I AM WORTHY Facilitator's Guide

Middle School

#1 | I Am Meant to Be & My Life Matters

Lesson Overview

This lesson (35–45 minutes) helps students understand that they are meant to be alive, their lives matter, and they are not an accident or a mistake. Among children and teens who are struggling with depression or suicidal thoughts, beliefs such as "I wasn't meant to be" and "My life doesn't matter" can be tragically common. Through discussion, hands-on activities, and reflection, students will begin learning to recognize and challenge these lies while understanding that every person has value.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- Realize they were meant to be and that their lives matter.
- Recognize that thoughts, feelings, or words from others do not always tell the truth about who they are.
- Understand that their lives matter regardless of popularity, attention, or achievement.
- Understand that every person is meant to be and has value.

Supplies Needed

- Clear bag of rice
- Additional rice for the art activity
- Whiteboard or large piece of paper
- Printed affirmation pages with "I am meant to be" in large, thick letters
- Glue
- Trays or paper plates for catching extra rice
- Markers or pencils
- Flashlight or small spotlight
- Four two-sided poster boards
- Journals or paper

© I AM WORTHY - WorthyProgram.com

Introduction: Meant to Be (5–7 minutes)

Lead Teacher

Say:

> “Do you know how many tiny things had to go exactly right for you to be sitting in this room today?”
>
> “Not ten. Not a hundred. Not even a million. Scientists say it’s more like trillions of tiny steps when you were being formed in your mother’s womb.”

Hold up the clear bag of rice.

> “Let’s pretend this bag has 5,000 grains of rice.”

Write on the board or a large piece of paper:

1,000,000,000,000

Say: “This is one trillion.”

Ask: “How many bags like this would we need to equal one trillion grains of rice?”

Write: **1 trillion ÷ 5,000 = 200,000,000 bags**

Then say:

> “Two hundred million bags of rice like this… just to equal one trillion grains.”
>
> “So, when I say your body needed *trillions* of tiny steps for you to be alive and born, it means: more than we can picture.”
>
> “If even **one** tiny step had failed—just one—you wouldn’t be here. But you are here. That tells us something important.”

Pause.

> “You are not an accident.”
>
> “You are not random.”
>
> “You are not a mistake.”
>
> “You did not choose to live. Life chose you and worked hard to bring you into the world.”

© I AM WORTHY - WorthyProgram.com

Talk It Out (2–3 minutes)

Table Leaders

Ask: Why are you grateful to be alive?

Teaching Truth #1: You Are Meant to Be (2–3 minutes)

Lead Teacher

Say:

> “Both writers of this very lesson we are doing now know what it is like to grow up without a father in their lives.”
>
> “Experiences like that can leave a person with questions about whether they were wanted, whether they mattered, or whether something was wrong with them.”
>
> “Even though they went through hard challenges, they both came to believe that they were meant to be and that their lives mattered.”
>
> “One way their lives matter today is that they helped create this lesson so you could hear the same truth about yourself: You are meant to be, and your life matters!”

Small Group Activity: Layered Truth Word Art (7–8 minutes)

Give each student cardstock or a journal page.

Students create a visual design around:

I AM MEANT TO BE
AND MY LIFE MATTERS

They may add words or phrases from the lesson, such as:

not an accident • not a mistake • valuable • truth • meant to be

© I AM WORTHY - WorthyProgram.com

Students may use lettering, color, shapes, or simple symbols to help the affirmation stand out.

Teaching Truth #2: Lies, Truth, and the Mean Voice (3–5 minutes)

Lead Teacher

Say:

> “We have been talking about the truth that you are meant to be and that you are not a mistake.”
>
> “But sometimes the truth can be hard to believe, especially when our thoughts, feelings, or experiences seem to say something different.”
>
> “Something can feel true without actually being true.”
>
> “Sometimes a thought or a hurtful message gets repeated in our minds so often that it begins to sound like the truth.”
>
> “We call these lying messages the mean voice.”
>
> “The mean voice may come from our own thoughts and feelings or from hurtful things other people have said or done.”
>
> “It may say, ‘I don’t matter,’ ‘I was a mistake,’ or ‘Other people matter more than I do.’”
>
> “But just because the mean voice says something does not make it true. We do not have to believe the lying mean voice.”
>
> “To be clear, any thought or feeling that you don’t matter, that your life doesn’t matter, is a massive lie, no matter where it’s coming from.”
>
> “The truth is: You are meant to be, and your life matters.”

Remind students:

> “If you are struggling to believe that truth, do not keep it to yourself. Talk to a trusted adult, like a parent or caregiver, teacher, school counselor, coach, or mentor.”

© I AM WORTHY - WorthyProgram.com

"Keeping those thoughts to yourself can make the mean voice feel even louder."

Talk It Out (2–3 minutes)

Table Leaders

Ask: "Why can a lie start to feel true when someone has replayed it in their mind for a long time?"

Large Group Activity: The Spotlight Moves, but the Truth Stays the Same (6–7 minutes)

Lead Teacher

Before the lesson, prepare four two-sided poster boards.

Write one statement on the front of each poster:

- Won an award
- Has lots of friends or followers
- Got in trouble in front of everyone
- Did something kind that no one noticed

On the back of every poster, write:

I AM MEANT TO BE, AND MY LIFE MATTERS.

Say:

> "The mean voice can lie about us, but comparison can also make us believe that some people matter more than others. Let's see what happens when the spotlight starts moving."
>
> "I need four volunteers."
>
> "These posters are pretend examples. They are not describing the volunteers."

Give each volunteer one poster and ask them to hold up the front.

© I AM WORTHY - WorthyProgram.com

Shine the spotlight on the volunteer holding Won an award.

Ask: “This person won an award and is getting a lot of positive attention. Does that make their life matter more than everyone else’s?”

Move the spotlight to Has lots of friends or followers.

> “Now this person is getting a lot of social attention. Did their value suddenly go up because more people notice them?”

Move the spotlight to Got in trouble in front of everyone.

> “This person is getting negative attention. Does making a mistake or being embarrassed make their life matter less?”

Move the spotlight to Did something kind that no one noticed.

> “This person did something thoughtful, but no one saw it. Does that make their life matter less?”

Turn off the spotlight.

Say: “Now turn your posters around.”

Allow the group to see that every poster says:

I AM MEANT TO BE, AND MY LIFE MATTERS.

Say:

> “The spotlight moved. The kind of attention changed. But the truth about each person stayed the same.”
>
> “Sometimes comparison makes us think the person getting the most attention matters more.”
>
> “But positive attention, negative attention, or no attention at all does not decide a person’s value.”
>
> “Every person is meant to be, and every life matters.”

What Did You Notice? (2–3 minutes)

© I AM WORTHY - WorthyProgram.com

Lead Teacher

Ask:

- “What changed when the spotlight moved?”
- “How can comparison or social media make it seem like some people matter more than others?”

Say: “The spotlight moved, but the truth about each person stayed the same. The truth is: Every person is meant to be, and every life matters.”

Journal Reflection (3–4 minutes)

Lead Teacher

Say: “Let’s take a few quiet minutes to think about today’s affirmation. You will not be required to share what you write.”

Write: “I am meant to be, and my life matters.”

Then reflect: “What would it look like for me to really believe this is true?”

Closing Affirmation (1–2 minutes)

Lead Teacher

Say:

“Today we learned that you are not an accident, and you are not a mistake.”

“We learned that thoughts, feelings, attention, popularity, or comparison do not decide whether your life matters.”

“The truth is that you are meant to be, and so is every person around you.”

“Let’s say today’s affirmation together.”

Students repeat: **“I am meant to be, and my life matters.”**

© I AM WORTHY - WorthyProgram.com