In Korea, a company of Marines was greatly outnumbered and was retreating before the enemy. The company had crossed a bridge over a river, but the enemy were still mostly on the other side. If someone went back to the bridge and blew it up as the enemy soldiers were coming over it, it would weaken the enemy. With the head start the rest of the men in the company would have, they could probably then escape. But the man who stayed back to blow up the bridge would probably not be able to escape alive; there would be about a 4 to 1 chance that he would be killed. The captain of the company has to decide who should go back and do the job. The captain himself is the man who knows best how to lead the retreat. He asks for volunteers, but no one will volunteer. Should the captain order a man to stay behind, or stay behind himself, or leave nobody behind? Why?

a. Stage 1  b. Stage 2  c. Stage 3  d. Stage 4  e. Stage 5  f. Stage 6

_____ 1. He should send another soldier back to blow up the bridge. His duty is to protect and to lead his troops and he can't do this if he gets killed.

_____ 2. He shouldn't send any one back to blow up the bridge because if that guy gets hurt, the captain might get in trouble. He might be court-martialed for ordering someone to do something he knew would get them hurt or killed.

_____ 3. He should send a guy back because if he saves the lives of the rest of his group, they'll be grateful to him and give him their help. They'd be willing to do anything for him in return for leading them to safety.

_____ 4. You have to consider what serves the greater good. If you assume that our winning the war is a good outcome and will benefit the most people, then he needs to do what's necessary to achieve that. Although one person will certainly be killed, he is the one who can lead his group back to safety and accomplish their military goals. If the bridge isn't destroyed they might all be killed. He needs to do what is in the best interest of the most people. Besides this is consistent with the code he was taught as an officer.

_____ 5. This is hard to answer. No matter what he does he is endangering a life and a life is too important to sacrifice. He is caught in a dilemma. If you have regard for the sacred value of human life, it is difficult to reconcile this with the hard realities of war. What is the goal of the war? Are we fighting against an evil ruler who is inflicting pain and suffering on people? Or is this just a war about a political boundary line between North and South Korea? Is this issue worth the sacrifice of even one human life? It is very hard to choose what is right in this situation.

_____ 6. He should send the guy back because he is making a brave decision and his troops will respect and admire him for it. It is hard to order a man to do such a dangerous task but if he makes that decision he will be seen as a courageous leader and earn the respect of his men.