

FOR THOSE BACK HOME

Aim: to raise awareness of the choices made by Christians working overseas and the expectations laid on them.

Audience: older teenagers, adults. Any number of people, minimum 4.

Duration:
30 minutes.

Equipment:
pencils, scissors, Score Cards (photocopy masters provided).



Wycliffe Bible Translators,
Horsleys Green, High Wycombe,
Bucks HP14 3XL
Tel: 01494 682268
email: askus@wycliffe.org
Registered Charity No. 251233

© Wycliffe Bible Translators 1995.
No part of this activity sheet may be
republished without the prior permission
of the copyright holder.

Leaders Instructions:

In advance:

- Photocopy the Score Card master so that you have a card for each team of 3 – 5 participants.
- Cut the Decision Card pages into three.

1. Put all the Decision Cards *except* card 1 around the room. The cards can be in any order.
2. Divide the participants into groups of 3 – 5.
3. Give each group a Score Card and a pencil.
4. Read out the Audience's Instructions.
5. Read out Decision Card 1.
6. When all the groups have read the last card that they are instructed to read, use the Talk Back section to discuss the simulation together.

Audience's Instructions:

For this activity you need to imagine that you are a young Christian working overseas. There is a series of Decision Cards around the room which describe some situations you could have to face. Exactly what happens to you will depend upon the choices you make from now on. Card 1 will be read out to you. Once you have heard it, you need to make a decision about what you want to do next. Discuss the information on the card with the other members of your group before making a decision. This activity is not a race! Each card will give you two options and will tell you which Decision Card to move on to next.

Along the way, you need to use your Score Card to keep a record of three things:

- the amount of time you have spent.
- the amount of converts you have gained.
- the number of the decisions you have made.

Whenever you see a small pencil symbol ✎ on the Decision Card you will know that you need to mark something on your Score Card.

This is the situation so far... You have a church supporting you but will actually be working overseas as part of a mission organisation. Your church is exerting pressure on you to win as many converts as possible. The church leaders want to encourage further involvement in mission and want you to be seen to be successful. Along the way you will have to think about whether you should follow the advice of 'those back home' or respond to the needs as you meet them overseas.

Talk Back:

1. What can this simulation teach us about *decision making*?
 - How did the groups make their decisions?
 - If this had been a real situation, what else would you have included in your decision making?

2. What can this simulation teach us about *measuring success* in Christian work overseas?
 - Is counting converts a good measure of success?
 - How else could churches assess the success of their overseas ministry?
3. What can this simulation teach us about *accountability*?
 - Your supporting church, the director of your mission organisation, and the Holy Spirit are all involved in your work overseas, but who should have the final say in deciding what that work should be?

Comments to use in discussion:

Decisions can be made democratically or by choosing to follow a leader. In a cross-cultural team, those involved in the decision making process may have different expectations about how decisions should be made.

A conflict of interests can be resolved in a number of ways. In the earliest days of missionary work, Paul and Barnabas decided to go their separate ways instead of reaching a compromise (Acts 15:36 – 41).

Prayer is missing from this activity only because spiritual reality cannot be simulated; it has not been forgotten or marginalised. Prayer is fundamental to decision making for Christians. God does and will guide us if we seek him for direction.

'Convert counting' has been purposely built in to this simulation to highlight how inappropriate it is to measure success in this way. It is however, encouraging to see a good response to our ministry. When there is very little, we are not being less successful because God alone is responsible for working in other people's lives. Christians are called to be obedient to God, to be available to him and to trust him to work in his way and in his time.

Mission organisations are bridges over which churches may extend their ministries overseas. Decisions concerning a person's particular ministry involve a partnership between the individual, their supporting church(es) and the mission organisation. Today an increasing additional partner is Christian organizations or churches within the overseas country. Together we need to seek God's guidance so that His will is done.

The Decision Cards require the participants to think through some of the issues below. They may want to share some of their ideas in a larger group. Which is best:

- to opt to live in basic conditions or to maintain a higher standard of living and be healthier and more efficient?
- to fit in with what the national church wants or to pursue what you think you should be doing?

NOTES:

- to use the trade language that will be understood to some degree over a wide area or to ensure that the message is understood in the local language?
- to spread the good news yourself or to train and resource others to do so?
- to go to those who may be more open to believe or to go to those who are likely to resist the message?
- to work primarily amongst national people or to commit yourself to filling a vital support role (such as teaching co-workers' children)?

SCORE CARD

Time (Watch for the ✂ symbol on the Decision Cards. Cross off the number of months that you spend overseas).

1st YEAR

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

2nd YEAR

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

3rd YEAR

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

4th YEAR

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

5th YEAR

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

6th YEAR

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Converts (Watch for the ✂ symbol on the Decision Cards. Cross off the number of converts you gain).

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32
33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60

Decisions (Keep a record of the numbers on the Decision Cards you choose).

1							
----------	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

THE WYCLIFFE IDEA BANK

FOR THOSE BACK HOME

SCORE CARD

Time (Watch for the ✂ symbol on the Decision Cards. Cross off the number of months that you spend overseas).

1st YEAR

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

2nd YEAR

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

3rd YEAR

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

4th YEAR

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

5th YEAR

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

6th YEAR

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Converts (Watch for the ✂ symbol on the Decision Cards. Cross off the number of converts you gain).

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32
33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60

Decisions (Keep a record of the numbers on the Decision Cards you choose).

1							
----------	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

THE WYCLIFFE IDEA BANK

PHOTOCOPY MASTER

FOR THOSE BACK HOME 4/13

DECISION CARD 1

You have just arrived in the country where you will be working. Before you can begin evangelistic work, you must first learn the national language. You have two choices as to where you could live while you do your language learning. The relatively wealthy city suburb where general living conditions are good will make studying quite easy. In the poorer suburb, the study environment and hygienic conditions are more dubious but you will probably have more contact with the people.

Which will you choose to do?

FOR THOSE BACK HOME

Options:

- 2 Live in a wealthy suburb.
- 3 Live in a poorer suburb.

THE WYCLIFFE IDEA BANK

DECISION CARD 2

Your language course takes 6 months ↘. With your language learning now well advanced, you can move to the centre where other workers from your mission organisation are based. When you arrive, you find that the school for the missionaries' children is facing a crisis. The school, with 27 pupils of all ages, has a single teacher who has just had a breakdown. Your director asks you to step in and teach at the school until the teacher recovers. If you stay and teach you will be temporarily delayed in beginning evangelistic work.

What will you do?

FOR THOSE BACK HOME

Options:

- 4 Agree to teach.
- 5 Stick boldly to your original call and ask to begin evangelistic work.

THE WYCLIFFE IDEA BANK

DECISION CARD 3

Your language course takes 6 months ↘ but you catch hepatitis from contaminated water in the poor suburb. This takes you out of action for 6 more months ↘. However, through your contact with the people there, you gain 2 converts ↘. Furthermore, through living in this section of the town, you learn to your surprise that many different languages are spoken there. You also discover that many of these languages do not have any part of the Bible translated into them. You are now pulled in two directions. You had planned to do evangelistic work. Now you see a need for Bible translation, and since you have already studied linguistics, you could translate the Scriptures.

Which will you choose?

5 /13 FOR THOSE BACK HOME

Options:

- 6 Do evangelistic work.
- 7 Do translation work.

THE WYCLIFFE IDEA BANK

DECISION CARD 4

You teach for a full 12 months while the teacher recovers. You become well accepted by the expatriate community and manage to help one of the children through a severe phase of anorexia and another over an inferiority complex. You also lead the 8-year-old child of one of your co-workers to the Lord (this does not count on your score card, as the people back home want to hear about the conversion of national people). When the teacher returns to active service, you are warmly invited to stay and help at the school.

What will you do?

FOR THOSE BACK HOME

Options:

- 8** Stay on and help.
- 9** Ask to return to evangelistic work.

THE WYCLIFFE IDEA BANK

DECISION CARD 5

Your stubbornness earns you a rebuke from your director who decides that, although you are obviously single-minded in your desire to do evangelism, your self-will is a potential danger to your work. For 9 months while you work in the administration office. At the end of that time, the director recognises you were being single-minded, rather than stubborn, and is happy to agree to let you begin evangelistic work.

What will you do now?

FOR THOSE BACK HOME

Options:

- 9** Ask to be cleared for evangelistic work.
- 10** Write a letter to your home church, complaining about the general delay and mishandling of your situation, asking them to lodge a complaint with the home end of the mission's administration.

THE WYCLIFFE IDEA BANK

DECISION CARD 6

You embark on your evangelistic work enthusiastically. After 10 months while you are getting well established and have seen 4 people converted. Then you learn that the school for your colleagues' children which has 27 pupils of all ages, urgently needs people to help the single teacher. Your director asks you if you wouldn't mind teaching.

What will you do?

Options:

- 8** Help in the school.
- 9** Ask to be allowed to continue with evangelistic work.

THE WYCLIFFE IDEA BANK

DECISION CARD 7

You begin translating the Bible with enthusiasm, but after 12 months you find that the work is progressing more slowly than you had first anticipated. You are fascinated by the language and you have many opportunities to share your faith as you discuss the meaning of biblical passages with local people. You are not sure how long to continue with the translation work.

What will you decide to do?

FOR THOSE BACK HOME

Options:

- 11** Leave the translation to someone more able than yourself and ask to return to evangelistic work.
- 12** Plod on knowing that with the right partnerships in place you should make good progress.

THE WYCLIFFE IDEA BANK



DECISION CARD 8

A year later, the pupils are enjoying the variety of their school work: the curriculum has improved greatly since you arrived. Their parents are delighted with your input and dedication and really feel that their children are being well looked after. You recognise that your service to the children of Christian workers is vital to the effectiveness of the mission's work as a whole even though you are not doing what you originally planned. The principal invites you to continue to work at the school.

What will you do?

FOR THOSE BACK HOME

Options:

- 13** Stay on at the school.
- 14** Return to your original plan to do evangelistic work.

THE WYCLIFFE IDEA BANK



DECISION CARD 9

Your director agrees that you should proceed with evangelistic work. After 6 months of preaching in local villages, 3 people have become Christians. You have been working with the local church but you discover that some national Christians would really prefer you to be teaching in their Bible school. You ask around carefully to try and find out what the church as a whole feels about this and discover that there is a great need for both types of work. The church leaders would really like you to do both but that would be too heavy a workload.

What will you do?

Options:

- 14** Continue with evangelistic work.
- 15** Agree to teach in the Bible school.

THE WYCLIFFE IDEA BANK

DECISION CARD 10

Neither your church, nor the mission organisation at home, nor the mission leadership overseas is prepared to authorise you to continue with any more evangelism at the moment until you get yourself sorted out. You are instructed to return home at once!

FOR THOSE BACK HOME

AN AWFUL BLUNDER!

(You should, at this stage, start all over again but if you accept a 12 month time penalty ↘, you can go on to the other alternative - Decision Card 9).

THE WYCLIFFE IDEA BANK



DECISION CARD 11

When you indicate your interest in a change of work to your director there is a delay of 5 months ↘, while all the options open to you are explored. You are finally advised that the school for your colleagues' children which has 27 pupils of all ages, urgently needs people to help the single teacher. You are asked if you would be willing to help out.

What will you do?

Options:

- 13** Agree to help at the school.
- 14** Ask for an evangelistic assignment.

FOR THOSE BACK HOME

THE WYCLIFFE IDEA BANK



DECISION CARD 12

For 15 months ↘ you have been working closely on the translation with a team of local christian, including the pastor. This pastor is also on the council for the local Bible school. He recognises your ability in explaining difficult passages and is overjoyed by the way 2 people ↘ have been led to the Lord through your ministry. He asks you if you will help teach at the Bible school.

What will you do?

Options:

- 15** Agree to teach at the Bible school.
- 16** Continue with translation.

DECISION CARD 13

You teach for 12 months and have begun to feel that you would like to remain serving the work in your area as a teacher, rather than in anything else. However, your director thinks it is time for you to have a change. You are given the option of going on an evangelistic trip but you will have to use the trade language because you didn't learn any other language while teaching. The other alternative is to help in literacy work which will involve you in teaching national adults to learn to read instead of missionaries' children.

Which will you choose?

FOR THOSE BACK HOME

Options:

- 17** Go on an evangelistic trek.
- 21** Do adult literacy work.

THE WYCLIFFE IDEA BANK



DECISION CARD 14

During your 6 month evangelistic trip, 5 people become Christians. However, you run into serious problems in communicating with a major section of the population: the Muslim community.

What will you do?

FOR THOSE BACK HOME

Options:

- 17** Confine yourself to the more responsive areas of the population and continue with your evangelistic trek.
- 18** Decide to dedicate yourself to the challenge of Muslim work.

THE WYCLIFFE IDEA BANK



DECISION CARD 15

You find that despite many promises and the existence of a building, there is no functioning Bible school at all. You have to start completely from scratch. Establishing a syllabus and the structures to make the Bible school work takes 6 months to plan and a further 9 months of actual teaching. You are fulfilled by this work, but are glad for some unallocated time coming up before the next course begins.

What will you do during that time?

Options:

- 19** Go on an evangelistic trek.
- 20** Go on holiday down to the coast.

THE WYCLIFFE IDEA BANK

DECISION CARD 16

Your translation proceeds well for another 15 months ↘.

You are very encouraged to see the 3 translation checkers become Christians ↘ and a number of church leaders understand their faith better. Now, you see two pressing needs on the horizon: you need a holiday, and very few speakers of the language you are translating the Scriptures into, are able to read. The local community really wants an adult literacy class.

What will you decide to do?

FOR THOSE BACK HOME

Options:

- 20** Go on holiday.
- 21** Start an adult literacy course.

THE WYCLIFFE IDEA BANK

DECISION CARD 17

On your evangelistic trip, you catch malaria and it takes you 6 months to recuperate ↘. As soon as you are fit enough to do so, you go out on another 6 month trip ↘. Your truck is laden with literature and Bibles to sell. Unfortunately, you find that in the remote areas most people not only do not read the trade language but they do not even speak it. You can only communicate through an interpreter and few are interested in the books. However, you do see 10 conversions ↘. A serious decision faces you as to how to reach these people in their own language.

What will you do?

FOR THOSE BACK HOME

Options:

- 22** Learn the local language so that you can preach in it.
- 23** Continue to preach in the trade language.

THE WYCLIFFE IDEA BANK

DECISION CARD 18

You decide that the only way to build good relationships with Muslims is to live among them. Islam in this country is less extreme than some other places, but you still don't seem to make much progress. In addition, you catch malaria and are seriously ill for a while. 18 months ↘ pass during which no one shows any interest in Christianity.

Now what will you do?

Options:

- 24** Return to your previous evangelistic work among the non-Muslim community.
- 25** Continue with Muslim related evangelism.

10/13 FOR THOSE BACK HOME

THE WYCLIFFE IDEA BANK

DECISION CARD 19

The trek took 3 months and you saw 2 converts as a result of it. However, when you get back you find that there have been some ethnic clashes amongst the local people and most of the students who were coming to the Bible school will arrive late. You delay the start of the whole course.

In the meantime, what will you do?

FOR THOSE BACK HOME

Options:

26 Go off on another trek.

27 Do some private study in preparation for the Bible school programme.

THE WYCLIFFE IDEA BANK

DECISION CARD 20

You enjoy your 3 month holiday and come back feeling very refreshed. However, when you return, you find that there has been some violent unrest in the local community. This seriously disrupts your plans. You decide to delay the next part of your programme until things have settled down again.

Meanwhile, what will you do?

FOR THOSE BACK HOME

Options:

26 Go off on an evangelistic trip.

27 Stay at your organisation's centre and get on with what paper work and preparatory study you can.

THE WYCLIFFE IDEA BANK

DECISION CARD 21

Together with a local Christian primary teacher, you prepare all the materials for your literacy course over a period of 6 months. When you are just about to start teaching your first classes, some violence breaks out amongst the local community and you learn that the students will be delayed.

Until they can come, what will you do?

Options:

26 Go off on a visit around the outlying villages, using the Scriptures you already have.

27 Stay at your organisation's centre to do some paper work and preparation for future translation work.

THE WYCLIFFE IDEA BANK

DECISION CARD 22

You find that no books, dictionaries, or any other teaching aids exist in the language you want to learn. For 2 years \ you work with interested people from the local community on developing these materials. By that time, 3 local people have become Christians \ as they have come to understand the good news of Jesus in their own language. For unexpected political reasons you are suddenly instructed to take home leave and return to your own country immediately.

FOR THOSE BACK HOME

END OF GAME

(Total up all your scores)

THE WYCLIFFE IDEA BANK

DECISION CARD 23

You restrict yourself to working in the trade language. 35 people become Christians \ over a period of 12 months \. When talking to these believers you find that their understanding is very shallow so you do have some personal doubts about the validity of some, or even many, of these conversions. However you decide that there is no need for you to mention this to your supporters... whom you are now about to see again as you have been instructed to take immediate home leave for political reasons.

FOR THOSE BACK HOME

END OF GAME

(Total up all your scores)

THE WYCLIFFE IDEA BANK

DECISION CARD 24

On your evangelistic trip, you catch typhoid and malaria and are ill for 6 months \. As soon as you are fit enough to do so, you go out on another 6 month trip \. Your truck is laden with literature and Bibles to sell. Unfortunately, you find that in the remote areas, most people not only do not read the trade language, they do not even speak it. An interpreter is essential to enable you to communicate at all and you end up taking almost the entire car load of books back with you. However, you do see 10 conversions \. You are suddenly instructed to take home leave in your own country immediately for political reasons.

12/13 FOR THOSE BACK HOME

END OF GAME

(Total up all your scores).

THE WYCLIFFE IDEA BANK

DECISION CARD 25

You work another 12 months \ without seeing much interest in Christianity from among the Muslims. However, you are now very well accepted among the Muslim community and you have managed to see 2 non-Muslims become Christians \. You are personally convinced that some form of spiritual breakthrough is just around the corner. However, you are suddenly instructed to take home leave in your own country immediately for political reasons.

FOR THOSE BACK HOME

END OF GAME

(Total up all your scores)

THE WYCLIFFE IDEA BANK



DECISION CARD 26

You catch malaria on your travels and are ill for 3 months \. As soon as you are fit enough to do so, you continue with a 3 month trip \ and are encouraged to see 10 conversions \. You are just about to resume your earlier work when you are instructed to take home leave in your own country immediately for political reasons.

FOR THOSE BACK HOME

END OF GAME

(Total up all your scores)

THE WYCLIFFE IDEA BANK



DECISION CARD 27

Instead of focusing on your own translation, you end up helping a national Bible translation organisation train new workers. During these 6 months \ you make some good contacts in the city and see 2 conversions \ even though you have been mainly involved in support work rather than evangelism. Unexpectedly you receive instructions to return immediately to your own country on home leave for political reasons.

13/13 FOR THOSE BACK HOME

END OF GAME

(Total up all your scores)

THE WYCLIFFE IDEA BANK