



Self-Discipline and Moderation

Part 1

- Why was Alexander's mom upset with him? *(he was bouncing the basketball in the house and was obsessed with basketball)*
- Isn't it good to practice basketball a lot and try to get good at it?
- What was the problem with what Alexander was doing?
- What is moderation?

Part 2

- When Alexander arrived in Inland, where was he? *(Gateway Castle)*
- What was important about Gateway Castle? *(a secret passage from Gateway Castle led to Stormhaven)*
- Who saw Ellie's cooking fire? *(crows—the Eroline spies)*
- Ellie was really hungry but what should she have done instead of building a cooking fire? *(put off eating until later when it was safer)*
- The Light Keeper said, "The hard thing is often the good thing." What does that mean?
- What is self-discipline?

Part 3

- What did the Lightkeeper tell Alexander to do? *(return to Gateway Castle and write letters to two warriors to help him)*
- How did Alexander feel about that? *(he was scared)*
- Who was the man Alexander met on the road back to Gateway Castle? *(Lord Muffin)*
- What did Lord Muffin think was important? *(Food)*
- Was Lord Muffin using moderation?
- Let's say you got a lot of candy at a birthday party and you have it in a bag under your bed. How can you use self-discipline and moderation to make your candy last longer and keep yourself from getting sick?

Part 4

- Who was the woman Alexander met on the road back to Gateway Castle? *(Lady Penciltoe)*
- What did Lady Penciltoe think was important? *(beauty and fashion)*
- Was Lady Penciltoe using moderation?
- Can something good become something bad if you do it too much?
- Let's say you really want to get really good grades in school so you decide to do homework and reading from the minute you get home until you go to bed. Is there any problem with that?

Part 5

- Who were Lord Muffin and Lady Penciltoe really? *(two warriors—the Fist of the Western March and the Siren of Southguard)*
- Why was Alexander disappointed with the warriors? *(he didn't think they would be helpful)*
- What did Alexander shoot out of the cannon at the Erodians? *(food from Lord Muffin, cosmetics from Lady Penciltoe)*
- Alexander learned that self-discipline often requires trading something good for something better. What does that mean?
- Let's say you're on a fun outing with your family and you're really hungry. Your mom pulls out some crackers and asks you to be in charge of passing them out. There's just one box of crackers and a lot of people in your family. No one will notice if you take a little more than your fair share while you pass out the crackers. How can you use self-discipline to be fair?

Part 6

- What personal object did Alexander put in the canon? *(his basketball)*
- What did Alexander write in his book? *(self-discipline and moderation)*
- What are some things we should do in moderation? *(eating treats, running, jumping off things, playing video games, etc.)*
- Can you think of a time when you used self-discipline? *(share some stories of your own when you had to use self-discipline.)*
- Let's say you like soccer but your games are really early on Saturday morning and it's often really cold outside so you start to complain about going. How could self-discipline come in handy?

Self-Discipline and Moderation Activity and Discussion

Try these activities and discuss the values self-discipline and moderation. Think about and discuss what makes a person self-disciplined and able to show moderation.

"Too Much" Game

Explain that too much can sometimes be worse than too little. Say, "Let's play a game about too much. I'll say, 'too much _____,' and you say what 'bad thing' might happen from too much."

For example:

Too much exercise. . . . You might get too tired, or even injured.

Too much candy. . . . You'd get cavities, lose your appetite.

Too much television. . . . It keeps you from playing, studying, and other good things and isn't good for our brains.

Too much catsup. . . . You can't taste the food.

Too much bathing. . . . You might wash your skin off.

As the last two examples show, you can have some fun with the game. But the ultimate objective is helping children to understand the value of moderation.

"M, A, and NL" Game

This game teaches older elementary school children that some things are okay in moderation but bad in excess—while other things are bad in any quantity or form. Tell kids you're going to read them a list of activities and they should write down the word you say along with an M if it's something they should do in "moderation," an A if it is something they should "avoid" or "abstain from," or a NL for "no limit" if it's something they don't really need to limit (describe and define the words). You can use the following list of words, adding items of your own. At the end, discuss what answers everyone came up with. It's OK that sometimes there won't be a definitive answer.

- Eating treats
- Spending money on things you don't absolutely need
- Reading
- Exercising
- Watching television
- Taking things that don't belong to you
- Caring for others
- Name-calling
- Smiling
- Eating vegetables
- Giving hugs
- Taking drugs
- Smoking
- Playing at friends' houses
- Spending time on a computer or phone