show, and each friend had a different idea for what they wanted to perform. But there was one problem: the auditions were scheduled for the same day as a big science project deadline.

“I really want to perform in the talent show,” Harriet said. “But I haven’t finished my science project yet. If I don’t audition, I might miss out on the chance to do something fun.”

Sammy looked thoughtful. “But if we don’t finish the project, our grades could suffer. We need to think about what matters most in the long run.”

Benny, ever calm, suggested they weigh the options using the S.T.A.R. strategy: ****Stop, Think, Act, Reflect.****

“Let’s Stop and take a moment to think about this,” Benny said. “It’s a big choice, and we don’t want to rush into it.”

Weighing the Consequences

As they moved on to the Think step, Ollie pulled out his notebook to list the pros and cons of auditioning versus focusing on the science project.

“If we audition, we could have a lot of fun and get a chance to perform,” Ollie said. “But if we spend too much time preparing for the talent show, we might not do well on our project.”

Betty, always practical, added, “And if we do poorly on the project, it could hurt our grades. That would have a bigger impact than just missing out on the talent show.”

Harriet frowned. “But if we don’t audition, we’ll miss the chance to show our talents. We’ve been practicing for weeks!”

Maya, who was still getting used to these kinds of discussions, spoke up. “What if we found a way to do both? We could set aside time each day to work on the project and still make time to practice for the audition.”

Sammy nodded. “That way, we’re not just thinking about the short-term fun of the talent show—we’re also considering our grades in the long term.”

Choosing a Balanced Approach

After considering the pros and cons, the friends decided to act on Maya’s suggestion. They would set a schedule to work on the science project every day after school, leaving enough time to prepare for the talent show auditions without neglecting their responsibilities.

Harriet took charge of organizing their practice sessions. “We’ll keep our rehearsals short and focused,” she said. “That way, we’ll still have time to finish our project.”

Ollie made sure the group stuck to the plan, using his planning skills to set deadlines for each part of the science project. “If we break it down into smaller tasks, it won’t seem so overwhelming,” he said.

As they followed their schedule, the group found that balancing their time wasn’t as difficult as they had imagined. They managed to make progress on their science project while still preparing a fun routine for the talent show.

Reflecting on Their Decision

When the day of the auditions arrived, the friends felt prepared. They had put in the work for both the talent show and the science project, and they felt confident about their choices.

After their audition, Mr. Jenkins asked the class to reflect on the decisions they had made over the week. Ollie spoke for the group.

“We used the S.T.A.R. strategy to think about how our choices would affect us in the long term,” he said. “It helped us see that we didn’t have to give up one thing to do the other—we just had to manage our time better.”

Betty added, “And by thinking about the future, we realized that a good grade on our project would matter more in the long run than just having fun at the audition.”

Mr. Jenkins nodded. “You’ve learned an important lesson about responsible decision-making. Sometimes, weighing the short-term benefits against the long-term consequences can help you find a balanced solution.”

Moving Forward

As the friends walked out of the classroom, they felt proud of how they had handled the situation. They knew that their decisions would continue to have an impact on their lives, and they felt better prepared to think things through in the future.

“We’ve learned that it’s not just about making the right choice—it’s about understanding the consequences of our choices,” Sammy said. “If we keep practicing that, we’ll be ready for whatever comes our way.”

Harriet grinned. “And next time, we’ll know how to balance fun and responsibility even better!” With that, they headed outside, ready to take on the rest of fifth grade, confident that they had learned an important skill for life: thinking about how today’s choices could shape tomorrow’s outcomes.

3. Post-Chapter Teacher Script

- **Teacher:** “Well, thinking ahead and using the S.T.A.R strategy really are seemed to really help Ollie and his friends. Maybe they’ll be helpful for us too.”

4. Post-Chapter Questions

Ask these questions to help students reflect on the chapter and connect it to their own experiences:

- How did the friends feel about their decision once they made it?
- What is a long-term consequence, and how is it different from a short-term benefit?
- Why is it important to think about the future when making decisions?
- How did the friends manage their time between the talent show and the science project?
- What could have happened if they hadn’t thought about the long-term impact of their decision?
- What role did teamwork play in helping the group make their decision?
- How can the S.T.A.R. strategy help in real-life decisions outside of school?
- Can you think of a decision you made recently that had a long-term consequence?
- Why is it sometimes hard to think long-term when making decisions?
- How can you use what you learned today to make better choices in the future?

Do an Activity (20 minutes)

- Students will practice making responsible decisions using the S.T.A.R. strategy.

Activity: S.T.A.R. Decision-Making Practice (20 minutes)

1. Introduce Activity

“Now that we’ve seen how Ollie and his friends use the S.T.A.R. strategy to work out decisions that might have long-term consequences, we’re going to practice by doing a fun group activity.”

- **Activity Instructions**

1. Divide students into small groups (4-5 per group).
2. Hand out the S.T.A.R. Decision-Making Worksheet, which guides them through a hypothetical scenario where they have to choose between two activities - studying for a test or going to a friend's party.
3. Each group will:
 4. - Stop: Identify the decision they need to make.
 5. - Think: Weigh the short-term and long-term consequences of each option.
 6. - Act: Choose a course of action based on their thinking.
 7. - Reflect: Discuss how their decision could affect them in the future.
8. After 10 minutes, have each group present their decision and explain their reasoning.



- **Reflection**



"Great job, everyone! Let's talk about the decisions your group made. What were the short-term and long-term consequences of your options? How did using the S.T.A.R. strategy help you make your decision? Remember, responsible decision-making means thinking about how our choices today can affect us tomorrow!"

- **Wrapping it Up**

"Today, we learned that making responsible decisions isn't just about what feels good right now—it's about thinking ahead to the future. By using the S.T.A.R. strategy, we can stop and think before we act, which helps us make better decisions that will benefit us in the long run. I want you all to practice this strategy whenever you face a big decision, whether it's about school, friendships, or anything else in your life. Now, you're better prepared to think long-term!"

Wrap Up the Lesson (5 minutes)

1. Review and Reflection Overview:

- Review what they learned about the importance of seeing things from a different perspective.
- Ask a few children to share when this might help them.

Review and Reflection Teacher Script

1. **Gather in a Circle for Reflection:**



- "Let's all come back together in a circle."
- "I'd like a few of us in the class to share how you think your decisions might be different when you consider the longer-term consequences." Listen to a few responses and provide positive reinforcement.

2. **Closing**

- "Great job using the S.T.A.R. strategy for something new - considering the impact of your choices over the long term!"

Home Connection Letter

1. Sending Information Home:

- “Before you go, I have a letter for you to take home. It explains that we talked about weighing the short term benefits over the long term consequences and how the S.T.A.R. strategy helped us to work through the problem and make a better decision
- Hand out the letters as the children prepare to leave. “Great job, everyone! I’m so proud of how well you’re doing with the S.T.A.R. strategy.”

Parent Letter

Sending Information Home:

- Provide each child with a letter to take home to their parents explaining the lesson.

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Today, we explored responsible decision-making in our reading of **The Star Squad: Navigating Fifth Grade Adventures**. In this chapter, the characters had to weigh the short-term benefits of auditioning for a talent show against the long-term consequences of not completing an important school project.

Your child learned to use the S.T.A.R. strategy (Stop, Think, Act, Reflect) to make thoughtful, responsible decisions. We discussed how thinking about long-term consequences can help them balance short-term fun with future responsibilities.

Ask your child about the decision-making practice we did in class and how they used the S.T.A.R. strategy!



Sincerely,



S.T.A.R. Decision-Making Worksheet

Name: _____

Date: _____

Scenario:

S.T.A.R. Strategy

1. Stop

- What decision do you need to make?

Write down the decision you need to make.

2. Think

- What are the options?

List the choices you have.

Option 1: _____

Option 2: _____

(You can add more options if needed.)

- What are the short-term benefits of each option?

Think about how each choice would make you feel or benefit you right now.

Option 1 Short-Term Benefit: _____

Option 2 Short-Term Benefit: _____

- What are the long-term consequences of each option?

Think about how each choice might affect you in the future.

Option 1 Long-Term Consequence: _____

Option 2 Long-Term Consequence: _____

3. Act

- What will you do?

Based on your thinking, what action will you take?

I will choose: _____

Why? _____

4. Reflect

- How do you feel about your decision?

After making your decision, take a moment to reflect on how it makes you feel and how it might impact your future.

I feel: _____

Why? _____
