

## MORALITY/VALUES

Anything to photocopy? Yes

Name the Neighbors (1 for each student or team)

Here are the parts of this lesson:

- ♦ Name the Neighbors *logic puzzle; pencils*
- ♦ The Window *discussion starter story*

### LOGIC PUZZLE

#### NAME THE NEIGHBORS

A fun problem of logic—that might come in handy sometime when you want to keep a group occupied—is Name the Neighbors. Here's the solution (from west to east on the street):



Angus Emerson

### DISCUSSION STARTER STORY

#### THE WINDOW

Read or tell the story The Window to the group.

This beautiful story is not only an excellent illustration for a talk (on a variety of subjects) with its surprise twist at the end, but lends itself well to discussion. The following questions raise some possible issues.

1. What was your initial reaction to the story? Were you shocked? Surprised? Angry?
2. From the story, describe Mr. Wilson. What kind of man does he appear to be? Do you like or dislike him? Why?
3. Describe Mr. Thompson. What kind of person is he? Do you like or dislike him?
4. Why did Mr. Wilson do what he did? What do you think his motives were?
5. Would you describe Mr. Wilson's descriptions of what was outside the window as:
  - (a) lying
  - (b) creative imagination
  - (c) unselfish concern for Mr. Thompson
  - (d) cruel and envy producing
  - (e) something else (please describe).
6. Did Mr. Wilson do anything wrong?
7. Why did Mr. Thompson's mood change from enjoyment and appreciation to resentment? Was his resentment justified?
8. Did Mr. Thompson murder Mr. Wilson?
9. Who was guilty of the more serious wrong? Mr. Wilson or Mr. Thompson?
10. Who was most responsible for Mr. Wilson's death? Why?
11. Would both men have been better off without Mr. Wilson's descriptions of the view outside the window?
12. If you had been Mr. Thompson, how would you have felt when you finally looked out the window and saw nothing but a blank wall?
  - (a) disappointed
  - (b) angry
  - (c) guilty

- (d) grieved
- (e) grateful
- (f) puzzled
- (g) shocked

13. Is it a sin to fantasize?

14. Is it a sin to hide the truth or to exaggerate when it doesn't hurt anyone?

15. Where does one draw the line in the areas of fantasy and imagination?



# Name



# the Neighbors

Fran, Grace, Helen, Ida, and Jane and their husbands all live on a certain street that runs east to west in the town of Centerville. From the following clues, give each couple's full names and describe exactly where on the street each couple lives.

- Grace has Ralph as one next-door neighbor and the Greens as her other next-door neighbor.
- The Browns live in the westernmost house—Ned in the easternmost.
- Sam has Ida as one next-door neighbor and Peter as his next-door neighbor on the other side.
- Both Jane and Peter live east of the Whites.
- Peter lives next door to the Blacks.
- Tom lives west of the Greys and east of Grace.
- Helen and Jane are next-door neighbors. The Greys live next to Jane also, but on the other side.

# THE WINDOW

There were once two men, Mr. Wilson and Mr. Thompson, both seriously ill in the same room of a great hospital—quite a small room, just large enough for the pair of them with two beds, two bedside lockers, a door opening into the hall, and one window looking out on the world.

Mr. Wilson, as part of his treatment, was allowed to sit up in bed for an hour in the afternoon (it had something to do with draining the fluid from his lungs). His bed was next to the window. But Mr. Thompson had to spend all of his time flat on his back. Both of them had to be kept quiet and still, which was the reason they were in the small room by themselves. They were grateful for the peace and privacy, though. None of the bustle and clatter and prying eyes of the general ward for them. Of course, one of the disadvantages was that they weren't allowed to do much: no reading, no radio, certainly no television. They just had to keep quiet and still, just the two of them.

Well, they used to talk for hours and hours. About their wives, their children, their homes, their jobs, their hobbies, their childhoods, what they did during the war, where they'd been on vacations, all that sort of thing. Every afternoon, when Mr. Wilson, the man by the window, was propped up, he would pass the time by describing what he could see outside. And Mr. Thompson began to live for those hours.

The window apparently overlooked a park with a lake where there were ducks and swans, children throwing them bread and sailing model boats, and young lovers walking hand in hand beneath the trees. And there were flowers and stretches of grass, games of softball, people taking their ease in the sunshine, and right at the back, behind the fringe of trees, there was a fine view of the city skyline. Mr. Thompson would listen to all of this, enjoying every minute. How a child nearly fell into the lake, how beautiful the girls were in their summer dresses, then an exciting ball game, or a boy playing with his puppy. He could almost see what was happening outside.

Then one fine afternoon when there was some sort of a parade, the thought struck him: Why should Wilson, next to the window, have all the pleasure of seeing what was going on? Why shouldn't he get the chance? He felt ashamed and tried not to think like that, but the more he tried, the worse he wanted a change. He would do anything! In a few days, he had turned sour. He should be by the window. He brooded. He couldn't sleep and grew even more seriously ill, which the doctors just couldn't understand.

One night as he stared at the ceiling, Mr. Wilson suddenly woke up, coughing and choking, the fluid congesting in his lungs, his hands groping for the call button that would bring the night nurse running. But Mr. Thompson watched without moving. The coughing racked the darkness. On and on. He choked and then stopped. The sound of breathing stopped. Mr. Thompson continued to stare at the ceiling.

In the morning, the day nurse came in with water for their baths and found Mr. Wilson dead. They took his body away quietly with no fuss.

As soon as it seemed decent, Mr. Thompson asked if he could be moved to the bed next to the window. So they moved him, tucked him in, made him quite comfortable, and left him alone to be quiet and still. The minute they'd gone, he propped himself up on one elbow, painfully and laboriously, and strained as he looked out the window.

It faced a blank wall.