

Reality Ride

3. Birthday Cards

Spatial Requirements: Regular classroom setup: little or no space required

Activity Type: Object lesson

Grades: 4-12

Group size: 5 or more

Time: 5-10 minutes

Introduction: This activity will help youth recognize the difference between the easy-fast track and the harder but worth it track. They will see that the easy-fast track is only out to deceive them, while the harder track will lead to opportunities, freedom, and self-respect.

Materials:

- 5 birthday cards (These can be found at www.whytry.org/activities.)

Activity:

Print out the five birthday cards provided online with the following specific numbers in this sequential order:

| Card "A" | Card "B" | Card "C" | Card "D" | Card "E" |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 1 17 | 2 18 | 4 20 | 8 24 | 16 24 |
| 3 19 | 3 19 | 5 21 | 9 25 | 17 25 |
| 5 21 | 6 22 | 6 22 | 10 26 | 18 26 |
| 7 23 | 7 23 | 7 23 | 11 27 | 19 27 |
| 9 25 | 10 26 | 12 28 | 12 28 | 20 28 |
| 11 27 | 11 27 | 13 29 | 13 29 | 21 29 |
| 13 29 | 14 30 | 14 30 | 14 30 | 22 30 |
| 15 31 | 15 31 | 15 31 | 15 31 | 23 31 |

Tell the group or class that you have a special gift or ability to predict birthdays. Randomly select someone to predict their birthday. You can do this by asking if anyone has a birthday in a given month. If more than one person has a birthday in that month, have them pick a number between 1 and 10. The student closest to the number is the winner and you will guess their birthday. Either turn your back to the group or step out of the room, then have that person tell their birthday or write it on the board. Now announce that you will come up with the actual birthday. Start by showing the numbers on card "A" and ask if their date is on that card. If it isn't, go on to the next card. If it is, remember the number in the upper left hand corner of that card and go onto the next card. Every time they say their birthday is on the card shown, add the number in the upper left hand corner to all the other numbers in the same location on the cards they've said "yes" to. If they answer "no" to any card, you do nothing. For example, if the person's birthday was November 19th, you would add 1 because 19 is on card A. 19 is also on card B, with two being the first number, so you would add 2 to 1 for a running total of 3 so far. 19 is not on card C or D, so you would add nothing and still have a total of three. Card E does have a 19 on it, so you would add the first number, which is 16, to 3. The students will be amazed with your special gift to predict birthdays. If you have time, you can predict one or two other birthdays.

Processing the Experience:

- Ask the group or class, 'Do you really think I have the ability to predict birthdays?'
- After their response, tell them that you really don't have the power to predict birthdays; that you were in a sense trying to deceive or trick them into believing that you did.
- In what ways can we be deceived on the fast-easy track?
- What does life look like for a person that never makes it off the fast-easy track?
- Why is the other track called the "Harder But Worth It" track?
- Where does the "Harder But Worth It" track lead to?