



Bouldering with the Ten Commandments by Amy Kopkin

Subject Area: *Values*

Single teaching unit

Target Population: *5th grade to adult - can be modified for all groups*

Lesson Objective(s):

- 1) *Students will be able to understand how the 10 commandments are applicable in their everyday life.*
- 2) *Students will gain self esteem through climbing challenges.*
- 3) *Students will learn the value of supporting others in the group.*
- 4) *Students will be able to trust one another more at the end of the lesson*

Materials:

Note: This would not be an appropriate lesson for someone who has never done any rock climbing or has not ever done trust initiatives. Maybe bringing a facilitator who is skilled to help with the climbing so you can do the teaching...

- *Access to a bouldering area indoors or outdoors*
- *Crash pads or mats*
- *Pre-printed slips of paper with one commandment listed on each*
- *Pre-printed slips of paper with the words "Design your own" and space for students to write*
- *Pens*
- *Duct Tape*
- *Special consideration: the teacher may want to obtain liability waivers from the school or organization for parents of students under 18*
- *2 facilitators*

Location

The facilitator needs to find access to an indoor or outdoor climbing wall or rock formation with appropriate padding.

Group Size

6-12

Procedure



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- 1) *The teacher preps the lesson by designating enough bouldering routes and taping at least one commandment to the wall beside the last rock. The teacher can have the students claim the same route or designate different ones.*
- 2) *The group begins in a circle. The teacher begins the lesson by helping the students envision Moses receiving the Ten Commandments at Mt. Sinai. The teacher can talk about climbing the mountain to receive the knowledge.*
- 3) *Next, the students break into groups of two and practice a two person trust fall. This is accomplished by one person standing behind the other. The front person crosses his/her arms across his/her chest. The objective is for this person to fall back slowly and the other person catches the person. The pair begins with the commands: "Spotter ready?" "Ready" "Falling" "Fall away". The first person falls back into the arms of the other person who catches them and then puts them back on their feet. This exercise readies a student to become a spotter for the bouldering later on. If the teacher has never conducted trust exercises, it may be helpful to read "Teamwork and Team Play" by Jim Cain or "Games for Teachers" by Chris Cavert.*
- 4) *Once everyone has gotten to be both "faller" and "spotter" we can begin the bouldering section of the lesson. Divide the group into two groups and have one person in each group climb first with the other students as spotters.*
- 5) *The first person in each group climbs a designated bouldering route ending at a rock with a commandment next to it. They pull down the commandment and step down.*
- 6) *The entire group comes back together after the first person in each group has successfully climbed. The students in turn read a commandment. After each commandment is read, the teacher asks any of the following questions to stimulate or continue discussion:*
 - a. *What do you think this means?*
 - b. *Why do you think it is an important enough commandment to be listed as one of the major 10?*
 - c. *How can you apply this to your life?*
 - d. *How can you apply this to your life on a daily basis?*
 - e. *How can you re-word it to make other teenagers understand?*
- 7) *After the discussion, the groups split back up and the next two students climb. The procedure is repeated. If you have more than 10 students, include the "design your own". This time, students would create an "11th" commandment that would be important to Jewish values.*



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- 8) *The lesson finishes with a discussion of the difficulties that the Israelites faced during their time of wandering in the desert. Maybe they too had to climb rocks to reach the Promised Land?!*