Take Action: Respecting Boundaries

At a Glance:
This activity explores boundaries in our lives and ways in which we might remove or cross others' boundaries. Students will be divided into pairs. Each pair will be given a set of cards to act out and demonstrate a boundary being crossed. After a few moments of acting, the teacher will say "freeze". The actors will freeze. The teacher will then "interview" them (pretending to hold a microphone) where they are standing to find out what is going on inside their minds. Discuss the implications of the boundary-crossing with the class after each incident.



Teacher Background:
Following the Lord's instructions to leave Laban, Jacob took off with his family and possessions in the middle of the night. Three days later Laban took off in pursuit after him. To settle their quarrel Jacob suggested that they set up a heap of stones as a boundary marker and witness between them. Neither of them was to cross the boundary and get close to each other. The Old Testament states "you shall not remove your brother's landmark" (Deuteronomy 19:14). A landmark was an object that marked the edge of a persons property. This is a command to respect others' boundaries.

Supplies Needed:
- activity cards

Preparation:
- Cut cards apart.
- Choose scenarios that will work for your group.

Directions:
1. What are personal boundaries?
2. Have you ever been upset because someone crossed your boundaries?
3. Laban and Jacob set up a boundary between them—it was a pillar or heap of stones. Their relationship was protected by this boundary.
4. The Ten Commandments are boundaries of truth that protect our spiritual lives.

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5. There is a law in the Old Testament that states "you shall not remove your brother's landmark" (Deuteronomy 19:14). Literally this law prohibited people from removing the boundary stones that were set up. Spiritually it involves not violating spiritual boundaries that could cause harm.
6. Today's activity explores many different kinds of boundaries. You will be divided into pairs. Each pair will act out two sides of a boundary that is being tested. Once we have the general picture, I will call out "freeze." You will freeze where you are.
7. I will then come and interview you one at a time and ask what you are thinking.
8. We will then discuss the situation as a group and identify the boundary that is being tested and the implications of crossing the boundary.

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Boundary Freeze Cards

A1 GIRL You are angry because your friend's obnoxious brother just said something nasty to you. You text your friend and tell her you think her brother is stupid.	**A2 GIRL** You are shocked. You and your younger brother are close to each other, although other people don't like him. You feel protective of him. Your friend has just texted you to say she thinks your brother is stupid.
B1 BOY You are cramped because you are forced to sit in a row of chairs that are too close together, along with other students your age. You push the person sitting next to you over and sit on part of their chair.	**B2 BOY** You are feeling cramped by sitting close to others in a row of small chairs. The person sitting next to you suddenly shoves into you, leaving you with nowhere to sit.
C1 GIRL/BOY You are sitting with a friend in a crowded bus. You leave your backpack and jacket on the seat while you get up to go and talk to a friend for a minute. When you come back, someone else is sitting in your seat.	**C2 GIRL/BOY** There are not enough seats on the bus. You have had to stand for most of the journey. You see a seat that nobody is sitting in with a backpack and jacket on it. You move the stuff to the floor and sit down. The person returns.
D1 EVIL SPIRIT A hungry person sees food on a table. It is not his/hers. You are a voice in their mind telling him/her that it's fine to take it. Give reasons to support this idea.	**D2 GOOD SPIRIT** A hungry person sees good food on a table. It is not his/hers. You are a voice in that person's mind saying that he/she should not take the food without asking. You believe it is stealing. Give reasons to support this idea.

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E1 GIRL You cannot find the right clothes to wear. Your sister has a lot of clothes you like. You go to her closet and start trying on outfits.	**E2 GIRL** Wearing nice clothes is important to you. You work hard, buy your own clothes and take good care of them. You don't like it when your sister comes and helps herself. She's careless and has spoiled some of your favorite things in the past.
F1 SON You need black socks to match your outfit. You have none. You go to your father's drawer to borrow his.	**F2 FATHER** You need black socks for work each day. You plan ahead and take care of your laundry so that you always have the socks you need. You are annoyed when your son takes them, because he doesn't return them and leaves you with no socks for work.
G1 GIRL/BOY You want to go to a party with friends. Everyone is going. Your parents have said you are not allowed to go. They are concerned about how far away it is, who will be driving, whether adults will be there, etc. You think they should trust you.	**G2 FATHER/MOTHER** Your son/daughter wants to go to a party with friends. You are concerned about both the party and person who will be driving. You do not give permission for your son/daughter to go out of concern for their safety.
H1 STUDENT A teacher has given you a low grade on your essay. You think it's unfair. You think he/she is punishing you because you skipped class to get the assignment finished. You talk to the teacher.	**H2 TEACHER** A student has submitted an essay late. It was due at the start of class—and the student was not even there. He/she has done a hurried job that didn't meet your expectations. He/she has come to talk to you about the grade.
J1 BOY/GIRL You are not sure what to do. A friend of yours keeps telling you to skip school. He/she wants you to go to a concert in town with him/her. The concert sounds like fun, but you like school and really don't want to do this because you care about doing well.	**J2 BOY/GIRL** You hate school. Your favorite band is coming to town. You really want to see them, but the concert is during school hours. You don't want to go by yourself, so you are looking for someone who will go with you.

K1 BOY/GIRL You are watching a great movie on TV. An advertisement interrupts the movie. You find the advertisement demeaning and insulting to the body the Lord gave you. Should you watch, turn the sound down, leave the room, or stop watching the movie?	**K2 TV ADVERTISEMENT** You are a TV actor advertising a product that some may find insulting and upsetting, e.g. a product for bad breath, skin care, weight loss, etc.
L1 BOY/GIRL You meet someone new. You ask a series of very personal questions about his/her family.	**L2 BOY/GIRL** You have recently moved because your mother died. You are a shy person and getting to know new people is hard for you. Questions about your family are especially difficult to answer.
M1 BOY/GIRL You are sitting in a class. You have not silenced your mobile phone and it goes off in the middle of class.	**M2 TEACHER** You have a "no mobile phone" policy in your classroom. Just as you are explaining a difficult concept, a student's mobile phone rings. You lose your train of thought and the class all turns to look.
P1 BOY/GIRL You struggle with being late for events even when you try to be on time. Your friends have invited you to join them for a movie and once again you are late. Everyone missed the trailers.	**P2 BOY/GIRL** You are always on time. You hate it when people are late. It's so inconsiderate. You have invited a friend to watch a movie and told him/her how important it is to be on time. He/she is late. You have not missed the movie, but you did miss the trailers.
Q1 BOY/GIRL You are really angry about something. You start shouting at friends/family.	**Q2 BOY/GIRL** You are sitting quietly when someone starts shouting at you for no reason.