



**SIMPLE COMMUNITY-BUILDING ACTIVITIES FOR KINDERGARTEN-GRADE 8**

# **Second Step® Class Meeting Pack**

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Supporting the social-emotional well-being of children during the COVID-19 pandemic is a critical challenge for school educators. Class meetings are an excellent strategy for building relationships and fostering the safe, supportive, positive learning communities that students need right now.

This resource contains 45 class meetings and challenges for use for kindergarten through grade 8. These meetings cover a variety of topics relevant to students right now, and they are designed to be easily adapted for in-person, remote, and hybrid learning. Use them alongside the Second Step® programs or as standalone activities to help support your students' social-emotional well-being.

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## Using These Meetings

This pack contains three types of meetings:

- **Check-Ins and Check-Outs** are simple and repeatable conversation templates you can follow to check in on how your students are doing.
- **Class Discussions** are structured conversations. They are designed to be led by a moderator, who can be either a teacher, counselor, or an older student. If you are using Restorative Practices in your school, you can also use these as community-building circles.

For more ideas on creating elementary-level community-building circles based in social-emotional learning, see the [Restorative Practices and the Second Step® Program guide](#).

- **Class Challenges** are fun activities students can do together. They can require some advanced preparation, so be sure to review them before using with your students.

If you have a Second Step® Middle School program subscription, you can find more discussions and challenges under the [Advisory Activities tab](#) of your dashboard. If you don't have a subscription, check out these [Second Step Middle School activities](#) available for free through June 30, 2021.

### Teaching In-Person

All these meetings should require minimal adaptation for use during in-person teaching. They are designed with social-distancing restrictions in mind. If possible, seat students in a circle when holding a class meeting, and don't be afraid to participate in meetings and challenges yourself!

### Teaching Remotely

There are three ways to engage with students during school closures:

- **Synchronous Activities:** When a class meets live, simulating a regular school experience.
- **Asynchronous Activities:** When a class engages in something together, but not at the same time. For class meetings, this can often look like threaded conversations or discussion forums.
- **Individual Activities:** When students work on something on their own. The final product may or may not be reviewed by a teacher or classmates.

Successful class meetings can be a mix of all three strategies. What the particular mix looks like for you and your students depends on what technology is available, how your school or district is prioritizing social-emotional supports, and what works best for your students.

For more information on remote community-building strategies, see our [K-5 Remote Class Meeting Guide](#) and [Middle School Remote Learning Advisory Guide](#).

### Hybrid Teaching

Creating meetings that are simultaneously accessible both for students who are in class and for ones participating from home is challenging. If you are adapting these meetings for use in a hybrid classroom, look for opportunities to create asynchronous activities that all your students can work on together on their own. This will minimize any doubling of work you need to do to support all your students.

## **Check-Ins and Check-Outs**

One of the simplest yet most effective ways to connect with students and foster a sense of community is through Check-Ins and Check-Outs. Providing a space for students to share a little bit about what they're up to and how they're feeling can be very valuable to them.

Having a caring adult connect with every student, every day, is an effective way to build strong student-staff relationships and a positive school environment. Daily check-ins are a practical strategy for facilitating these connections schoolwide. They also serve to identify students who may need more personalized social-emotional support. The weekly check-out provides students with an opportunity to reflect on and process the week.

## Daily Check-In Template

### Objectives

By the end of this activity, students will be able to:

- Identify how they're feeling
- Ask for help with concerns and problems



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

### Lesson Note

Consider participating in the conversation yourself. When you share how you're feeling, you can help normalize these conversations for students.

### Group Check-In (10 min.)

1. Set the purpose of the lesson: **Let's check in on how we're doing.**
2. Have students take turns answering the following questions:
  - **How are you feeling today?** *Happy. Sad. Tired. Excited. Hungry.*
  - **What's something you're looking forward to today?** *Seeing friends. Playing. Learning. Lunch.*
3. **What's something you're not looking forward to today?** *Practicing letters. Following safety rules. Being away from home.*

Observe students as they answer. If you're concerned a student may need extra support, use the Individual Check-In to follow up with them later in the day.

### Individual Check-In (5 min.)

1. Find a time you can speak with the student privately and ask the following questions:
  - **How are you feeling today?**
  - **Is there anything you'd like me to know?**
  - **Is there anything you need help with?**
2. Acknowledge and affirm students' feelings. Give them space to talk, but do not pry. Contact your school counselor or administrator if you're concerned the student may need additional support.

## Weekly Check-Out Template

### Objective

By the end of this activity, students will be able to reflect on their experiences over the last week.

### Lesson Note

As with check-in, consider participating in the conversation yourself. When you share how you're feeling, you can help normalize these conversations for students.

### Group Check-Out (10 min.)

1. Set the purpose of the lesson: **Let's reflect on how this week went for us.**
2. Have everyone in the class (including you!) briefly answer the following question: **What was the best part of this week?** *My friend's birthday. Finishing my reading. Winning at Fortnite.*
3. **What's one thing that was hard?** *Using the computer. Focusing on school. Getting bored.*
4. **What's one thing you want to do this weekend?** *Sleep. Talk to my grandma. Play with my dog.*

## Activities

### Class Discussions

Name	Grade Levels	Objective Students will be able to:
Battling Boredom	4–8	Identify ways to cope when feeling bored
Beauty in Life (New)	6–8	Identify things they find beautiful and how those things can help them manage their emotions
Building a Respectful Community	2–5	Name ways to be respectful
Circles of Support (New)	K–8	Identify people, places, and things that provide them with support
Feelings About Remote Learning	2–5	Recognize that their feelings about remote learning are normal and that many other students share them
Growing, Learning, Changing (New)	K–8	Explore how they've grown and changed so far this year Predict how they might grow over the rest of the year
Growing Pains	6–8	Reflect on conflicts they've experienced while learning from home
I Can Solve Problems	K–3	Explore how it feels to solve a problem Gain confidence in their problem-solving abilities
Let's Make Some Laughter! (New)	K–8	Share and learn some jokes to bring laughter to the class
My Family	2–5	Gain understanding about diversity and the need to accept everyone's differences
My Favorite People, Places, and Things (New)	2–3	Identify some of their favorite things and describe how those things make them feel
My Feelings About This Year	4–5	Name one thing they are excited about this year Name one thing they feel worried about Name one question they have about school this year
Our Class Community	K–1	Explore what it means to be part of a community
Out of Control (New)	4–8	Explore how to react when things they're counting on go out of control
Remembering Class Rules	K–1	Explore why following class rules is important
Returning to School	K–5	Prepare for when school buildings reopen by exploring health and safety rules
Same and Different	K–1	Explore ways students are similar to and different from each other
Talking About Empathy	2–5	Discuss what empathy is and think of times and ways they can use empathy with classmates
Talking About Strong Feelings	K–1	Identify feelings they share with other students about school
The Perfect Classroom	K–5	Share what they think a safe and supportive (virtual) classroom looks, sounds, and feels like
Treasuring Others (New)	K–8	Identify and appreciate the positive actions that special people in their lives do that help them feel happy and cared for
What Are You Grateful For?	2–8	Think about what is good in their world as many things are changing and different
What Brings You Joy? (New)	4–5	Use thinking about what brings them joy as a way to cope with stress
What Makes Me Smile (New)	K–1	Identify some of their favorite things and describe how those things make them feel
When Life Is Topsy-Turvy (New)	K–3	Plan for how to manage their feelings when coping with things outside of their control

# GRADES ..... **4-8**

Second Step® Class Discussions

## Battling Boredom

### Getting Started

#### Objective

By the end of this meeting, students will be able to:

- Identify ways to cope when feeling bored

#### Delivery

- Synchronous
- Asynchronous

#### Preparation

None



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

### Activity Instructions

#### Warm-Up

Have students answer the following poll:

How often have you felt bored at home since the COVID-19 Pandemic began?

- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Almost always

#### Discussion

Post the following questions for students to answer:

- What activities do you miss most right now?
- What are some things you do for fun right now?
- What are some things you can do to help others right now?
- What are three things you never had time to do before that you might be able to do now?

#### Reflection

Have students reflect on the following prompt and submit their answers privately to you:

- Choose an activity another student suggested that you want to try the next time you're feeling bored. Why did you pick this activity?

# GRADES ..... 6-8

Second Step® Class Discussions

## Beauty in Life

### Getting Started

#### Objective

By the end of this meeting, students will be able to:

- Identify things they find beautiful and how those things can help them manage their emotions



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

#### Preparation

None

### Activity Instructions

#### Warm-Up

Have everyone in the class (including you) briefly answer the following question:

- What's one of your favorite songs? What about the song makes it special to you?

#### Discussion

As a class, discuss one or more of the following prompts as time allows:

- What does the word "beauty" mean to you?
- Do you ever notice beautiful things around you? Why or why not?
- What makes a place beautiful? What are some beautiful places you've seen?
- What makes a sound beautiful? What are some examples of sounds you find beautiful?
- What's a beautiful thing you've seen someone else do? What's a beautiful thing you've done?

#### Reflection

Have the class reflect quietly about the following prompts:

- Think of something that's beautiful to you. How does it make you feel when you think of it?
- How can thinking about the beauty in your life help you handle strong emotions or stressful situations?



# Building a Respectful Community

## Getting Started

### Objective

By the end of this meeting, students will be able to:

- Name ways to be respectful

### Delivery

- Synchronous
- Asynchronous
- Individual



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

## Activity Instructions

### Warm-Up

Have everyone in the class (including you!) briefly answer the following question:

- A community is a group of people who live, play, or work together. Who do you live, play, or learn with?

### Discussion

Tell the class: **We are all part of our classroom community. We get to build this community together. One way to build community is to treat each other with respect. This means we think about how others want to be treated and treat them that way.**

As a class, discuss one or more of the following prompts as time allows:

- What are some ways we can be respectful to each other?
- How does it make you feel when someone treats you with respect?
- How do you feel when you treat others with respect?

### Reflection

Have the class reflect quietly on the following prompt:

- Think of one thing you can do this week to show respect to someone in our classroom community.

Have students keep their answers to themselves for now. Follow up in a week and ask students what they did.

# GRADES ..... **K-8**

Second Step® Class Discussions

## Circles of Support

### Getting Started

#### Objective

By the end of this meeting, students will be able to:

- Identify people, places, and things that provide them with support



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

#### Preparation

Before the discussion, think about people, places, and things that provide you with support in your own life and use those as examples for the students.

### Activity Instructions

#### Warm-Up

Have everyone in the class (including you) briefly answer the following question:

**When life gets tough, we all need people, places, and things to give us support.**

- What is one thing in your life that gives you a warm or safe feeling when you think about it or hold it? A warm or safe feeling provides you with support.

#### Discussion

As a class, discuss one or more of the following prompts as time allows:

- What is one place in your life that gives you a warm or safe feeling, whether you go there or just think about it? It can be as small as a chair or as large as a park or mountain.
- Who is a person in your life who gives you a warm or safe feeling when you think about them or are with them? It can be someone near or far.

#### Reflection

Have the class reflect quietly about the following prompt:

- When you find yourself in a tough moment in your life, how can you remind yourself to rely on the people, places, and things that provide you with support?

# Feelings About Remote Learning

## Getting Started

### Objective

By the end of this meeting, students will be able to:

- Recognize that their feelings about remote learning are normal and that many other students share them



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

### Delivery

- Synchronous
- Asynchronous
- Individual

## Activity Instructions

### Warm-Up

Have everyone in the class (including you!) briefly answer the following question:

- What's one thing you're excited about this school year?

### Discussion

**Today we're going to talk about how we feel about remote learning.**

**You might feel a lot of different emotions about this school year, like happy and frustrated.**

As a class, discuss one or more of the following prompts as time allows:

- What are some other emotions students might be feeling about remote learning?
- What's one thing you like about remote learning? How does that thing make you feel?
- What's one thing you that's difficult about remote learning? How does that make you feel?

### Reflection

**All of these emotions are okay. This school year might feel different than other years. But remember that you are not alone—a lot of us are excited and worried about the same things.**

Have the class reflect on the following prompt:

- Who you can talk to or go to for help when you're feeling frustrated, angry, or upset about remote learning?

# Growing, Learning, Changing

## Getting Started

### Objective

By the end of this meeting, students will be able to:

- Explore how they've grown and changed so far this year
- Predict how they might grow over the rest of the year



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

### Preparation

None

## Activity Instructions

### Warm-Up

Have everyone in the class (including you) briefly answer the following question:

- **Remember how you felt on your very first day of school this year. What's one word you could use to describe that feeling?** *Nervous. Excited. Sad. Lonely. Anxious.*

### Discussion

As a class, discuss one or more of the following prompts as time allows:

- What did you expect school this year to feel like?
- How has it been different than what you expected?
- How has it met your expectations?
- What is one way that you feel more confident about school now than you did earlier this year (last spring or at the beginning of the school year)?
- Think about a time in the last few months that you've felt proud and that you're doing a good job. What happened to make you feel that way?

### Reflection

Have the class reflect quietly about the following prompts:

- If we ask these same questions at the end of the school year, how do you think your answers might change?
- What ways do you think you'll grow and change in the next few months?

# GRADES ..... 6-8

Second Step® Class Discussions

## Growing Pains

### Getting Started

#### Objective

By the end of this meeting, students will be able to:

- Reflect on conflicts you've experienced while learning from home

#### Delivery

- Synchronous
- Asynchronous
- Individual

#### Preparation

If your students are equipped to participate in a live online discussion, this Class Meeting works in that format (synchronous). You can also run the class meeting asynchronously by having students interact and discuss on a secure message board that you're moderating.

#### Themes



Conflicts



Perspective Taking



Relationships

## Activity Instructions

### Warm-Up

Have everyone in the class answer the following question:

- **We're spending a lot of time with our families at home, and there's potential for conflicts to arise. Has learning from home or sharing space with your family introduced some challenges?**

### Discussion

As a class, discuss one or more of the following prompts, as time allows:

- Think about some of the conflicts that have occurred since you've been learning from home. These might be conflicts with siblings, parents, or other members of your household.
  - How was one of these conflicts resolved?
  - Were you able to (or can you now) imagine the other person's perspective?
  - Can you describe some of the things that the other person might have been thinking or feeling?
  - Do you think it's easier or harder to resolve conflicts during this time? Why?

### Reflection

Have students reflect on the following prompt and submit their answers privately to you:

- What's one thing you can do to deescalate a situation when you're feeling upset? How could resolving conflicts respectfully make things easier at home?

# I Can Solve Problems

## Getting Started

### Objective

By the end of this meeting, students will be able to:

- Explore how it feels to solve a problem and gain confidence in problem-solving abilities



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

### Delivery

- Synchronous
- Asynchronous

## Activity Instructions

### Warm-Up

Have all students reflect on the following question, after modeling with your own answer.

- What is a problem, big or small, that you have already run into today?

Optionally, have some students share out their answers. This helps students recognize that they can run into all kinds of problems every day.

### Discussion

Have each student answer the following prompt, as time allows:

- Think back to a problem that you ran into and then solved. (This can be the same problem from the Warm-Up, or a different one.) How did you solve it? Did you ask for help? How did you feel afterwards?

### Reflection

Have the class reflect on the following prompt:

- What can you do the next time you run into a problem?

# GRADES ..... **K-8**

## Second Step® Class Discussions

# Let's Make Some Laughter!

## Getting Started

### Objective

By the end of this meeting, students will be able to:

- Share and learn some jokes to bring laughter to the class

### Preparation

None



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

## Activity Instructions

### Warm-Up

Ask the students to take two minutes to think of an appropriate joke to share with the class if they choose to do so. But don't have them say it out loud yet!

### Discussion

As a class, choose students at random to share their joke.

### Reflection

Tell the class: **Jokes can really help you when you are feeling down or upset about something—especially if there is laughter involved.**

Have the class reflect on the following prompts:

- Did you laugh today? What did it feel like in your body?
- What was the best joke you heard today from your class? It could be what you thought was the funniest or the most creative.

Have students write down the joke they thought was the funniest.

Tell the class: **The next time you are feeling down, sad, or upset, you can share this joke with someone around you and have a good laugh together.**



# GRADES ..... 2-5

Second Step® Class Discussions

## My Family

### Getting Started

#### Objective

By the end of this meeting, students will be able to:

- Gain understanding about diversity and the need to accept everyone's differences



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

#### Delivery

- Synchronous
- Asynchronous

### Activity Instructions

#### Warm-Up

Have everyone in the class answer the following question, starting by answering it for yourself. Make sure students can hear or see everyone's answers.

- What is something that's interesting or unique about your family?

#### Discussion

**Each of you is unique and different. Your families are all different from each other. Sometimes people are made fun of because of how their families are different from others. That is not okay.**

As a class, discuss one or more of the following prompts as time allows:

- What did you learn about how our families are different?
- What do you think the world would be like if every family is exactly the same?
- Why is it not okay to make fun of someone because their family is different from yours?
- What are some things that all families have in common?

#### Reflection

Have the class reflect on the following prompts:

- If you see or hear someone being made fun of because of how their families are different, what is something you can say or do?
- After hearing about other families, what do you appreciate about your own family?

# GRADES ..... 2-3

## Second Step® Class Discussions

# My Favorite People, Places, and Things

## Getting Started

### Objective

By the end of this meeting, students will be able to:

- Identify some of their favorite things and describe how those things make them feel



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

### Preparation

None

## Activity Instructions

### Warm-Up

Have everyone in the class (including you) briefly answer the following question:

- If you could have anything for lunch today—absolutely anything—what would it be?

### Discussion

Tell the class: **What we like is an important part of who we are. Let's learn a little bit more about each other by learning about our favorite people, places, and things.**

As a class, discuss one or more of the following prompts as time allows:

- Who is one of your favorite people in the world? What is it you like about them?
- Where is one of your favorite places to go or be? Why is this place special to you?
- What is one of your favorite things? How does it make you feel when you see/hold/use it?

### Reflection

Have the class reflect on the following prompts:

- In this class today, what was one person's favorite thing that you learned about?
- How can thinking about your favorite things help when you're feeling big emotions like anger, sadness, or frustration?

# GRADES ..... **4-5**

## Second Step® Class Discussions

# My Feelings About This Year

## Getting Started

### Objectives

By the end of this meeting, students will be able to:

- Name one thing they are excited about this year
- Name one thing they feel worried about
- Name one question they have about school this year



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

### Delivery

- Synchronous
- Asynchronous
- Individual

## Activity Instructions

### Warm-Up

You might feel a lot of different emotions about coming back to school this year. **Maybe you're excited to see your friends, or you're worried about our new school rules. Maybe you feel a few different emotions at the same time.**

Have everyone in the class (including you!) briefly answer the following question:

- What are some other emotions students might be feeling?

### Discussion

As a class, discuss one or more of the following prompts as time allows:

- What's one thing you're excited about this year? *Talking with friends. Learning new things.*
- What's one thing you're worried about? *Keeping up with classes. Making friends. Staying healthy.*
- What's one question you have about this year?

### Reflection

Have the class reflect on the following prompt:

**A lot of you are excited and worried about the same things and have the same kinds of questions. Who can you talk to when you feel worried or have questions?** *Teachers. Counselors. Family. Friends.*

# GRADES ..... **K-1**

## Second Step® Class Discussions

# Our Class Community

## Getting Started

### Objective

By the end of this meeting, students will be able to:

- Explore what it means to be part of a community

### Delivery

- Synchronous
- Asynchronous



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

## Activity Instructions

### Warm-Up

Have everyone in the class (including you!) briefly answer the following questions:

- **Who do you live with?** *My family. Mom. Dad. My grandparent. My sister/brother. Pets.*
- **Who do you play with?** *Friends. Family. My dog. My stuffed animal.*

### Discussion

Say: **A community is a group of people who live, play, or work together. This class is a community and this year, we'll learn, play, and work together.**

As a class, discuss one or more of the following prompts as time allows:

- Who is part of our classroom community? *Students. Teacher. Counselor. School staff. Family.*
- What are some things we do together? *Learn. Talk. Sing. Read. Play.*
- What are some differences between your family community and your classroom community? *Classroom meets online. My family is always around. Lots of kids in the classroom.*

### Reflection

Have the class reflect on the following prompt:

- What's something you want to do to help others in our class community? *Be nice. Help with schoolwork. Have fun.*

# GRADES ..... 4-8

Second Step® Class Discussions

## Out of Control

### Getting Started

#### Objective

By the end of this meeting, students will be able to:

- Explore how to react when things they're counting on go out of control



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

#### Delivery

- Synchronous
- Asynchronous

### Activity Instructions

#### Warm-Up

Tell the class: **This year, we've been asked to be very flexible with our planning; so many of our plans have had to change. Maybe you thought you were going back to school one day, but then your classroom had to close. Maybe you thought you were visiting your cousins over winter break, but then you couldn't go to their house. It can be especially frustrating to feel out of control when you had a really good plan.**

Have everyone in the class (including you) briefly answer the following question:

- When is a time that you had to change your plans at the last minute?

#### Discussion

As a class, discuss one or more of the following prompts as time allows:

- What kinds of emotions do you feel when things are out of control?
- What's something you can do when you start to feel that way? (*Take a deep breath. Think about the ways things are going to get better. Think about another fun thing to do. Talk to a grown-up.*)
- What is some advice you might give to a friend who tells you they feel like their plans are all out of control?

#### Reflection

Tell the class: **We don't always get to control the future, even when we try to be really prepared.**

Have the class reflect quietly about the following prompt:

- What are some things in the future that you expect will still be out of your control? What are some things that can help you feel better or more grounded?

# Remembering Class Rules

## Getting Started

### Objective

By the end of this meeting, students will be able to:

- Explore why it's important to follow class rules



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

### Delivery

- Synchronous
- Asynchronous
- Individual

## Activity Instructions

### Warm-Up

Have everyone in the class (including you!) briefly answer the following question:

- We all have lots of rules to follow. What's one rule you follow with your family? *No running inside. Bedtime is at 7:00 p.m. No snacks before dinner.*

### Discussion

Read your class rules for your students (or have students read them with their families).

As a class, discuss one or more of the following prompts as time allows:

- What's a rule that you follow with your family and also here in class? *Listen. Use kind words. Be responsible.*
- What are some rules you only follow in class? *Raise your hand to talk. Don't play with the chat box.*
- What's one new rule you'd like us to have in class?

### Reflection

Have the class reflect on the following prompt:

- How do you feel when everyone follows the rules in our class? *Safe. Happy. Ready to learn.*

# Returning to School

## Getting Started

### Objective

By the end of this meeting, students will be able to:

- Prepare for when school buildings reopen by exploring health and safety rules



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

### Delivery

- Synchronous
- Asynchronous
- Individual

## Activity Instructions

### Warm-Up

**We are about to return to school! This is a very exciting moment, but school won't be quite the same as you remember. Preparing for what we'll need to do to stay safe and healthy will help us all feel more comfortable in school.**

Have everyone in the class (including you!) briefly answer the following question:

- What is one thing you're looking forward to about returning to school?

### Discussion

Tell students about the health and safety rules they will need to follow, like rules for wearing masks, staying 6 feet apart, attending in shifts, and any others.

As a class, discuss one or more of the following prompts as time allows:

- Which of these rules are you already following outside of school?
- Which of these rules are you worried about being able to follow?
- How are these rules going to change the way you learn?
- How are these rules going to change the way you play?

### Reflection

Have students reflect on the following prompt:

- Who at school can you talk to if you're feeling anxious, worried, or upset about these new rules?

# GRADES ..... **K-1**

## Second Step® Class Discussions

# Same and Different

## Getting Started

### Objective

By the end of this meeting, students will be able to:

- Explore ways students are similar to and different from each other



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

### Delivery

- Synchronous
- Asynchronous

## Activity Instructions

### Warm-Up

Poll the class on the following questions. Make sure students are able to see the results.

- How old are you?
- What is your favorite animal?
- Do you like to dance?
- Did you go to this school last year?

Feel free to add more questions you think your students will enjoy.

### Discussion

As a class, discuss one or more of the following prompts as time allows:

- What are some ways you are the same as other children in this class?
- What are some ways you are different from other children in this class?

### Reflection

Have the class reflect on the following prompts:

- How does it feel to know there are things about you that are different from other students?
- How does it feel to know there are things about you that are the same as other students?



# GRADES ..... **2-5**

Second Step® Class Discussions

## Talking About Empathy

### Getting Started

#### Objectives

By the end of this meeting, students will be able to:

- Build an understanding of what empathy is
- Think of times and ways to use empathy with classmates



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

#### Delivery

- Synchronous
- Asynchronous

### Activity Instructions

#### Warm-Up

We're going to talk about how having empathy can help us relate to our classmates, even when we don't get to be in the same place as they are.

If synchronous: **Look at other students in our class on their screens. Can you name how other students are feeling by looking at their faces or listening to their voices?**

If asynchronous: **Think about another student in our class. Imagine what that person looks and sounds like. If they are excited about something, what would their face look like? How would they sound?**

**Discussion**

As a class, discuss one or more of the following prompts as time allows:

- Imagine what a person looks and sounds like when they are sad. What are some examples?
- Imagine what a person looks and sounds like when they are energized. What are some examples?
- How do you think someone feels when he or she is being treated in a mean way? What are some clues that would help you know?
- If you notice someone is happy or joyful, what would you do or say to that person?
- If you notice someone is being treated in a mean way, and you know that person feels sad, scared, or worried, what should you do or say?

**Reflection**

Have the class reflect on the following prompt:

- Empathy means feeling and understanding how someone feels. When are some times that you've used empathy?

# GRADES ..... **K-1**

## Second Step® Class Discussions

# Talking About Strong Feelings

## Getting Started

### Objective

By the end of this meeting, students will be able to:

- Identify feelings about school they share with other students

### Delivery

- Synchronous
- Asynchronous
- Individual



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

## Activity Instructions

### Warm-Up

Have everyone in the class (including you!) briefly answer the following question:

- What's one thing you're doing in school that you've never done before? *Subtraction. Using a computer. Everything!*

### Discussion

Say: **When you do something for the first time, you can have strong feelings! Everybody has strong feelings sometimes.**

As a class, discuss one or more of the following prompts as time allows:

- What are some feelings you've had about school? *Worried. Happy. Excited. Frustrated.*
- What do you do to feel better when your feelings get really big? *Hug my teddy bear. Get a drink of water.*
- Who can you go to if you need help with a big feeling? *Family. Teacher. Friends.*

### Reflection

Have the class reflect on the following prompt:

- Sometimes strong feelings can feel good. What's something that makes you feel really happy or excited? *When my mom gets home from work. Ice cream. Playing outside.*

# The Perfect Classroom

## Getting Started

### Objective

By the end of this meeting, students will be able to:

- Share what they think a safe and supportive (virtual) classroom looks, sounds, and feels like



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

### Delivery

- Synchronous
- Asynchronous

## Activity Instructions

### Warm-Up

Even though we don't get to be together (as much as/like) we were last year at school, we can still think about ways to help each other feel safe and supported in our class. Today we're going to think about what makes us feel that way, and how we can help each other.

Have everyone in the class (including you!) briefly answer the following question:

- What does feeling safe and supported mean to you?

### Discussion

As a class, discuss one or more of the following prompts as time allows:

- What are some things that make you feel supported while you're in school?
- What are some things that make you feel safe while you're in school?
- Even though we don't get to be near each other, how can we help each other to feel safe and supported in our class right now?

### Reflection

Have the class reflect on the following prompt:

- What is one thing you will do this week to help make our class feel safe and supportive?

# GRADES ..... **K-8**

Second Step® Class Discussions

## Treasuring Others

### Getting Started

#### Objective

By the end of this meeting, students will be able to:

- Identify and appreciate the positive actions by other people that help them feel happy and cared for



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

#### Delivery

- Synchronous
- Asynchronous

#### Preparation

Before class, think ahead and identify a special thing you've experienced and a special person in your life to use as examples for the class.

### Activity Instructions

#### Warm-Up

Have everyone in the class (including you) briefly answer the following question:

- What is one special thing in your life that makes you feel happy—something that you treasure? It can be a very small thing or a big thing.

#### Discussion

Tell the class: **We also have special people in our lives. They do and say big and little things that help us feel happy, cared for, and safe.**

As a class, discuss the following questions:

- Who is someone in your life who helps you feel happy, cared for, or safe?
- Now bring them into your mind. What are some things that they do or say that make you feel happy, cared for, or safe? The things they do or say are treasures.

#### Reflection

Have the class reflect on the following prompt:

- What is a way you can let that person know how much you treasure what they say or do?

# GRADES ..... **2-8**

Second Step® Class Discussions

## What Are You Grateful For?

### Getting Started

#### Objective

By the end of this meeting, students will be able to:

- Think about what is good in their world as many things are changing and different



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

#### Delivery

- Synchronous
- Asynchronous
- Individual

#### Preparation

Think of a few things you are grateful for that you can use as an example for the class.

### Activity Instructions

#### Warm-Up

Have everyone in the class (including you!) briefly do this task:

- Take three deep breaths. Describe how you are feeling right now.

#### Discussion

As a class or individually, respond to one or more of the following questions below as time allows:

- What are some things you are grateful for in your life?
- What are some things that made you happy this week?
- Who is one person in your life who's helped you recently?

#### Reflection

Have the class reflect quietly about the following prompt:

- What's something you can do to help someone else this week?

# GRADES ..... **4-5**

## Second Step® Class Discussions

# What Brings You Joy?

## Getting Started

### Objective

By the end of this meeting, students will be able to:

- Use thinking about what brings them joy as a way to cope with stress



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

## Activity Instructions

### Warm-Up

Have everyone in the class (including you) close your eyes and take five deep breaths in a row. When you are done, have the class answer the following questions:

- How do you define happiness? What makes you happy?

Or have students fill in the missing word to this statement:

- "I am happiest when \_\_\_\_\_"

### Discussion

Tell the class: **Joy is defined as a feeling of great pleasure and happiness.**

As a class, discuss one or more of the following prompts as time allows:

- When you think about what just came to mind that makes you happy, think of a time when you felt JOY
- What was happening when you felt joy? What was the experience?
- What did your body feel like when you experienced joy?

### Reflection

Tell the class: **It often happens that when we are feeling a strong emotion, we forget to think about all that we have to be grateful for—and also what brings us joy. The next time you might be feeling sad, mad, stressed, or angry, try to think about something that brings you joy.**

Have the class reflect on the following prompt:

- Think of something that often makes you feel frustrated or angry. What's something joyful you'll think about the next time that happens?

# GRADES ..... **K-1**

## Second Step® Class Discussions

# What Makes Me Smile

## Getting Started

### Objective

By the end of this meeting, students will be able to:

- Identify some of their favorite things and describe how those things make them feel



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

## Activity Instructions

### Warm-Up

Have everyone in the class (including you) briefly answer the following question:

- If you could have anything for lunch today—absolutely anything—what would it be?

### Discussion

Tell the class: **We're going to talk about some things that make us smile.**

As a class, discuss one or more of the following prompts as time allows:

- Did thinking about your favorite foods make you smile?
- Is there a person you know that makes you smile when you see them? Why do they make you smile?
- What's one place you know that makes you smile? Why do you smile there?
- What games or activities make you smile? Why?

### Reflection

Tell the class: **Sometimes it can feel hard to smile.** Have the class reflect on the following prompt:

- If you're sad, angry, or frustrated, how can thinking about something that makes you smile help you manage those big feelings?



# When Life Is Topsy-Turvy

## Getting Started

### Objective

By the end of this meeting, students will be able to:

- Plan for how to manage their feelings when coping with things outside of their control



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

## Activity Instructions

### Warm-Up

Tell the class: **This year, we've been asked to be very flexible with our planning; so many of our plans have had to change. Maybe you thought you were going back to school one day, but then your classroom had to close. Maybe you thought you were visiting your cousins over winter break, but then you couldn't go to their house.**

Have everyone in the class (including you) briefly answer the following questions:

- Have you ever had to change your plans last minute—even when you felt really prepared?
- When was the last time you felt like things weren't able to go to plan?

### Discussion

As a class, discuss one or more of the following prompts as time allows:

- How does your body feel when you're not able to do something you planned to do? (*Tense. Angry. Sad. Anxious.*)
- What's something you can do to calm down when you feel that way? (*Take a deep breath. Think about the ways things are going to get better. Think about another fun thing to do. Talk to a grown-up.*)
- What could you say to a friend who tells you they feel like their plans are all out of control?

### Reflection

Tell the class: **We don't always get to control the things in life that feel topsy-turvy.**

Have the class reflect on the following prompt:

- Imagine something you're looking forward to gets canceled. How can you respond?

## Activities (continued)

### Class Challenges

Name	Grade Levels	Objective Students will be able to:
A Few of My Favorite Things	2–5	Recall the names and interests of students in the class
Class Flags	K–5	Contribute to a “whole” representation of classroom culture and values by decorating an individual square of a class flag
Class Rules Dance	K–3	Remember the Class Rules
Do Something Different	K–5	Explore how it feels to do something different
Drawing Same and Different	K–5	Reflect on their similarities and differences through drawing
Everything Changes (New)	K–8	Recognize that everything changes and that they can have many different kinds of feelings about the changes
Fact in a Hat	K–5	Learn interesting facts about each other and build classroom community
Find Your Joy (New)	6–8	Recognize the things that bring them joy
Gratitude for Our Food (New)	K–8	Identify and thank all living beings that helped bring them a specific food item
Good News Network	6–8	Look for and share positive, uplifting news stories and updates
Instruction Deconstruction	6–8	Reflect on how words can be perceived differently by different people
Meet the Class!	K–1	Learn the names of other students in class
Music to Me	2–5	Explore others’ perspectives through reactions to music
My People	2–8	Identify unexpected cultural connections between students
My Self-Portrait	K–5	Create a self-portrait Identify connections between students
One Sees Two Sees	K–8	Share something new with classmates and learn new things about them
Pop Quiz	4–5	Recall information about their classmates
Pretend Feelings	K–1	Identify ways to feel better when having strong feelings
We Are ...	2–5	Create a list of ways they want their classroom community to be
You Did What???	K–8	Recognize the talents of classmates and identify something new to learn

# GRADES ..... **2-5**

Second Step® Class Challenges

## A Few of My Favorite Things

### Getting Started

#### Objective

By the end of this challenge, students will be able to:

- Recall the names and interests of students in the class

#### Delivery

- Synchronous
- Asynchronous

#### Materials

None

#### Preparation

If your students speak languages other than English, consider having them also introduce themselves in their home language as well as in English.



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

## Activity Instructions

### Introduction

Today we're going to play a game to learn each other's names and interests. Knowing each other's names and interests can help us get to know each other and even make new friends.

### Steps

1. Explain the rules.
  - You will call on a student
  - They will say their name and answer a question about something they like (see below for suggested questions)
  - When you call on the next student, they must first say the name of the student who answered before them and what they liked—then say their own name and their answer
2. Choose a question from below or pick your own. Start by saying your own name and then answering the question.
3. Call on other students to answer until all students have participated.
4. Repeat with another question as you have time.

### Questions:

- What's your favorite thing about school?
- What's your favorite food?
- What's your favorite movie?
- What's your favorite hobby?

### Reflection

Have students reflect on the following prompt:

- What's something new you learned about someone during this game?

## Getting Started

### Objective

By the end of this challenge, students will be able to:

- Contribute to a "whole" representation of classroom culture and values by decorating an individual square of a class flag



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

### Delivery

- Synchronous
- Asynchronous

### Materials

Teacher will need:

- Simple image editing software (such as Microsoft Paint, Word, PowerPoint or similar)

Students will need:

- Blank paper, coloring utensils, access to cell phone camera or webcam

### Preparation

As part of a live class meeting (synchronous) or as part of asynchronous lesson instructions, ask students to find a piece of paper and art supplies to draw with.

## Activity Instructions

### Introduction

We are going to create a class flag. We will use pictures, colors, and words to show what's important to us as a class. First, each of you will decorate your own square to show something that you like or that is important to you. It could be your favorite animal, toy, sports team, flower, color, anything!

## Steps

1. Ask students to draw their picture. If this activity is synchronous, give students at least 10 minutes to complete their drawing.
2. Once completed, ask students to do one of two things to share their drawings:
  - Hold the drawing up to their webcams. The instructor can then use the screenshot function to capture the image and save it. Windows users can find instructions [here](#), and Mac users can find instructions [here](#).
  - Have a family member with access to a cell phone take a picture of the drawing and email or text it to the instructor.
3. Save all images to a folder on the instructor's computer.
4. Explain to the class that in the center of the flag, we will choose colors, pictures, and/or words that represent qualities or values that are important to the class as a whole. See the table below for ideas.

Color	Meaning	Animal	Meaning
Red	Bravery	Bear	Strong
Yellow	Loyalty	Leopard	Agile
Orange	Welcome	Eagle	Wise
Blue	Responsibility	Stag	Strong spirit
Green	Honesty	Lion	Brave

5. Ask students to share ideas one at a time (if synchronous) or as part of the activity instructions (if asynchronous). The instructor may choose to put the most popular ideas to a vote, or just select one of the ideas for the final design.
6. Arrange student images on a flag. This will take varying amounts of time depending on your comfort level of copying and pasting images digitally. Select a program or application which will let you copy and paste images—this could be Microsoft Word, Paint, PowerPoint, or something else. Open students' images one at a time and cut and paste them into a larger image. Adjust the size of the images and arrange them in the perimeter of a flag shape, leaving a blank space in the middle.
7. In the middle, design the class image decided by the students. Tip: use Google images to find animal pictures as needed.
8. Share the image with the students! Display image on the class homepage or in other ways that they can see it.

## Reflection

Have students reflect on the following prompts:

- What do you see when you look at our class flag?
- What are some things you notice in other students' squares?

# Class Rules Dance

## Getting Started

### Objective

By the end of this challenge, students will be able to:

- Remember the Class Rules

### Delivery

- Synchronous
- Asynchronous
- Individual

### Materials

None

### Preparation

Have a list of rules ready for students to review. These can include traditional rules, rules specific to remote learning, and health and safety rules students may have to follow as buildings reopen.



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

## Activity Instructions

### Introduction

Say: **Our class rules tell us how to behave. We're going to play a game to help us remember them.**

### Steps

1. Read your class rules for your students (or provide them for students to read with their family members).
2. Ask: **What does it look and sound like to follow each of these rules?** *Being kind looks like taking turns. Washing hands sounds like running water.*
3. Assign each student a rule and have them come up with a dance move or other action to demonstrate that rule. Examples include: "Be safe: give yourself a hug", or "Listen with attention: cupping hands over ears."
4. Have students show their move to the class, either live or through a recording.

### Reflection

Have students reflect on the following prompt:

- When you're thinking about our class rules, which of our dance moves will you remember?



# Do Something Different

## Getting Started

### Objective

By the end of this challenge, students will be able to:

- Explore how it feels to do something different

### Delivery

- Synchronous
- Asynchronous

### Materials

The teacher will need:

- A secure digital platform where students can share posts, audio recordings, and/or video

Students will need:

- A writing utensil and piece of paper

### Preparation

None



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

## Activity Instructions

### Introduction

We have all been spending a lot of time writing and drawing at home. In this activity, I am going to challenge you to write or draw with your *other* hand. This means if you always write or draw with your left hand, then I want you to write or draw with your right hand.

### Steps

1. Have students start by writing their name with their dominant hand.
2. Have students then write their name underneath using their other hand—their nondominant hand.
3. Have students share their work (if they want).
4. Give students one minute to draw a tree with their dominant hand. It can be any kind of tree they want, any size, with leaves or flowers.
5. Now have students draw the same picture with their nondominant hand.
6. Have students compare their two drawings and notice the differences.

### Reflection

Have students reflect on the following prompts:

- What's one thing you felt when you were writing with your dominant hand?
- What's one thing you felt when you were writing with your nondominant hand?
- Was there a difference in the feelings? Why?
- What are things you do when something is challenging to you? *Practice. Work at it. Keep going.*
- What is something that is challenging in your life, and what are you doing to overcome that challenge?

**Drawing with your "off" hand is a little like online school. It's different and can feel awkward and frustrating. But with practice, we will all get better at it.**

# Drawing Same and Different

## Getting Started

### Objective

By the end of this challenge, students will be able to:

- Reflect on their similarities and differences through drawing

### Delivery

- Synchronous
- Asynchronous
- Individual

### Materials

Students will need:

- Drawing or painting materials and paper, or a digital drawing program
- A way to submit their drawing to their teacher

### Preparation

If doing this as a synchronous activity, let families know ahead of time that students will need art supplies.



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

## Activity Instructions

### Introduction

We're going to make a drawing about how we are all the same in some ways, and different in some other ways. You can do any kind of drawing or painting.

### Steps

1. Have students identify ways they're similar to their classmates and ways they're different.
2. Have students draw something in the center of their paper that represents how they're different.
3. Have students use the rest of the paper to draw things that represent how they're the same.
4. Have students submit their portraits. Post portraits somewhere online where the whole class can see them.

### Reflection

Have students reflect on the following prompts:

- How is your portrait similar to or different from other students' portraits?
- How does it feel to see so many similarities and so many differences in our class?

# GRADES ..... **K-8**

Second Step® Class Challenges

## Everything Changes

### Getting Started

#### Objective

By the end of this challenge, students will be able to:

- Recognize that everything changes—and that they can have many different kinds of feelings about the changes



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

#### Materials

If teaching remotely, the teacher will need:

- A secure digital platform where students can share their creations (artwork, videos, stories, and so on)

If teaching remotely, students will need:

- Internet access
- A phone or digital camera to photograph and post creative artwork

#### Preparation

This activity can be done across all K–8 grade levels. Choose modes of expression that match the developmental level of your students. Suggestions include:

K–1: Draw a picture about the change and draw yourself showing your feeling(s).

2–3: Draw a picture and write one or more sentences about the change and your feeling(s).

4–8: Write a poem, song, journal entry, or story about the change and describe your feelings.

Be prepared for students to express grief and loss about changes in their lives, including the illness or death of family members. Respect their privacy, but reach out to them to provide support and make sure they are connected to a supportive adult. Students need to know that they can talk openly about their grief and loss—and that those feelings are a normal part of experiencing unwanted change and loss.

## Activity Instructions

### Introduction

Tell the class: **Today we are going to think about how change is a natural part of our lives, and how when things change, we can have lots of different kinds of feelings.**

**Sometimes change is something we want, and sometimes it is something we do not want.**

**What is an example of a change that we want?** (*Growing up. Summer coming. A new friend.*) **What are some feelings we can have about those changes?** (*Happy. Excited. Joyful.*)

**What is an example of a change we do not want?** (*Not being in school because of COVID. Getting sick. Losing a family member. Having to move to a new house.*) **What are some feelings we can have about those changes?** (*Sad. Scared. Angry.*)

**There is not one right or wrong way to feel. All our feelings are okay.**

### Steps

1. Have students think of a big or small change that has happened recently and the feeling(s) they have about the change.
2. Have them depict or describe the change and the feeling(s). See Preparation for suggestions for each grade band.
3. Invite volunteers to share their creation using a method of your choosing. Let everyone know it is fine to have it be private.
4. Encourage students to share their creation with someone they trust, especially if they have depicted or described a change they did not want and are having strong feelings about the change.
5. Check in with students individually about their feelings related to the change and have a supportive conversation with them. If the student is experiencing strong grief, reach out to their caregiver and/or connect them to the school counselor or other school support personnel.

### Reflection

Have students reflect quietly about the following prompt:

- Who can you talk to if you have strong feelings about a change that has happened? This is especially important if you have strong feelings of sadness, fear, or anger.

Call on students to tell the class their ideas as time allows.

## Getting Started

### Objective

By the end of this challenge, students will be able to:

- Learn interesting facts about each other and build classroom community



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

### Delivery

- Synchronous
- Asynchronous

### Preparation

None

## Activity Instructions

### Introduction

We're going to do an activity where we get to learn a little bit more about each other. In a message to me (email, text, message on Google Classroom, etc.), write something you don't think many people know about you but you'd like everyone to know. For example, you could write your favorite sport, hobby, or food, or a place you've lived or traveled, or a special talent you have. We'll share these facts with the rest of the class, but here's the catch: we won't tell who wrote what.

### Steps

1. Give students time to think about and write their facts in a message to the instructor. Collect the facts from all students in the activity group.

2. **If synchronous:** read one of the facts out loud. Pick three or four students to guess who wrote it. Continue choosing students until they guess the correct student. Then, move to the next fact.

**If asynchronous:** post each fact in a list and provide students a list of all the students in their class. Have them match the student names to the fact that they believe matches the student. Tally the results and share the students' true answers with the class.

### Reflection

Have students reflect on the following prompts:

- What facts surprised you the most?
- Do you have any questions for your classmates?

# GRADES ..... **6–8**

Second Step® Class Challenges

## Find Your Joy

### Getting Started

#### Objective

By the end of this challenge, students will be able to:

- Recognize the things that bring them joy



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

#### Preparation

Before class, you might want to think about a couple of times when you experienced joy. How did your body feel? What made this joyous for you and why? Keep these thoughts in mind to be able to participate in the activity.

### Activity Instructions

#### Introduction

Tell the class: **Today we are going to talk about the word "joy" and the feeling of it. Joy is defined as a feeling of great pleasure or happiness. Many students, especially now, are experiencing sadness, stress, anger, social isolation, and much more. Remembering a time when you have felt joy can hopefully bring you back to that feeling when you need it most.**

#### Steps

1. Define "joy" for the students: **A feeling of great pleasure or happiness.**
2. Explain that we are going to take a few minutes today to remember or think about a time when you experienced joy in your life—even though this might be hard to do right now.
3. As you are thinking about this time, maybe even take a couple minutes to close your eyes and bring yourself back there. How was the feeling of joy in your body? What was happening around you? Who was there with you? Why did you feel joy?

#### Reflection

Have students reflect quietly. Tell the class: **You are welcome to write your thoughts about this time on paper. Or, you can close your eyes to bring yourself back to that time, and in a few minutes, you can share if you would like.** Give the class 5 minutes or so to gather their thoughts.



# Gratitude for Our Food

## Getting Started

### Objective

By the end of this challenge, students will be able to:

- Identify and thank all living beings that helped bring them a specific food item



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

### Materials

If teaching remotely, the teacher will need:

- A secure digital platform where students can share their creations (artwork, videos, stories, etc.)

If teaching remotely, students will need:

- Internet access
- A phone or digital camera to photograph and post their creative artwork

### Preparation

This activity can be done across all K-8 grade levels. Choose a food item that matches the developmental level of your students. Suggestions are as follows:

K-1: A single piece of fruit or a vegetable originally grown in the US, such as an apple

2-3: A single piece of fruit or a vegetable originally grown in another country, such as a banana or pineapple

4-5: A food item with 2-3 ingredients, such as a piece of chocolate (chocolate, milk, sugar) or bread (flour, yeast, salt)

6-8: A food item with three or more ingredients, such as pizza or a hamburger.

Choose a food item ahead of time and think through all the living beings that were part of bringing that food item to you.

For the apple example, you can think about the farm workers who planted and tended an apple tree; the tree itself that knew just how to grow apples; the bee that pollinated the fruit; the fruit pickers who put the apples in the truck; the truck driver and the autoworkers who built the truck; the construction workers who built the road and the store; the shelf stocker and grocery clerk; the family member who purchased it; and so on.

Challenge your students to identify all the living beings that were involved and express their gratitude in some creative way.

## Activity Instructions

### Introduction

Tell the class: **Every day, we eat things without thinking about all the living beings that helped bring us that food item. Today we're going to be detectives and name all the living beings that made it possible for us to have \_\_\_\_ [chosen food item] \_\_\_\_\_. Then we will find a creative way to show our gratitude to all those living beings.**

### Steps

1. Identify everything that counts as a living being (humans, animals, birds, insects, plants, and so on).
2. Have a brief discussion about their chosen food item. Talk about its ingredient(s) and what the students already know about them, including where they come from. Older students with more complex food items can do some independent research to extend the project.
3. Have students think about all the living beings that brought them their chosen food item and discuss with a partner.
4. Call on students at random to share their responses. Document student responses by using an online whiteboard, chat box, or other method.
5. If appropriate for the age of your students, discuss how all the people who are part of the food supply chain are essential workers during the pandemic.
6. Invite students to create something that identifies and expresses their gratitude for all those living beings. Examples include a drawing, a poem, a song, or a video.
7. Have students share their creative work with each other in a manner of your choosing.

### Reflection

Have students reflect on the following prompts:

- What did you learn from doing this activity?
- Did it change the way you look at your food item?
- How did it feel to express gratitude for all the living beings who brought you the food item?

Have students share their thoughts.

# GRADES ..... 6-8

Second Step® Class Discussions

## Good News Network

### Getting Started

#### Objective

Look for and share positive, uplifting news stories and updates

#### Delivery

- Asynchronous
- Individual

#### Themes



Helping Others



Resilience



Values

### Activity Instructions

#### Introduction

Present the activity: **Today your challenge is to search for and share examples of good news from our community, our country, and across the world.**

#### Steps

1. Have students search for one or two news articles about something positive happening in the world right now. They can search either on the internet or in their local newspapers, and can ask family members to suggest news sources if needed.
2. Have students post the articles they've found on the secure digital platform.
3. Have each student read two classmates' articles and comment on each with a thought or reflection.

#### Reflection

Have students reflect on the following prompts and post their responses on the secure digital platform:

- How easy was it to find stories with good news?
- What was one piece of good news that surprised you?

# GRADES ..... 6-8

Second Step® Class Challenges

## Instruction Deconstruction

### Getting Started

#### Objective

Reflect on how words can be perceived differently by different people

#### Delivery

- Asynchronous

#### Themes



Growth Mindset



Perspective Taking

### Activity Instructions

#### Introduction

Present the activity: **Today you're going to think about the challenges of trying to teach someone to do something remotely. It may seem like an easy thing to do, but it can be quite difficult.**

#### Steps

1. Have each student choose a simple task they do at home. The task must not require money or any special equipment. Things like preparing snacks, doing chores, exercising, or simple hobbies work well.
2. Have students write step-by-step instructions for how to do the task and submit their instructions to you.
3. Redistribute the instructions to students, making sure no one gets their own back.
4. Have students take videos of themselves trying to follow the instructions they received, and then post the videos on the secure digital platform.
5. Have students comment on each other's videos, noting how things went. Monitor responses to make sure students are commenting respectfully.
6. (Optional) After the Reflection activity, have students revise their original instructions and try the challenge again.

#### Reflection

Have students reflect on the following prompts and post their responses on the secure digital platform:

- What makes some sets of instructions easier to follow than others?
- How does it feel to follow instructions written by someone else?
- How might thinking about a task from someone else's perspective help you write instructions?

# GRADES ..... **K-1**

Second Step® Class Challenges

## Meet the Class!

### Getting Started

#### Objective

By the end of this challenge, students will be able to:

- Learn the names of other students in class

#### Delivery

- Synchronous

#### Materials

None

#### Preparation

If your students speak languages other than English, consider having them also introduce themselves in their home language as well as in English.



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated  
student responses

## Activity Instructions

### Introduction

We're going to play a game to learn each other's names. This will help us get to know each other and feel comfortable in our class.

### Steps

1. Explain the rules.
  - You will call on a student.
  - They will say their name, and if they have a family member present, introduce their family member, too.
  - When you call the next student, they must say the name of the student who just answered, and then say their own name.
2. Start things off by introducing yourself and any family of yours that may be present.
3. Call on the first student. Have them say your name and then introduce themselves.
4. Continue until all students have introduced themselves.
5. Say: **Think about a name you learned. On the count of 3, say the name: 1, 2, 3!**

### Reflection

Have students reflect on the following prompt:

- How does it feel when someone knows your name? *Good. Happy.*

# GRADES ..... **2-5**

Second Step® Class Challenges

## Music to Me

### Getting Started

#### Objective

By the end of this challenge, students will be able to:

- Explore others' perspectives through reactions to music

#### Delivery

- Synchronous

#### Materials

Teacher will need:

- Two short pre-selected music clips

**Tip:** Music clips that evoke clear feelings or images (such as Flight of the Bumblebee by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov) are recommended

Students will need:

- A piece of notebook or computer paper
- Coloring tools like markers, crayons, or colored pencils

#### Preparation

Students should fold their paper in half once to create two panes for drawing within.



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

## Activity Instructions

### Introduction

Today we are going to draw along with some music. You can draw whatever the music makes you think of, with whatever colors you like. We will also notice what others draw when listening to the same piece of music. Your drawings may be similar or different.

### Steps

1. Ask students to fold their paper in half to create two panes.
2. Have students number their panes 1 and 2.
3. Play the first music clip, asking students to draw along in pane 1.
4. Prompt students to hold up their drawings so that others may view them.
5. Ask the two reflection questions from Reflection #1 below.
6. Play the second music clip, asking students to draw along in pane 2.
7. Prompt students to hold up their drawings so that others may view them.
8. Ask the two reflection questions from #1 again.
9. Move on to Reflection #2.

### Reflection

1. After each music clip, ask students:
  - How are their drawings similar? How are they different?
  - Is there a drawing that you find especially interesting? Why?Have students volunteer responses.
2. Have students think about a song they would like to share with someone in the future.



# GRADES ..... **2-8**

Second Step® Class Challenges

## My People

### Getting Started

#### Objective

By the end of this challenge, students will be able to:

- Identify unexpected cultural connections between students

#### Delivery

- Asynchronous
- Individual

#### Materials

Teacher will need:

- A secure digital platform where students can share posts, audio recordings, and/or video

Students will need:

- Internet access

#### Preparation

None



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

## Activity Instructions

### Introduction

Say: **We are all spending more time with family during the COVID-19 pandemic. In this activity, we will get a chance to learn a little bit more about our own family, as well as the families of the rest of our class.**

### Steps

1. Have students choose one adult member of their family to interview. Students can use the interview questions in this activity (below) or ask other questions of their own.
2. Have students either record their interview (audio or video) or write down their family member's answers. It's okay for students to conduct their interviews in other languages.
3. Have students post their interviews for the rest of the class to see.
4. (Optional) Have students submit their interviews individually to you.

### Reflection

Have students reflect on the following questions:

- What's one surprising thing you learned about your own family member? Why was it surprising to you? How did it change the way you think of him or her?
- What's something interesting you learned about your classmates' families? Are there similarities to your own family that you discovered? How might this change your perception of your classmates?

### Interview questions:

- What's your full name? Were you named after anyone? Do you have any nicknames?
- When were you born? Where did you live when you were young?
- What's your earliest memory?
- What were you like when you were my age?
- What's the scariest thing you've ever done?
- What was your first job? What was your favorite job?
- What stories did your family tell you when you were young?
- What events impacted you the most while you were growing up?
- How is this current COVID-19 pandemic affecting you? How does it compare to other big events in your life?
- What are your three favorite movies? Why?

## Getting Started

### Objectives

By the end of this challenge, students will be able to:

- Create a self-portrait
- Identify connections between students



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

### Delivery

- Synchronous
- Asynchronous
- Individual

### Materials

Students will need:

- Paper and something to draw with, or a digital drawing program
- A way to submit their self-portraits to their teacher

### Preparation

If doing this as a synchronous activity, let families know ahead of time that students will need art supplies.

Create your own self-portrait ahead of time as an example for the class.

## Activity Instructions

### Introduction

Show students your self-portrait. **This is my self-portrait. A self-portrait is a picture that you draw of yourself. A self-portrait shows who you are!** Today you'll make self-portraits to help us get to know you better.

### Steps

1. Have students think about what they might put in their self-portrait (*My spiky hair. My nose and my mouth. My pet fish.*). You can use your self-portrait as an example.
2. Have students create their self-portraits. Remind them that the portrait should show who they are and doesn't have to look perfect.
3. Have students submit their portraits. Post portraits online in a place where the whole class can see them.

### Reflection

Have students look at the self-portraits and reflect on the following prompt:

- How are we the same and different?

# GRADES ..... **K-8**

Second Step® Class Challenges

## One Sees Two Sees

### Getting Started

#### Objective

By the end of this challenge, students will be able to:

- Share something new with classmates and learn new things about them



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

#### Delivery

- Synchronous
- Asynchronous
- Individual

#### Materials

None

#### Preparation

None

## Activity Instructions

### Introduction

Just because schools are closed doesn't mean we can't get to know each other a little bit better. In this activity, we will all use objects from around our homes to help us learn about each other.

### Steps

1. Choose a theme from the list below or create a theme of your own.
2. Have students choose an object in their home that represents the theme.
3. Have students share the object, along with a story about it, using any combination of text, photos, videos, or live meetings.

Stories can be:

- Why the object is or was important to them, or why it's important to someone else in their family
  - How the object came into their house
  - An event in their lives connected to the object
4. Give students the opportunity to comment on each other's objects and stories.
  5. (Optional) Choose another theme and repeat the activity.
  6. Don't forget to participate yourself!

### Themes:

- Something that hasn't changed or moved in a long time
- Something that represents your personal values
- Something you used to love when you were little, but don't think much about anymore
- Something that brings you comfort
- Something that reminds you of a special person or time in your life
- Something you think seems out of place in your home
- Something that represents your family history

### Reflection

Have students reflect on the following questions:

- How did hearing other students' stories change the way you think about them?
- How do you think your stories affected the way the rest of the class sees you?

# GRADES ..... **4-5**

Second Step® Class Challenges

## Pop Quiz

### Getting Started

#### Objective

By the end of this challenge, students will be able to:

- Recall information about their classmates

#### Delivery

- Synchronous
- Asynchronous

#### Materials

The teacher will need:

- A way to create quizzes. Students can do the quiz synchronously via video conference, or asynchronously via an online quiz platform.

Students will need:

- The ability to share their answers to the activity questions with the rest of the class

#### Preparation

None



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

## Activity Instructions

### Introduction

We're going to play a game to learn each other's names and interests. Then we'll see who can remember the most about other people in our class. Learning about each other's interests will help us get to know each other and feel comfortable learning together this year.

### Steps

1. Have each student answer the following questions:
  - What's your name?
  - What is something that you like to do on the weekend?
  - What is one book/movie/game that you like?
  - What is one thing you like to learn about?
2. Have students post their answers online where the rest of the class can see them.
3. Give students time to read each other's answers.
4. Create a quiz from the students' answers, asking students to identify who said what.
5. Have students take the quiz synchronously or asynchronously and compete to see who can get the most correct answers.

### Reflection

Have students reflect on the following prompt:

- How does our class community feel now that we know a bit more about each other? *Friendly. Comfortable.*



# GRADES

.....

# K-1

Second Step® Class Challenges

## Pretend Feelings

### Getting Started

#### Objective

By the end of this challenge, students will be able to:

- Identify ways to feel better when having strong feelings

#### Delivery

- Synchronous
- Asynchronous
- Individual

#### Materials

Teacher will need:

- A toy or stuffed animal

Students will need:

- A toy or stuffed animal

#### Preparation

Playing pretend may feel unfamiliar to you, but it comes naturally to young children. Pretend play gives students an opportunity to try something new in a low-stakes, fun way.



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

## Activity Instructions

### Introduction

Say: **Everybody has strong feelings sometimes. When we have strong feelings, we can do things to feel better. Today you'll play pretend and act out some ways to feel better when you have strong feelings.**

### Steps

- 1.** Have students pretend their toy is acting silly and jumping around. Then have students pretend their toy is too excited and needs to take a break.
- 2.** Have students pretend their toy is in a new place and is feeling scared. Then have students say something to their scared toys to help them feel better, like "It's okay to feel scared."
- 3.** Have students pretend their toy is super-excited and running back and forth. Then have students hug and rock their toy to help it calm down.

### Reflection

Have students reflect on the following prompts:

- What kinds of things did the toys do to feel better when they had strong feelings?
- Could you do those same things to feel better when you're having a big feeling?

# GRADES ..... **2-5**

Second Step® Class Challenges

## We Are . . .

### Getting Started

#### Objective

By the end of this challenge, students will be able to:

- Create a list of ways they want their classroom community to be

#### Delivery

- Synchronous
- Asynchronous
- Individual

#### Materials

The teacher will need:

- A place to publicly record students' ideas

Students will need:

- The ability to vote on their favorite ideas

#### Preparation

This activity is meant to complement your class or school rules. You can use your class rules as examples to help students think of their own ideas.



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

## Activity Instructions

### Introduction

Today we're going to describe how we want to be when we're together. This will help our community feel safe, welcoming, and fun.

### Steps

1. Show students the words "We are \_\_\_\_\_"
2. Have students brainstorm different words to fill in the blank and record their answers. *Respectful. Safe. Kind.*
3. Have students vote on which words they like the most. Highlight the three to five words with the most votes.

### Reflection

Have students reflect on the following prompt:

- What does it look like when we demonstrate each of the words we picked?

# GRADES ..... **K-8**

Second Step® Class Challenges

## You Did What???

### Getting Started

#### Objective

By the end of this challenge, students will be able to:

- Recognize the talents of classmates and identify something new to learn



**Bold**—Teacher's script

*Italics*—Anticipated student responses

#### Delivery

- Asynchronous

#### Materials

The teacher will need:

- A secure digital platform where students can share videos and comment on posts

Students will need:

- Internet access
- A phone or digital camera to record themselves

#### Preparation

None

## Activity Instructions

### Introduction

Say: **TALENT SHOW TIME!** This activity will give you the chance to show off the talents you have and learn a bit more about your classmates. This talent show is a bit different: your goal is to surprise us. You can show any talent you'd like, big or small, but try to pick something that we wouldn't expect to see you do.

### Steps

1. Have students choose a talent to show the rest of the class. This talent can be an impressive feat of skill or something quite simple—so long as it surprises the rest of the class.
2. Have students post videos of themselves demonstrating their talents.
3. Have students comment on each other's talents. Encourage students to ask 'why' and 'how' questions.
4. (Optional) Compile the videos into a virtual talent show and share with the class or the rest of the school.

### Reflection

Poll students on the following questions:

- Which student surprised you the most with their talent?
- Which talent would you most like to learn?

Have students pick someone else's talent they want to try. Have them submit videos of themselves trying the new talent, along with a written statement on why they chose the talent they did.

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