

The Alchemist's Choice: The Ethical Pledge

(Year 7 - Ages 12-13)

Lesson 6 of 9

Lesson Overview

Lesson Title:	The Alchemist's Choice: The Ethical Pledge
Year Level:	Year 7 (Ages 12-13)
Lesson Duration:	60 minutes
Key Focus Areas:	Ethical Decision Making, Consent Systems (Opt-in vs Opt-out), Civics.
Curriculum Links:	<p>Australian Curriculum – Health and Physical Education (Foundation)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>AC9HP8P06</u>: ...Select and apply strategies to manage... decision making. (Focus on informed health choices)• <u>AC9E7LY02</u>: Plan, create and edit... texts... to present a point of view. (Debating skills)• <u>AC9HS7K04</u>: Investigate how citizens can... contribute to the community... and how decisions are made. (Focus on consent systems)

Learning Intentions

- Understand the difference between "Opt-in" (Active Choice) and "Opt-out" (Presumed Consent) systems.
- Investigate the Australian donation system and why it requires an active decision (The Pledge).
- Analyze the ethical weight of making a promise versus just "going with the flow."
- Connect the concept of the "Pledge" to the importance of family certainty (Lesson 5).

Success Criteria

- Define "Opt-in" and "Opt-out" using a simple analogy (e.g., signing up for a sports team).
- Explain why an active "Yes" (Pledge) makes it easier for a family to agree than a passive "Maybe."
- Create a personal "Ethical Pledge" listing three values they want to stand for (e.g., Kindness, Legacy, Generosity).
- Participate in a respectful debate about which system is "fairer."



Teaching Sequence

Work through this lesson in the following sequence:

Duration	Part	Focus
15 minutes	Part A: The Club Vote	Science Demo/Video & Introduction of the "Voice" metaphor.
15 minutes	Part B: Decoding Systems	Defining the terms and applying them to Donation.
20 minutes	Part C: The Debate	Group discussion/Debate on the fairness of systems.
10 minutes	Part D: The Pledge	Reflection and Values Statement.

Part A: The Club Vote (15 minutes)

Step 1. The Simulation

- Scenario: Tell the class you are starting a "Saturday Clean Up Crew."
- Round 1 (Opt-in): "Raise your hand if you want to give up your Saturday to clean." (Count hands – likely few).
- Round 2 (Opt-out): "Okay, new rule. Everyone is automatically on the crew. Raise your hand if you want to fill out a 5-page form to quit." (Most will groan, some will raise hands).

Step 2. Analysis (Worksheet Part 1)

- Discuss: "Round 2 got more people. But who would actually do a better job on Saturday? The volunteers from Round 1, or the forced group from Round 2?"
- Concept: Introduce the terms Opt-in (Volunteer) and Opt-out (Default).

Part B: Decoding Systems (15 minutes)

Step 1. Application to Donation

- Explain: "Australia is like Round 1. You have to raise your hand (Register) to be a donor. Some countries are like Round 2."
- Visual:
- Discussion: "Why does Australia choose Round 1? Because donation is a medical procedure. We want to be 100% sure the person wanted it."

Step 2. The Family Connection

- Link to L5: "Remember the 'Catalyst' (The Family)? If a family knows you chose to sign up (Opt-in), they feel proud. If you were just 'defaulted' in (Opt-out), they might worry you didn't actually want it."



Part C: The Debate (20 minutes)

Step 1. Preparation

- Task: Students complete Part 4 of the worksheet. They must choose a side on the topic: "Australia should switch to Opt-out to get more donors."

Step 2. The Crossfire

- Activity: Ask students to stand on one side of the room (Agree) or the other (Disagree).
- Moderator: Ask random students to voice their argument.
- Key Counter-point: If a student says "Opt-out gets more organs," ask: "But does it get more trust? What happens if a family gets angry?"

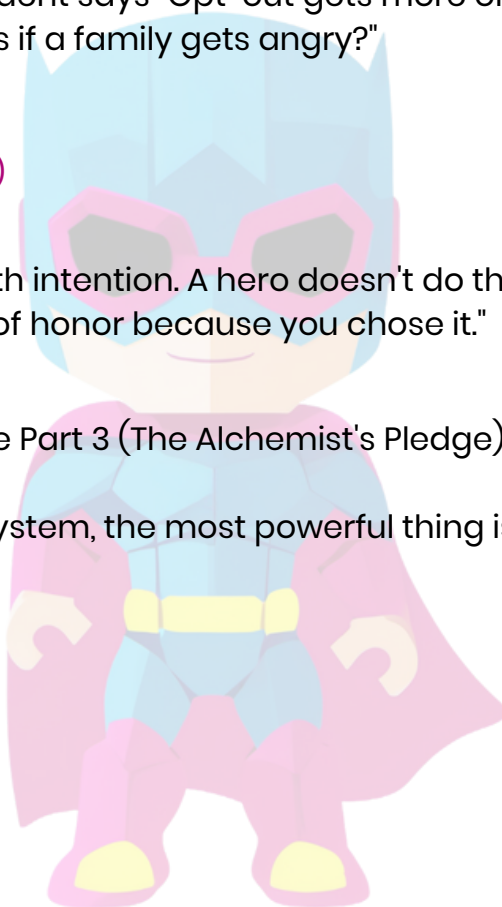
Part D: The Pledge (10 minutes)

Step 1. The Hero's Choice

- Say: "An Alchemist acts with intention. A hero doesn't do things by accident. In Australia, being a donor is a badge of honor because you chose it."

Step 2. Writing the Pledge

- Activity: Students complete Part 3 (The Alchemist's Pledge). They identify their core values.
- Close: "Regardless of the system, the most powerful thing is knowing what you stand for."



Differentiated Learning

- Extension:
 - Students research a country that uses Opt-out (e.g., Wales or Spain) and find out if their "Family Consent" rules are different to Australia's.
- Learning Support:
 - Provide a simple definition key on the board:
 - Opt-in = I say YES.
 - Opt-out = I have to say NO.

Teacher Reflection

- Did the "Saturday Clean Up" analogy clarify the difference between the systems?
- Were students able to debate the topic respectfully without getting personal?
- Did they grasp the nuance that "More people on the list" doesn't always mean "Better system"?

Assessment

- Worksheet (Part 1): Assess understanding of the mechanics of Opt-in/Opt-out.
- Debate Participation: Assess ability to justify an ethical viewpoint (Civics skill).

Additional Notes:

This lesson sits at the intersection of Civics (Laws/Systems) and Ethics (Fairness). It is a great opportunity to teach respectful disagreement. Ensure you emphasize that Australia's current system is Opt-in, so they don't leave the lesson confused about the current law. The focus is on the value of active participation in society.

