

Lesson 2.1: Values and What Matters to Me

Unit: Unit 2, Me, My Goals, My Money (Individual Growth and Life Readiness) **Topic:** 2.1 Who I Am **Grade:** 6 to 8 (written at grade 7; see Differentiation for the grade 6 support and grade 8 stretch) **Days:** 1 class period of 40 minutes (day 36 of the year) **Room:** Classroom or FACS lab, tables that seat four

Standards

- NYS module line: NYS IGLR 1. Personal Development a) Examine personal values
- NYS module line: NYS IGLR 2. Goal Setting a) Acknowledge the role of personal values and standards in goal setting
- CTE theme line: CTE CCO 3. Employability Skills a) Identify personal characteristics such as abilities, interests, and values and examine how they might impact career choices
- NYS FACS Learning Standard 3 (Intermediate), Key Idea: Students will understand and be able to manage personal resources of talent, time, energy, and money and make effective decisions in order to balance their obligations to work, family, and self.; Performance Indicator: Students identify their own abilities and interests as possible guides to career choice.
- CDOS Standard 3a Universal Foundation Skills: Personal Qualities
- National FCS 3.0: 2.1.2 Examine how people and families choose among needs and wants.
- National FCS 3.0: 2.1.1 Use time management, organization, and step-by-step process skills to rank tasks and reach goals.

Enduring understanding and essential question

Big idea: A value is something that matters to you enough to change what you do. You can see a person's values in how they spend money, time, and attention, not in what they say.

Essential question: If I watched you for one week, what would I say you care about?

Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. (Low) Given the 24 value cards, define "value" in their own words and sort the deck into three piles (matters a lot, matters some, matters less) with every card placed.
2. (Mid) From the "matters a lot" pile, choose a top five and then a top three, and explain in one sentence each how one of the top three shows up in a real choice about spending, time, or friends.
3. (High) Given a value, write one personal standard that goes with it (the rule you hold yourself to), and judge whether one of your own recent choices matched that standard.

Vocabulary

Tier 2 (general academic): priority, sort, rank, reflect Tier 3 (FACS): value, core values, standard, choice (in the sense of the decision model). See the unit vocabulary list for Turkish, Portuguese, and Spanish.

Materials and setup

- Value card decks, one per student: Handout 02.01 - Value Cards and Sort Sheet.md, page 1 printed on card stock and cut into 24 cards before class, held with a paper clip or a small envelope. *[Sal: cut once, laminate if you can, and reuse them every year. Thirty decks is about 90 minutes of cutting; a student helper or the paper cutter makes it 20.]*
- Sort sheet, one per student (page 2 of the same handout)
- Slides: Slides 02.01 - Values and What Matters to Me
- Three sticky notes or index cards per table labeled “Matters a lot,” “Matters some,” “Matters less”
- Timer visible to the class
- Setup notes: put one deck and one sort sheet at every seat. Seat in fours. No food or tools today. This is the first lesson of the unit, so keep the room quiet and the tone personal; some students will not want to share their top three out loud, and they do not have to.

Pre-assessment

The do now is the pre-assessment. A student who writes “family” or “being honest” already knows what a value is and needs the word, not the idea. A student who writes “my phone” or “pizza” is naming a thing they like, and Step 1 is for them. Count the two kinds of answers on the board; that count tells you how long to spend on Step 1.

Do now and hook (Time: 5 min)

On the board: “Finish this sentence: The most important thing to me is _____. Now write one thing you did this week that shows it.”

Debrief: cold call four students for the first blank only. Write the answers in a column. Ask the class: “Which of these could you buy in a store?” Circle the ones you cannot buy. Say: “The ones you cannot buy are values. Today you find out what yours are, and then we check whether your week agrees with you.”

Procedure

Step	Teacher will	Students will	Time
1. Direct instruction: what a value is	Show slide 3. Define a value: something that matters to you so much that it changes what you	Write the definition and the test on the sort sheet, Part 1.	5 min

	do. Contrast with a like (pizza) and a goal (make the team). Show the test: “If it changes how you spend money, time, or attention, it is a value.” Give two examples from your own life. <i>[Sal: your own two, told in one sentence each; students remember the teacher’s examples.]</i>		
2. Learning activity: the three-pile sort	Start the timer. Say the rules: every card goes in a pile, no card left in your hand, no pile can be empty, no talking until the timer ends. Circulate. Watch for the student who puts 20 cards in “matters a lot”; that student gets the question, “If you could keep only ten, which ten go?”	Sort all 24 cards into the three piles on the table.	6 min
3. Practice: top five, then top three	Say: “From your ‘matters a lot’ pile, choose five. Write them on the sort sheet. Now cross off two. The three left are your core values.” Give 90 seconds for each cut. Then ask for the partner turn: “Tell your partner your top three and one you cut. Say why	Write the top five, cross off two, write the top three in Part 2. Partner turn, 2 minutes.	7 min

	you cut it.”		
4. Practice: values in action	Show slide 7, the three columns: money, time, friends. Model with your own value: “I value health. Money: I buy running shoes before video games. Time: I run before work. Friends: I pick friends who do not make fun of that.” Then assign Part 3.	For one of their top three, write one sentence in each column: how the value shows up in what they spend, how they spend time, and who they spend it with.	7 min
5. Direct instruction and practice: values vs standards	Show slide 8. A value is what matters (health). A standard is the rule you hold yourself to because of it (I go to bed by 10 on school nights). Give three pairs. Then assign Part 4: write one standard for one of your top three, then the honesty check: “Did one choice you made this week meet that standard? Yes or no, and one sentence.”	Write one value, one standard, and the honesty check in Part 4. Two volunteers read a value and standard pair aloud (not the honesty check; that stays private).	6 min

Questions to ask

Monitor understanding:

- Is “pizza” a value? What about “being honest”? How do you tell?
- You put “fun” in matters a lot and “hard work” in matters less. Can both be true? What would that look like on a Saturday?
- What is the difference between a value and a standard? Give me one of each.

Deepen learning:

- Two students both say they value family. One spends every Sunday at grandma’s and one does not. Are they lying? What else could explain it?

- Which of your top three would a stranger guess after watching you for a week? Which one would they never guess? Why?
- When a value and a goal fight, for example “fun” and “make honor roll,” which one wins, and who decides?

Check for understanding

Clipboard walk during Step 3 and Step 4: for each student, a yes or no on “top three written” and “the money, time, friends row names an actual action, not a feeling.” A “got it” row reads like “I spend my allowance on art supplies,” not “I love art.” A student with a feeling instead of an action gets the question, “What did you do, though?” before Step 5.

Closure (Time: 4 min)

Exit card on the bottom of the sort sheet, Part 5: one of your top three values, one standard that goes with it, and one question you have about the difference between a value and a goal. Two students read their value and standard aloud. Collect the sort sheets and the decks. Sort the sheets into “got it” (an action and a standard that is a rule) and “needs more” (only feelings). The “needs more” pile decides whether Lesson 2.2 opens with a two-minute values review.

Differentiation and supports

- ELL: every value card has a one-line definition in plain words, and the sort sheet has a word bank with Turkish, Portuguese, and Spanish for value, standard, choice, and the three pile names; sentence starters printed on the sheet (“I spend my money on,” “**I spend my time on**,” “My friends are people who ___”). Pair with a bilingual peer where possible; the sort itself needs no language once the cards are understood, so let an ELL student sort first and write after.
- IEP and 504 (general): the three-pile sort is physical and needs no writing; a student may dictate the sentences in Part 3 to a partner or the teacher; extended time by running Part 4 as homework; fidgets allowed; a student who does not want to share stays out of the partner turn and writes a fourth sentence instead.
- Grade 6 support: use 16 cards instead of 24 (pull the eight marked “grade 8” in the teacher key) and skip the top five step; go straight from the “matters a lot” pile to a top three. Part 3 asks for one column, not three.
- Grade 8 stretch: after Part 4, write which of the top three values would be hardest to keep in a job you want, and why (this previews CTE CCO 3. a) and Topic 2.5). Also: rank the top three, and defend the order in two sentences.
- UDL checkpoint used: multiple means of action and expression (the sort is done with cards, then in writing, then out loud, and a student can stop at any of the three); multiple means of engagement (every answer is the student’s own; there is no wrong sort).
- No-kitchen or no-machine alternative: not needed; no equipment is used. If cards are not cut, students circle on the printed page 1 instead.

Assessment

Objective	Standards met	Learning task	Assessment (formative or summative; tool)
1. Define a value and sort all 24 cards	IGLR 1. a); CCO 3. a)	Do now and Step 2	Formative; clipboard check that every card is placed and the definition is written in Part 1
2. Choose a top three and show one in a real choice	IGLR 1. a); Std 3 PI E; National FCS 2.1.2; CDOS 3a Personal Qualities	Steps 3 and 4, sort sheet Parts 2 and 3	Formative; sort sheet scored complete, partial, or missing for daily work (complete means top three plus three action sentences)
3. Write a standard and judge a recent choice against it	IGLR 2. a); Std 3 KI; National FCS 2.1.1	Step 5, sort sheet Part 4, exit card	Formative; exit card sorted “got it” or “needs more”

The top three values carry into the All About Me one-pager (Lesson 2.3), which is the Topic 2.1 formal check, and into the decision grid in Lesson 2.5. Keep the sort sheets; students need them on day 39.

Homework

None. Optional: ask an adult at home to name their top three values, then guess before they answer. Be ready to say whether you guessed right.

Connections

Inside the building: the school counselor uses values sorts in advisory or in high school planning; share the deck so students see the same words twice. Community: none needed for this lesson.

Sources

- NYS Middle Level CTE FACS Content Module 01, Individual Growth and Life Readiness (nycetecenter.org, June 2018), lines 1. a) and 2. a). Copy in 02 Standards/NYS Module PDFs/.
- NYS Middle Level CTE Theme Module, Career and Community Opportunities, line 3. a). Same folder.
- NYS Learning Standards for Health, Physical Education, and Family and Consumer Sciences (1996), Standard 3, Intermediate, FACS strand. Wording per 02

Standards/STANDARDS SOURCES - web research.md, section 2. *[Sal: confirm against the NYSED PDF.]*

- NYS CDOS Standard 3a, Intermediate, Personal Qualities. Same file.
- National Standards for Family and Consumer Sciences Education 3.0 (LEAD FCS Education, 2018), competencies 2.1.1 and 2.1.2.
- Sal's own materials: the Core Values Compass packet (Lesson Dups/Unit_5_Personal_Branding/education_teachingwork_core_values_compass_2026_04.docx) supplied the 24-value list and the top five, then top three sort. Rewritten here with definitions on every card, the three-pile step, the money, time, friends columns, and the values vs standards step added.

Teacher notes

- If time runs short, cut the partner turn in Step 3 to one minute and make Part 4 the exit card. Never cut Step 4; the money, time, friends sentences are what make the lesson about behavior instead of feelings.
- Common mistake: students treat the sort as a test of what they should value and put "learning" and "hard work" on top because the teacher is watching. Say once, at the start: "Nobody grades your values. I grade whether you can explain them."
- Common mistake: "matters less" feels rude to some students ("family matters to everyone"). Say that the pile is about you, this year, not about whether the thing is good.
- The pairing of values and standards is the line the state wants (IGLR 2. a)). Students get "value" fast and "standard" slowly. Use the bedtime example and one about phones; both are rules they already have and did not call standards.
- *[Sal: your Core Values Compass packet had a four-friends story (Dev, Priya, Aisha, Leo) making four different choices about the same weekend. It works as a two-minute read-aloud before Step 4 if the class is slow to see that different values produce different choices. Decide whether to keep it or tell a story from your own life instead.]*
- Keep the sort sheets in the FACS folder. They come back out in Lesson 2.3 (the one-pager), Lesson 2.5 (the decision grid), and Topic 2.3 (needs vs wants, where the values column of the budget comes from this sheet).