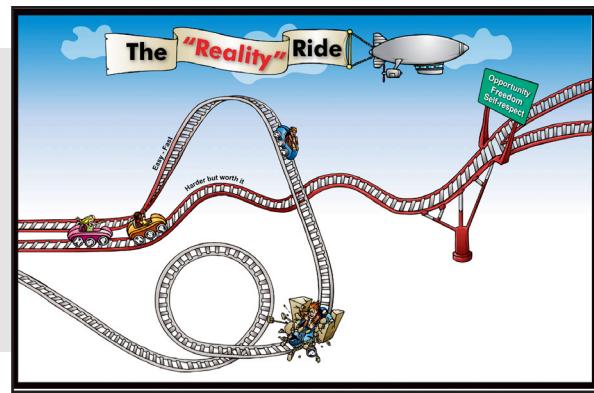


Parent Resources

Decision Making & Consequences

(Reality Ride - Part 1)



What This Lesson Is About

In this lesson, students explored how their decisions lead to real consequences and how those consequences shape their future opportunities, freedom, and self-respect.

Why This Skill Matters

Teenagers make hundreds of decisions each day. Some seem small. Others carry long-term impact. When students understand that they are free to choose—but not free to choose the consequences of their choices—they begin to see that they have more control than they sometimes realize.

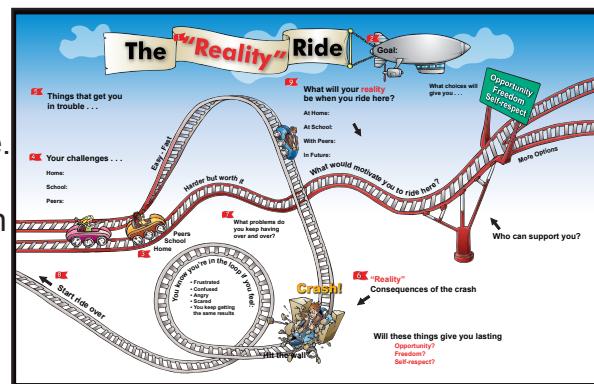
This lesson helps students:

- Connect actions to outcomes
- Recognize patterns of repeated behavior (“loops”)
- Think about possible consequences—not just immediate results
- Use personal goals as motivation for better decision-making

When students can see where a choice may lead before they make it, they are more likely to choose the track that supports long-term success.

The Visual Metaphor: “The Reality Ride”

To help students understand this concept, we introduced a visual metaphor called the Reality Ride. The Reality Ride compares life to a roller coaster. Every day, students make choices—especially when facing challenges at home, at school, or with peers. Some choices may feel exciting or easier in the moment but lead to negative consequences. Other choices may feel harder at first but lead toward goals and long-term success.



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harder at first but lead toward goals and long-term success.

The roller coaster visual shows two tracks:

- Easy-Fast Track – Choices that may feel thrilling or easier in the moment but can lead to a “crash” of consequences.
- Harder But Worth It Track – Choices that require more effort, patience, or courage but lead toward goals, opportunity, freedom, and self-respect.

The metaphor is simply a tool. The real skill students practiced is learning to pause, think ahead, and recognize how today’s choices shape tomorrow’s reality.

Key Vocabulary:

- **Decision** – A choice you make between two or more options.
- **Consequence** – What happens as a result of a decision. Consequences can be positive or negative.
- **Possible Consequence** – An outcome that could happen because of a choice, even if it doesn’t happen every time.
- **Loop** – A repeated pattern of behavior that keeps leading to the same results.
- **Harder But Worth It Track** – Choices that may require more effort in the moment but lead toward goals, opportunity, freedom, and self-respect.



At-Home Vocabulary Activity: “Catch It in Real Life”

Conversation Starters for Home

These questions are designed to open discussion without creating defensiveness. Keep the tone curious rather than corrective.

- If your week were a roller coaster, what would it be called?
- What’s an example of a decision that seemed small at first but had a bigger consequence later?
- What’s something that feels “easy now” but might cost more later?
- What’s one example of a Harder But Worth It choice you’ve seen someone make?
- What motivates you to stay on track when something feels hard?

If your child mentions a mistake, try responding with curiosity instead of judgment. You might say:

- “What do you think the possible consequences are?”
- “What would the harder but worth it choice look like in that situation?” “What might that pause have looked like?”

Positive vs. Negative Response

“Looking back, did that reaction help—or make things harder later?”

Keep the focus on outcomes rather than blame.

Self-Respect

“After it was over, how did you feel about yourself?”

This helps teens connect their choices to long-term self-respect, not just consequences.

Important Note: There’s no right or wrong way to do this. The goal isn’t to fix behavior—it’s to help your teen build awareness and language for what’s happening internally.



What Students Are Learning at School

What We Are Learning in School

In our WhyTry class, students are learning how their decisions shape their reality. This lesson focuses on understanding that every choice—especially in moments of challenge—leads to real consequences. Some consequences happen immediately. Others build over time.

Students explored a visual metaphor called the Reality Ride, which compares life to a roller coaster. The ride includes two tracks:

The Easy–Fast Track, which may feel exciting or easier in the moment but can lead to a crash of consequences.

The Harder But Worth It Track, which requires effort and patience but leads toward goals, opportunity, freedom, and self-respect.

Students practiced identifying challenges they face at home, at school, and with peers. They discussed how repeated choices can create “loops” that keep producing the same results. Most importantly, they learned that while they are free to choose their actions, they are not free to choose the consequences that follow.



At Home – Try This!

This simple activity helps reinforce the lesson without feeling like a lecture.

At dinner or during a car ride, choose one vocabulary word (Decision, Consequence, Loop, etc.).

Ask everyone in the family to share one real-life example from their day.

Keep it light and brief—no correcting, just noticing.

You might say:

“Where did you see a decision lead to a consequence today?”

“Did you notice anyone stuck in a loop?”

“Was that an easy-fast choice or a harder but worth it one?”

The goal is awareness. When students start noticing patterns, they gain more control over their future choices.

“Looks like that situation brought up some strong feelings.”

Model It: When appropriate, name your own process.

“I noticed I was getting frustrated, so I took a breath before responding.”

This shows that emotional regulation is a skill adults are still practicing too.



Parent Takeaway

Your influence matters more than you may realize.

Students are more likely to choose the Harder But Worth It track when they feel supported, understood, and guided—not judged. When mistakes happen (and they will), the most powerful response is often calm reflection rather than immediate correction.

Instead of asking, “Why did you do that?” consider asking:

“What do you think might happen next?”

“What would you like your reality to look like?”

“What choice moves you closer to that?”