**Value and Worth Lesson
Antiques RoadShow Story**

**Purpose:**

* To prompt and facilitate a discussion about value and what our value is as human beings.

**Materials:**

* Antiques Road Show Application Piece

**Time:**

* Approximately 30-35 minutes

**Focus:**

* Ask students what they think of when they hear the word “value?” Most of the time, students will say “money” (which is what you ideally want). Then say, “Yes! So if I have a $10 bill, what is the value?” Students will say, “$10.” You will then ask, “Can I buy something worth $20 with this $10?” They say, “No, it’s value is $10,” and then you agree and say that the value of the $10 bill is $10.

**Lesson:**

* *Story Time*

Have you ever heard of the Antiques RoadShow? It’s a show that is on PBS and people take items that they own to appraisers/historians to see how much they are worth. The appraisers will tell the people all about their item: the history of it, what it is made of, who made it, all kinds of things. So, for example, you may have a lamp in your family that your great grandmother bought in 1928 for 5 cents. You bring it to the Antiques RoadShow so that you can learn about the item. The appraiser might say. *“Wow! This is such a unique piece. This glass was from a factory in New York and it was made in 1925. Today, this lamp would be worth about $25.”* And you would probably say, *“Thank you so much! It doesn’t matter how much it’s worth, it’s so special to me, I just wanted to learn about it.”* The appraiser might also say, *“Wow! This is such a unique piece. This glass was hand blown in a factory in New York. The lamp was hand-painted and is such a beautiful piece. Today, this lamp would be worth around $1500.”* In both situations, you are usually so excited! Not because you’re going to sell it, but because you now know the value of your item.

Well, there is a lady who hears that the Antiques RoadShow is coming to her town. She decides that she is going to take this large wooden treasure chest to the Show to see how much it’s worth. It’s been in her family for as long as she can remember, but she doesn’t know anything about it. All she knows is that it’s big, it’s collecting dust, and she’d like to see if she can get some money for it. It is really heavy and she has a hard time getting it out of the attic, but she decides to push it out of the attic and it tumbles down the attic ladder. She lives in a two story house, so it then gets tumbled down her stairs. At this point, how do you think she’s feeling? (Take answers). You’re right, she’s tired and frustrated…but then she realizes she has to get it in her car. She puts a trash bag over it and somehow manages to swing the bag into her trunk with as much strength as she can muster. She then drives to the location of the Antiques RoadShow.

The Antiques RoadShow is being held in an old, abandoned building. There isn’t a real parking lot, just a lot of gravel and rocks that people are parking on. Since it took her so long to get the chest out of the attic, she is very late and there are no close spots. She pulls up to the front of the building and asks the people at the door if they can watch the chest while she parks, but, unfortunately, they cannot guarantee the chest will still be there upon her return. So, she has to park very far away and then has to drag the chest in the trash bag across the rocks and gravel. Miraculously, the bag doesn’t rip!

She exhaustedly gets to the door and is beyond frustrated, but she’s made it. She opens the door and sees a lot of very long lines with many people waiting in them with their items. You see, appointment spots were available earlier, but she did not make an appointment. So now she has to wait in a line to see an appraiser. She picks a line and waits. By the time she gets to the appraiser, she is livid. It’s been four hours from start to finish and she’s ready to just give this chest away.

The lady takes the garbage bag off of the chest and just stands there, angrily. The historian says, *"So, tell me about this chest."* She frustratingly answers, *"Ugh, it is a chest that has been in my family for who knows how long. It is so heavy and has been sitting in my attic and I just want to get rid of it. I had to drag it across the entire parking lot to bring it here, so anything you can offer me, I will take it and be so glad to get rid of it."* The historian looks at the chest, circles around it a few times, crosses his arms, and then begins speaking. *"This is a very interesting item. It is modeled after hand carved chests from the 17th century from a famous Italian wood carver. The original chests would travel on ships and hold valuables for those on the ships. The carved designs on it added a beautiful accent that people loved. Though this is a replica, they stopped making the replicas in the 1950s. They only made about 300. With the good condition the chest is in, I would say you could get about $1500 for it."* Remember, she has dragged this chest across the parking lot and it’s still in good condition. Amazing! The woman was thrilled! $1500! Then the historian stopped.

He kept looking at the chest, and the woman was frustrated again. She wanted to get out of there, get her $1500, and be done with it all. The historian asked, *"Do you mind if I look at the bottom of the chest?"* Now the woman is nervous. She has treated this chest so poorly and she believes the bottom of the chest is damaged from the parking lot rocks. She knows once the appraiser sees the bottom, it won’t be worth $1500. She helps to lift the chest on its side. The historian looks at the bottom, places it down, and then stands very still for a minute. He continues, "*The Italian wood carver of the originals would put a stamp or seal on all of his work. This is the way that people knew that he carved it and it wasn’t fake. On chests like these, he would put his stamp on the bottom. As of right now, we only know of two of these original chests left in existence, and they are both in museums. However, interestingly enough, your chest…has his seal.”* The woman could barely breathe. She stood very still for a moment. The historian then said, *"With an original in this condition, with only three known in the world, this chest would probably sell for about…2.5 million dollars."* The woman was in complete shock!

**Questions and Discussion:**

* So my first question to you is, do you think the woman put the chest back in the garbage bag and dragged it back to her car?
	+ Take answers.Answer**: She absolutely did not. She hired guards to carry it to an armored/bullet proof truck, which then transported it to a safe in a bank.**
* My second question is, what was the value of the chest when it was in her attic? **(Kids usually say “nothing,” “zero,” “a thousand,” but the answer is $2.5 million).**
* So the value is the same – from the attic to the Antiques RoadShow. What changed?
	+ Take answers. Answer: **Her mind is what changed, how she viewed it changed**.

Then discusshow valuable we are, even when we don't feel like it, even when we feel as if we’ve been dragged across the ground like the chest in a bag, our value, our worth doesn't change. And if there are **three original** chests in the world and they are worth 2.5 million apiece, *our* value is priceless, because there is **only one** of us and we can NEVER be replaced.

In the end, the only thing that changed was the woman's *knowledge*of the value, not the actual value of the chest. That was always the same. Sitting in the attic, it was 2.5 million, sitting with the historian it was 2.5 million; it's always been worth 2.5 million! However, once she learned how valuable it was, she treated it with the respect it deserved. We are priceless, and we need to treat people as creations of value, because they are. Nothing we can do, have done, or will do will ever lower or raise our value because we’re already the most valuable we can be.

Finally, ask the students who would like a crisp, new $100 bill (hold up a fake $100 bill that you’ve made or printed). Tell them there are no strings attached, they can spend it, give it to charity, whatever they’d like. Then crumple it up, throw it on the ground, and step on it. Pick it up and ask again who wants it. They all still do and have them tell you why. They always say the value is the same. Then say, *“If the $100 bill could talk, he’d probably say,* ***‘I’m worthless, I feel awful, this is terrible.’*** *And it probably would feel awful for him. But we would tell him what?”* The students say, *“You are valuable, you’re worth $100! Your value is the same!”* So when we’re having those awful days when we feel crumpled, we need to remind ourselves that we are still valuable – no matter what!

**Closure:**

* Tell the students that they will be writing a letter to themselves so that they can be reminded that they are valuable, no matter what. Read the quote that’s on top of the application piece by Max Lucado – *“You are valuable because you exist. Not because of what you do or what you have done, but simply because you are.”*

“You are valuable because you exist. Not because of what you do or what you have done, but simply because you are.” – Max Lucado

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