

UNIT 3:

Tent Pegs.

I Bring My FREEDOM into Play



11th Grade

Freedom is within me.

It is the search for *the Truth*, not *my* truth.

It is a call to the TRUTH.

True choice is to direct my steps toward my Creator.

1. Desire for Humanity

“He blew into his nostrils the
breath of life”

Gn 2:7.



Introducing the human dimension of freedom to the youth as the starting point on the path of love and happiness.

This topic is introduced by asking a question that a seven-year-old child might ask his mother about freedom. “Mom, why did God make us free?” and “What is freedom?” The mother uses the story of Pinocchio to respond to her child’s concerns.

This leads to a reading from Pinocchio. A specific version is suggested in the activity book, but the teacher can choose the version that he/she retains most opportune. The story can be read out loud by the teacher, by a student or, if beneficial, it can be acted out or presented using cartoons.

The story of Pinocchio will serve as the starting point for this topic of freedom, of the poor use of our freedom, and of the “suitable helper” that helps us exercise our freedom, also including the next two units on sin and morality. In this unit, we will dissect the story in order to focus on the desire for humanity that so deeply affects Pinocchio and Geppetto, as well as Geppetto’s paternity, Pinocchio’s dignity, and the motor of love that serves as the guiding thread of the story and each and every one of these units.

ACTIVITIES 1,2 and 3: Before delving into the story of Pinocchio, present the youth with a series of definitions that they can either relate, or not, to the concept of freedom.

This activity will give the teacher an overall impression of the idea that the youth have of freedom, allowing him/her to pay more attention to those aspects that need more work.

It is important to first listen to the opinions of the youth, and only later to guide and direct the topic.

This activity is a sort of brainstorm session. It doesn't aim to answer all of the questions, but to create curiosity within the group that can be developed, built on and reinforced over time in the sessions to come, helping them to better assimilate the ideas and concepts.

Below are some sentences for them to reflect on in order to establish dialogue and group sharing:

- **"We are free but we are tied to our actions"**: Is our freedom conditioned by our actions? Are there things that truly bind us?
- **"I know that when I die, I will be truly free"**: It seems as though life and freedom aren't compatible. Does true freedom not exist in this life?
- **"Freedom is doing whatever I want"**: Am I free when I do as I please? What about if what I want to do doesn't make me happy? What about if what I want to do enslaves me?
- **"We aren't free yet; we have to fight for freedom"**: Is freedom something that you can earn? Doesn't everybody have it?
- **"Your freedom ends where the freedom of another begins"**: My freedom depends on other people?
- **"A person is not free because they do whatever they want; we can't confuse liberty (freedom) with libertinage (debauchery)"**: What is the difference between freedom and debauchery?
- **"No one is free until they find themselves"**: Do we give freedom to ourselves?
- **"Freedom is incompatible with love. A lover will always be a slave"**: Is love something that enslaves?
- **"Freedom doesn't have value in and of itself; you have to appreciate it based on what it can give you"**: Is freedom a bargaining chip?
- **"There is no such thing as freedom, just the search for freedom, and this search is what makes us free"**: How can you search for something that doesn't exist?
- **"Freedom is not just a privilege to be awarded; it's a habit that you have to acquire"**: Is it a privilege for everyone? Can whoever doesn't have it obtain it through their efforts?
- **"True freedom consists in absolute mastery over oneself"**: Can the concepts of freedom and mastery co-exist?

ELABORATING ON THE STORY OF PINOCCHIO:

Distribute the sheets to every student and invite them to silently answer each question asked (you can put on background music), encouraging them to share their ideas. The teacher will moderate the discussion, always leading the students' contributions in order to be able to lay out the fundamental concepts for the general objectives of this unit.



Geppetto's desire to have a real child like Pinocchio (a wooden marionette that looks like a boy), doesn't change the reality that he is a puppet with strings that Geppetto has to manipulate himself. This example serves as an aid to reveal how the human person, without freedom, would not truly be a person. If God had created human beings with strings so that he could manipulate us, like Pinocchio, then we wouldn't be true sons and daughters, true persons. We would be puppets, guided by his Will. But God created us to be free. God created man to be rational, conferring on him the dignity of a person endowed with initiative and mastery over his actions. These acts can be good or evil, and they are directed in freedom through the reason and the will. Because of this, freedom makes man a MORAL subject. Man's orientation toward the good is only achieved through his use of freedom, and true freedom is a sign of the divine image in man. God willed that man should be left in the hand of his own counsel, so that he might of his own accord seek his Creator and freely attain his full and blessed perfection by cleaving to him. The path that corresponds to this search is love. When Pinocchio feels profoundly loved by Geppetto and is capable of loving him truly, then Geppetto welcomes Pinocchio like a true son.



Jiminy Cricket accompanies Pinocchio when the puppet abandons his strings. He is the voice of his conscience; he is always present and warns Pinocchio of the dangers in his path, counseling him on how to choose the good. In this way, also, man, in the depths of his conscience, discovers the existence of a law that he does not dictate to himself, but which he must obey, and whose voice resounds when necessary, to be heard by his heart. Man has a law inscribed in his heart by God; human dignity consists in obedience to this law, according to which man will be personally judged. Man's conscience is his most secret core and his sanctuary.

There he is alone with God whose voice echoes in his depths. In a wonderful manner, conscience reveals that law which is fulfilled by love of God and neighbor; once again, love is the path to the encounter.



Once Pinocchio is no longer subject to Geppetto's strings, he attains his freedom and is able to act according to his own decisions. But sometimes the world, society, "friends", influence the decisions we make and we use our freedom poorly, abusing it; the same thing happens to Pinocchio, who gets lost along the way.

Evil is deceiving in life: it appears to men with a face that seems attractive. What is easy, immediate and pleasurable appears as something apparently good, and man is seduced. For this reason, all of human life, both individually and collectively, is presented as a dramatic battle between good and evil. When man examines his heart, he discovers his inclination toward evil and feels overwhelmed by many evils that cannot have their origin in his Creator. Moreover, he breaks with the right subordination to his ultimate end, and causes disorder in his own person and in his relationships with others and with all of creation. This inclination disposes his freedom to be lived out as though it were a right to use the things that God has created to be at the service of man in a disordered way. This disorder has consequences not only for the person himself, but also for others.

The distorted image of Pinocchio is a reflection of the effect of sin on man. The consequences of sin are perceptible in the body and the spirit, in our acts and in the body's expression of the person. And man loses his dignity. He loses the greatness of the call to be truly human.



Only love is capable of rebuilding the destruction of man. Only in love does humanity acquire its fullness.

When Pinocchio recognizes that he is in need and turns toward his father, his creator, and feels truly loved - this is when he becomes a true son.

- Freedom is something inherent in human beings. God has created us “without strings”. He has made us free. And he loves us like this.
- God has inscribed our vocation to love in our hearts and bodies.
- Our freedom, and this heart touched by evil, lead us away from this vocation.
- Christian morality is not a burden; it is a help, like the little whistle of Jiminy Cricket.
- When we don't live according to Good, to Love, we lose our dignity as persons, just like when Pinocchio turns into a donkey.
- The world offers us “illusions” that appears good, but that can ultimately deceive us and make us lose our dignity.

TIMING AND MATERIALS

This lesson is designed for students in the 11th grade.

If this lesson has not already been taught prior to the units on sin and morality, it is useful to include it in said units as an introductory session, and so it could also be given to students in the 12th grade.

ACTIVITY	TIME (minutes)	MATERIALS
Activity 1: Presentation and reading of the story.	5	Story of Pinocchio: reading, cartoons, puppets, or skits.
Activ. 2: Sentence activity.	20	Sentences (on poster board or written on the chalkboard).
Activ. 3: Development of the story.	30	Activity book.
Conclusions.	5	