

The Hero's Pledge

(Year 4 - Ages 9-10):

Lesson 6 of 9

Lesson Overview

Lesson Title:	The Hero's Pledge
Year Level:	Year 4 (Ages 9-10)
Lesson Duration:	60 minutes
Key Focus Areas:	Understanding choice, decision-making, pledges, and the Australian "opt-in" system
Curriculum Links:	<p>Australian Curriculum – Health and Physical Education (Foundation)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>AC9HS4K09</u>: The roles of local government and the democratic processes... how group decisions are made in the community.• <u>AC9HS4K07</u>: How and why people participate in groups to achieve a shared goal and contribute to community life.• <u>AC9HP4P09</u>: Examine how... community expectations... influence individuals' behaviours, decisions and actions.• <u>AC9E4LY02</u>: Use interaction skills including... active listening... to express and justify a point of view.

Learning Intentions

- Understand that a "pledge" is a serious and important promise.
- Explore different, fair ways a group can make a big decision together.
- Recognise that the "Hero's Pledge" to donate is a personal, "opt-in" choice that you must make.

Success Criteria

- Give an example of a "pledge" they believe in.
- Explain the difference between the two "Classroom Choice" scenarios (one where you have to "join," and one where you have to "un-join").
- Explain that in Australia, the choice to be a donor is an "opt-in" pledge (you have to sign up for it).

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Teaching Sequence

Work through this lesson in the following sequence:

Duration	Part	Focus
10 minutes	Part A. What is a Pledge?	Introduction, Story Time & The "Pledge" Metaphor
20 minutes	Part B. The Classroom Choice	Interactive "Opt-In" vs. "Opt-Out" Activity
15 minutes	Part C. The Hero's Pledge	Connecting the Activity to the Big Idea (The Australian System)
10 minutes	Part D. My Personal Pledge	Worksheet Activity & Creative Reflection
5 minutes	Part E. Sharing Our Pledges	Reflection and Sharing

Part A. What is a Pledge? (10 minutes)

Step 1. Review and Introduction

- Gather students on the floor.
- Say: "Hello, Community Planners! In our last lesson, we learned about the 'Hero's Echo' and how our kind wishes can live on. Today, we're going to talk about the promise that starts that echo. A very serious, important promise is often called a 'pledge.'"

Step 2. Story Time

- Introduce a picture book about making a strong promise or a choice that makes a difference, like The Promise by Nicola Davies.
- Say: "This story is about a girl who makes a promise that changes her whole world. Let's see how her one choice, her one pledge, made a difference."
- Read the story, focusing on the power of a single, committed choice.
- Ask: "What was the promise? Why was it so important?"

Part B. The Classroom Choice (20 minutes)

Step 1. Introduce the "Community Planner" Mission

- Say: "Alright, Community Planners, I have a mission for you. We are going to start a new 'Classroom Kindness Club.' It's a club for students who want to do extra kind things, like helping other classes or cleaning the playground. But we need to decide how people join. We're going to test two different, fair ways."



Step 2. Scenario 1: The "Opt-In" Choice

- Place the poster "KINDNESS CLUB SIGN-UP SHEET (Opt-In)" at the front of the room.
- Say: "Here is Choice 1. In this system, nobody is in the club. If you want to join, you must make the active choice to 'opt-in' by standing up, walking to the front, and putting a tally mark under 'YES, I want to join!'"
- Give students 1-2 minutes to "opt-in."
- Count the results: "Okay, in this system, we have [number] students in our club!"

Step 3. Scenario 2: The "Opt-Out" Choice

- Say: "Okay, let's reset. Everyone sit down. Now let's try Choice 2."
- Place the other poster: "KINDNESS CLUB 'NO, THANK YOU' SHEET (Opt-Out)."
- Say: "In this system, everyone is automatically in the club. You are all members! However, if you don't want to be in the club, you must make the active choice to 'opt-out' by standing up, walking to the front, and putting a tally mark under 'No, thank you.'"
- Give students 1-2 minutes to "opt-out."
- Count the results: "Okay, in this system, we have [total students] minus [number] who opted-out... so [number] are in the club!"

Step 4. Class Discussion

- Ask: "What was the difference between Choice 1 and Choice 2?" (In 1, you had to do something to join. In 2, you had to do something to leave.)
- Ask: "Did we get a different number of members each time? Why?" (e.g., "It was easier to just stay sitting.") "Were both ways fair?"

Part C. The Hero's Pledge (15 minutes)

Step 1. Connecting the Activity to the Big Idea

- Say: "That was a really interesting experiment in community planning. Both of those ways are used in the real world to make fair decisions."
- Say: "In Australia, when it comes to making the 'Hero's Pledge'—the promise to be a 'Helping Hero' and donate your 'spare parts'—our country uses a system just like Choice 1: The 'Opt-In' system."

Step 2. The Australian System

- Ask: "So, if it's an 'opt-in' system, what does that mean? Are you automatically a 'Helping Hero' or do you have to choose to be one?"
- Guide them to the answer: "You have to choose to 'opt-in'! It is a 100% personal, special pledge that you must choose to make."
- Say: "This is why our lesson on the 'Hero's Echo' was so important. Because it's an 'opt-in' pledge, your family would never know you made that choice unless you are brave enough to 'start your echo' and share your heroic wish with them."



Part D. My Personal Pledge (10 minutes)

Step 1. Creative Activity

- Students move to their desks. Distribute the "My Hero's Pledge" worksheet.
- Instruct: "A 'Hero's Pledge' is a promise to live by your values. I want you to think about a kind pledge you want to make for your life. It could be a pledge to 'always be a good friend,' 'to protect nature,' or 'to always be a Helping Hero when I can.' On your worksheet, write your own personal 'Hero's Pledge' in the scroll."
- Instruct: "Then, reflect on our activity. Why is it so important to share an 'opt-in' pledge with your family?"

Part E. Sharing Our Pledges (5 minutes)

Step 1. Reflection and Sharing

- Ask a few students to bravely share the "Hero's Pledge" they wrote on their scroll. (Celebrate all kind pledges).
- Ask: "What did we learn today about making choices in Australia?"
- Say: "We learned that the 'Hero's Pledge' is a special choice you must 'opt-in' to, which is why it is so important to be a hero and share that kind wish with your family."

Differentiated Learning

- Extension:
 - Challenge students to write a short paragraph explaining why they think Australia chose an "opt-in" system (e.g., "because it's a very personal choice and you should have the freedom to choose it").
- Learning Support:
 - Provide a list of "Pledge Ideas" on the board (e.g., "I pledge to be kind," "I pledge to help my family," "I pledge to share") for students to choose from for their worksheet.

Teacher Reflection

- Did the "Classroom Choice" activity work as a safe, non-threatening metaphor for "opt-in" vs. "opt-out"?
- Were students able to grasp the key concept: that the Australian system is "opt-in" (a choice you must make)?
- Did students understand the critical link: because it's "opt-in," the "Hero's Echo" (family conversation) is essential?
- Was the tone kept positive and focused on civics and choice, rather than a debate on consent?



Assessment

- Worksheet (Activity 1): Assess the reflection questions. Can the student describe the basic difference between "opt-in" (having to join) and "opt-out" (having to leave)?
- Worksheet (Activity 3): Can the student explain why sharing an "opt-in" pledge is important? (e.g., "So my family knows my wish," "Because it's not automatic").
- Class Discussion: Listen for students' ability to use the terms "opt-in" and "pledge" in the context of the lesson.

Additional Notes:

This is the most abstract lesson in the unit, adapting a complex (16+) civics topic. The Safety and Sensitivity guidelines in the "Teacher Content" document must be followed. This is not a debate on which system is better. It is a simple, physical activity to explain how the Australian system works (it's an active "opt-in" choice) and to reinforce why that makes the "Hero's Echo" (Lesson 5) the most important step of all.

