

The Texter: A Moral Dilemma

Information for students

- Life is full of difficult decisions. Read the scenario below carefully and consider the situation.
- Consider the questions that follow, either in writing or simply by thinking about them.

Take things further and share the story with a family member, asking them how they would respond.

Scenario:

Sebastian, a Secondary I student, started secondary school at a big school in the city. He was always pretty popular, but recently he started receiving really upsetting text messages from an “unknown” number. The texts said things like:

- “Go back to elementary school where you belong.”
- “Good luck getting a girlfriend, loser.”
- “Nice lunch bag you had today. Did your mommy pick that out for you?”
- “You’d better watch out, loser, we’re watching you!”

Sebastian really didn’t know who could be sending the texts. He was scared. There was a big group of Secondary II kids who sneered at and mocked the Sec. Ones, but he didn’t know any of them personally.

At first, Sebastian tried to just ignore the messages. He even deleted the first one that came in. They frightened him. When each additional text message would *ding* on his phone, his heart would pound, his throat would tighten and his palms would begin to sweat. How did this person even get his number? What should he do?

Finally, Sebastian shared the messages with his neighbour, Aleks. Aleks was a great friend, but he didn’t go to the same school as Sebastian. Aleks was kind and reassuring, telling Sebastian not to take the messages personally. He told Sebastian that he should show the messages to his parents or maybe even a teacher.

Sebastian felt torn. He was scared that if he tried to ignore the text, they would never stop and things could get worse. But if he showed them to a teacher or his parents, he was worried that others would find out and people would think he was a snitch. There was no way he wanted things to get worse!

Questions:

- 1-What should Sebastian do?
- 2-Would you do the same thing?
- 3-What would you tell Sebastian if he came to you for advice? What would you do?
- 4-What would happen if this was a student at your school? Do these kinds of situations exist at your school?
- 5-Have you even known someone in a situation like Sebastian? How was it resolved?
- 6-Why do you think people bully others? Have you ever said hurtful things (either in person or over the Internet) to someone? Why did you do it?

Materials required

- None

Information for parents

- Read the instructions to your child, if necessary.
- Discuss the questions together