

CHOICES

Scenario 8

Cheat or fail?

You are coming up to a big Math test on algebra. It's important to get a good grade. But algebra is your worst nightmare.

Then your friend Johnny says, "Mark found the test paper on the teacher's desk. He took a photo of it. It's three pages of questions – the real questions."

"Well?"

"Isn't it obvious? I can show you the test questions. Math is not your thing, is it?"

Johnny opens up his phone. On the screen is a shot of the test questions.

He looks around, to see if anyone is watching.

"Make up your mind. Do you wanna pass? Or are ya gonna fail?"

What should you do?

A You say, "Oh – all right. Just this once. I need a good grade." And you ask him to send on the pictures of the test.

What next?

You look at the questions.

You ask your older brother to help you with the hard ones. You write up the correct answers, and you smuggle a tiny note into the class on the day of the test.

All is going well. You fill in the correct answers. You feel so clever.

"One more minute," says the teacher.

Then he stops behind you.

“What’s that?” he says. He points at your note. You slip it into your pocket.

“You weren’t cheating were you?”

All around, your classmates are staring at you.

Johnny looks out the window, a picture of innocence.

“Class, dismissed. And you – come with me.”

Think about it

In every culture around the world, honesty is considered one of the main virtues.

It is a sign of acting honorably – of doing the right thing.

If you were to get a great score on the Math test by cheating, you might win that battle. But it was based on a kind of lying about your Math ability.

What about the next Math test?

And what if you were caught?

Would the teacher ever trust you again?

Do you want to look at another scenario involving temptations? (Go to 13)

Do you want to try the scenario again? (Go to 8)

B You decide you can’t accept the offer. You say “Sorry – I can’t do that.”

What next?

You do a bit of extra preparation, because you’re worried about failing.

You do the test.

The next day, the teacher smiles at you and says, "Not bad. You got 15 out of 20. You need to get on top of factors. Do you want some extra help? I can show you how to do it at lunchtime, if you like."

You smile at the teacher.

"Sure thing."

Isn't it best to learn – rather than cheat?

Think about it

Some surveys have suggested that up to 70% of students know someone who has cheated.

Why is it a bad idea?

Because it's a form of lying and stealing. Because it causes stress – imagine getting caught. Because it is unfair to others (who work hard for their results). Because it is unfair to you. You are saying to yourself, "I can't do it on my own." Because it kills trust (by others, in you). Because it can become a habit. Because it can lead to failure – skipping the hard work means you won't get better. Because people may find out. If they do you will have shown yourself to be dishonest.

Standing up against the temptation to cheat means more work in the short term but a better outcome in the long term.

Do you want to look at another scenario in which you break the rules? (Go to 4)

Do you want to try the scenario again? (Go to 8)