

The Ethical Pledge: Making a Choice

(Year 6 - Ages 11-12):

Lesson 6 of 9

Teacher Preparation

Introduction for Teachers

This lesson adapts the most challenging senior curriculum topic, "Debating Consent Systems" (Opt-in vs. Opt-out), into a safe, age-appropriate ethical exploration. Students will explore making an active commitment (a "pledge") and learn why Australia uses the Opt-in system for donation.

The core objective is to shift the students' focus from what the gift is (L1-L4) to the choice that enables it (L5). The lesson uses the non-threatening metaphor of "The Community Choice Challenge" to demonstrate that Australia's system requires an intentional personal decision, reinforcing that sharing this Hero's Pledge with family is the Master Key to ensure the wish is honoured.

Safety and Sensitivity Considerations

- This is NOT a Debate: The core rule is that students are not debating which consent system is "better" for donation. They are performing a neutral, academic comparison of two different fair systems for making a group decision (Opt-in vs. Opt-out) in a classroom context.
- Focus on the Australian System: The goal is to clearly establish that the Australian system is Opt-in (you must actively choose). The purpose of the activity is to understand this reality.
- Reinforce the Master Key (L5): Explicitly state that the reason the choice must be active (Opt-in) is because the conversation with the family is the most critical step. The choice requires communication and trust.
- Key Language: Use "Pledge," "Active Choice," "Commitment," and "Ethical Responsibility" to match the Year 6 level of ethical maturity. Avoid medical details.

Teacher Resources

- Whiteboard or smartboard.
- Resource: "Community Choice Scenario Cards" (Two cards: one explaining a new school rule using Opt-in method; one using Opt-out method).
- Resource: "Opt-in/Opt-out" Label posters (A large area for two columns to display class votes).
- Student Worksheet: "My Ethical Pledge."
- Optional Hook: A simple image or story about a famous pledge or commitment (e.g., the Olympic Oath).



Key Concepts & Language for Teachers

- Metaphor: The Hero's Pledge: "A pledge is a serious, kind, and conscious promise to uphold your heroic values. The decision to become a donor is one of the biggest ethical pledges you can make."
- The "Community Choice" Challenge: This activity demonstrates that a system of decision-making greatly impacts participation, but both Opt-in and Opt-out are fair methods of group consent.
- Opt-In (Active Choice): You are not included unless you actively say YES and sign up. (The Australian system).
- Opt-Out (Active Removal): You are included unless you actively say NO and remove yourself.
- The Master Key Connection (The "Why"):
- Say: "Australia uses Opt-in because this choice is about more than a signature. It requires a conversation. If you make the active choice (Opt-in), you are responsible for making that wish known. This links directly back to Lesson 5: Your conversation (Master Key) ensures your pledge is honored."

Heart Magical Body Facts for Year 6 (Ages 11-12)

- The Body's Ethical Choice: Your body makes billions of choices every second. Even your immune system (your body's police force) has to make an "Opt-in" choice—it must actively recognize a threat before it commits to fighting it, just like you must actively choose your pledge.
- The Pledge of Healing: Your skin is your body's biggest hero. When you get a cut, your body makes an immediate "pledge" to fix it. Cells from all over "opt-in" to the repair team to build new skin and protect you.
- The Power of Commitment: If you linked all the blood vessels in your body end-to-end, they would "opt-in" to a journey of over 96,000 kilometers—more than twice around the entire Earth! This shows the incredible scale of cooperation and commitment that is built into your physical system.
- The Kidney's Choice: The kidneys (often donated in living donation) are masters of efficiency. They filter waste from your blood, consciously choosing (pledging) to keep the good stuff and throw out the bad, demonstrating the power of clear, conscious decision-making.

