

FEB
2021

AT MY BEST CHALLENGE ACTIVITIES

4-5-6

SYMBOLIZING BELONGING

Challenge Task: Design a word cloud that promotes the acceptance of everyone in your community.

Challenge Details: Share with students what word clouds are and how they contain a variety of words that describe a concept. Discuss with students that you want them to think about the school or community and design a word cloud that represents acceptance within the community. Brainstorm a list of words that could be used and provide each student with a paper to draw their word cloud. Encourage students to use different colours and elements to design the words.

Extended Exploration: Post the word clouds throughout the school, on a bulletin board, or displayed somewhere in the home, with the header “We All Belong”. Discuss with students the similarities and differences between the word clouds.

Reflection Question: If you, or someone you know, is not feeling accepted, what can you do?



FOOD TRADITIONS

Challenge Task: Reflect about and discuss food traditions.

Challenge Details: Invite students to think about a meal or food that their family has enjoyed for a long time or that they would like to try with a family member. It could be a meal that has been passed down to them, a meal that their family enjoys eating together, or a meal that they would like to try. Ask each student to draw the meal/food or describe it in writing, then invite them to share with their classmates.

Extended Exploration: Ask students about how food is related to celebrations they know of and have a discussion about them. If students need support, you can share information about Pow Wows, Lunar New Year, or Diwali as examples.

Reflection Question: Why do you think food traditions are important?



SNOWY HILLS AND CHILLY THRILLS

Challenge Task: Create a target and practice underhand and overhand throwing for accuracy.

Challenge Details: Divide students into groups of three or ask students to have a family member help in a home learning environment. Ask each group to work together to build a small hill made of snow encouraging them to build it as high and as wide as possible during a given time frame. If there is no snow, use mats, chairs, or other equipment to create throwing targets. Once their hill is built, provide each group with a set of objects. Encourage students to choose a distance to throw from. Students throw the objects at their hills using overhand and underhand throws. Students take turns each throwing three objects in a row seeing how many they can get to stick in their snow hill.

Extended Exploration: Challenge students to change the rules of the activity and make up a new game (e.g., balance the object on a body part and move to drop it on the hill, throw the objects so they land behind the hill close to each other, etc.).

Reflection Question: Which type of throw was more effective for you? Why?



#AMBCHALLENGE

FEB
2021

AT MY BEST CHALLENGE ACTIVITIES

4-5-6

WE ARE ALL CHANGEMAKERS

Challenge Task: Draw and describe a national or international problem you want to address in order to make the world a better place and describe how you would solve the problem.

Challenge Details: Share this short video by Kid President about changing the world: [Kid President How To Change The World a work in progress](#). Brainstorm global problems that students are interested in helping to solve like COVID-19, climate change, lack of clean water, or lack of food for children. Have students draw and describe the problem they have chosen to take action on and how they plan to solve the problem. Invite students to present their problems and solutions to the class.

Extended Exploration: Provide students with time to research their problem further and find organizations or people that are working to address the problem.

Reflection Question: What led you to pick the global problem that you did?



PLAY ON!

Challenge Task: Get outside and play – run around, bounce a ball, play a game, and just have fun!

Challenge Details: Give students the opportunity to go outside and have unstructured time to play. This could be in a school environment or a home environment. The only rules are that all classmates/family members must be engaged (included), students have to remain physically active, and COVID-19 guidelines must be followed.

Extended Exploration: Challenge students to get outside and enjoy unstructured time to enjoy the outdoors over the weekend. Ensure students know to have parent/guardian approval to do this. Ask students to reflect about how they felt after and invite them to share what they did and how they felt with the class on Monday.

Reflection Question: What can you do to ensure that you have time to get outside and unwind regularly?



SMASHING STEREOTYPES

Challenge Task: Think about categories that are used to describe people and how it might make them feel.

Challenge Details: Ask students if they know what a stereotype or label is. Share a description of what a stereotype is: a belief about a group of people that is not true for everyone in the group. Ask students if they can think of an example of a stereotype (e.g., only boys like to play with trucks). Read the following sentences to students and ask them to stand up and say, “That’s a stereotype!” if they think it is.

- All smart people like to read and do math.
- Adults can be silly and funny.
- All teenagers are lazy and sleep all the time.

Continue this activity by coming up with other stereotypes and asking students to say whether or not they believe the statement is a stereotype. Adapted from <https://www.glsen.org/article/thats-gender-stereotype>.

Extended Exploration: Discuss how stereotyping and labelling makes others feel and how to think about everyone as an individual with different qualities and characteristics.

Reflection Question: How do you think people feel when they are stereotyped? Why?



#AMBCHALLENGE



FEB
2021

AT MY BEST CHALLENGE ACTIVITIES

4-5-6

FEEDING THE WORLD

Challenge Task: Research different types of foods or meals that come from various countries from around the world.

Challenge Details: Discuss with students how food choices vary around the world and why they vary. As a group, or at home with a family member, research a list of common foods or meals from around the world. List the food or meal and the country where it originates. Share with students that even though many of these foods or meals originated in other countries, they are enjoyed in Canada every day. Discuss with students some possible reasons for this.

Extended Exploration: Create a booklet of recipes from foods or meals from around the world and challenge students to prepare a food or meal at home with a family member.

Reflection Question: What did you learn about different cultural food traditions that you found surprising or interesting?



MODIFIED INUIT BLANKET TOSS

Challenge Task: Participate in a traditional Inuit game that involves teamwork and problem-solving skills.

Challenge Details: Provide an introduction or review of the [Inuit Blanket Toss](#) to students. Explain that Inuit festivals and other celebrations have often involved blanket toss games where players are thrown or bounced up into the air using a blanket made of seal or walrus skin. Several rounds were played and the player who bounced the highest was the winner. The blanket toss was created for hunters who would be bounced in the air to see animals that could be hunted in the distance. Divide students into groups and provide each group with a blanket or parachute and one ball. Group members spread out around the blanket, each holding onto a section. Groups practice tossing the ball on the blanket to see how high they can toss it. Groups can also try to toss a ball back and forth to another group. Encourage students in a home learning environment can try the activity with a family member.

Extended Exploration: Try other traditional Indigenous games with students such as [Kneel Jump](#) or [Snowsnake](#).

Reflection Question: What did your group do to be successful at tossing the ball?



INTERRUPTING SEDENTARY BEHAVIOUR

Challenge Task: Brainstorm all the ways you can get active and make sure you are not sitting for too long.

Challenge Details: Share with students that sedentary behavior includes screen time and other activities that provide little physical movement and include prolonged periods of sitting. Ask students to brainstorm and list all of the ways in which they can interrupt their sedentary behavior (e.g., walking or biking to a friend's house, walking the dog, playing outside, playing active video games).

Extended Exploration: Select an activity from the list you brainstormed and perform the activity to interrupt sedentary behaviour.

Reflection Question: Why is it important that we interrupt our sedentary behaviour?



#AMBCHALLENGE

FEB
2021

AT MY BEST CHALLENGE ACTIVITIES

4-5-6

GRATITUDE TREE

Challenge Task: Express how connecting to nature supports emotional well-being.

Challenge Details: Take the students on a walk through a local green space, conservation area, around the school community, or nature trail. Before they begin the walk, ask the students to be aware of their connections to the plants, trees, and animals as they walk. Encourage them to be aware of the air, the sky, and how all of these things can support their emotional well-being. Upon returning, ask students to draw a leaf on a paper and cut it out. Ask them to write something they are grateful for on their leaf. Encourage students to find inspiration from their walk. When finished, place each leaf onto a large classroom cut out of a tree trunk with branches or hang from a real branch picked up from ground on the walk.

Extended Exploration: Invite students write a journal entry about how the nature walk supported their emotional well-being.

Reflection Question: What could you do each day to feel connected to nature?



A DIVERSITY OF FOOD CHOICES

Challenge Task: Discuss different eating preferences or food requirements.

Challenge Details: Facilitate a class discussion about what it means to be vegetarian or vegan, as well as what it means to have various food intolerances such as lactose intolerance, gluten intolerance, or a food allergy. Discuss how some people choose not to eat certain foods and why. Invite students to share if they have experiences with the eating preferences or requirements from the points the class has discussed. Talk about how to be supportive of others with eating preferences or requirements. Encourage students in at home learning environments to discuss with a family member.

Extended Exploration: Share recipes that are vegetarian or vegan, or recipes for individuals with food intolerances. As a group, compare and contrast the ingredients lists and ask students which recipes they would be interested to try.

Reflection Question: How can you be supportive of others with food preferences or eating habits that differ from your own?



CHAIR CHALLENGE

Challenge Task: Can you get active while sitting in your chair? Take the chair challenge!

Challenge Details: A perfect activity for being active while practicing physical distancing! Inform students that they are going to be active while seated in their chair and ask them if they have any ideas of how to do this. Guide students through seated chair exercises like heels to the ground, knees to their chest, pretend to paddle a canoe, or put hands behind your head and bend your upper body to your thighs). Ask students for other ideas or [check out the video here](#). Play some music to add fun to the challenge! Talk about who chair workouts might be helpful for (e.g., seniors, persons with a disability, or anyone who wants to get active without much equipment!).

Extended Exploration: Invite students to volunteer to lead their classmates through a patterned sequence of chair exercises, encouraging them to get creative with their movements.

Reflection Question: What movements were your favourite to perform? Why?



#AMBCHALLENGE

FEB
2021

AT MY BEST CHALLENGE ACTIVITIES

4-5-6

ON A DAILY BASIS

Challenge Task: Express how connecting to nature supports emotional well-being.

Challenge Details: Share with students that routines are a pattern of events completed regularly in order to help regulate behaviours and establish a sense of normalcy. Divide students into small groups, or work with a family member in a home learning environment, and brainstorm different routines they currently have in their lives, like routines for bedtime, screen time, or getting ready in the morning. Ask them to consider what healthy habits make up these routines. Have students choose one routine and imagine that they are preparing a short skit for younger students about the steps required to make it a healthy routine (e.g., steps for having a good bedtime routine, etc.). In their small groups, students can develop individual skits or a group skit to act out a routine.

Extended Exploration: Connect with a class in a younger grade and have students perform their skits for these students.

Reflection Question: How do you think routines can connect to feelings of stress and anxiety?



MAKE TIME FOR MINDFULNESS

Challenge Task: Try a meditation exercise and practice mindfulness.

Challenge Details: Ask students if they know what it means to be mindful. Share that mindfulness is the ability to be fully present, aware of where we are and what we're doing, and not overly reactive or overwhelmed by what's going on around us. Ask to share situations in their lives where they can practice mindfulness. As a class, try a sample meditation.

Extended Exploration: Discuss other ways students can practice mindfulness (e.g., going for a nature walk, journaling, gratitude exercises, etc.) and select one of the methods to try as a class.

Reflection Question: How did you feel before and after the meditation exercise?



LEADING THE LOCOMOTION

Challenge Task: Follow the actions of the leader of the group and come up with a fun action for the group when it's your turn to be the leader.

Challenge Details: In an open space, break students up into small groups. Each group forms a line somewhere within the space and with enough distance away from other groups that they can move freely and practice physical distancing. Brainstorm different types of movements for students to complete (e.g., jogging, hopping, skipping, different dance moves, etc.) and provide students with time to think about movement(s) they can do as the leader. For students in a home learning environment, encourage them to complete the activity with a family member. If possible, play music throughout the activity. The first person in line leads the group using different movement skills. The group follows the leader around the space mimicking the actions. Every 30 seconds, call out "switch" and the leader will run to the back of the line, while the next person in line becomes the leader and decides the new movements.

Extended Exploration: Discuss with students how they can move their body thinking about the size of their movements (e.g., small, medium, large), level of their movements (e.g., low, middle, high), and energy of their movements (e.g., light, strong, sharp, smooth). Do the activity again with each group member applying size, level, and energy to their movements.

Reflection Question: Did you find it harder to follow the leader or be the leader? Why?



#AMBCHALLENGE

FEB
2021

AT MY BEST CHALLENGE ACTIVITIES

4-5-6

FOOD AND THOUGHT

Challenge Task: Discuss what mindful eating habits are and how to practice them.

Challenge Details: Share with students that Canada's Food Guide notes that mindful eating habits are important to adopt at meal times in order to be aware of how you eat, why you eat, what you eat, when you eat, where you eat, and how much you eat. Invite students to discuss the following questions about mindful eating habits in pairs or small groups:

- Do you typically eat slowly?
- Are you ever distracted when you eat? What distracts you?
- Do you typically eat with others?
- Do you notice on your own when you feel hungry or only when food is offered to you?
- Do you typically eat in a space meant for eating (e.g. at a table)?
- Can you think of other eating habits you have? What are they?

Bring students back together into a large group and share that if they were able to describe answers to some or all of these questions, they are developing the skills to be mindful of their eating habits. Talk about students' answers and strategies and tips they can use for mindful eating (e.g., chew slowly, turn off electronics when you eat, make time to eat meals with others, etc.)

Extended Exploration: Eat a snack together, and during this time, ask students to consciously practice mindful eating habits students.

Reflection Question: Based on our discussion, what is one thing you could you change about your eating habits in order to be more mindful?



MOVE TO FOCUS

Challenge Task: Discover how small bouts of daily movement can help to increase attention and focus in class or while doing school work.

Challenge Details: Explain to students that interrupting sedentary behaviour with movement helps to give your brain a break and regain focus on school work. For example, getting up from your seat and stretching, doing jumping jacks, squats, etc., are great movements to use in order to be able to refocus. These energizing "brain breaks" (60 - 90 second movement activities) increase blood flow in the body, stimulating brain function. By incorporating these breaks into the day, students remain longer in their optimal learning state. Throughout the school day, take a minute or two during each lesson to ask the students to stand up, stretch, and do a movement that can be performed safely within a small space. If students have other teachers throughout the day, ask if they could find 1-2 minutes for movement breaks in their lessons. At the end of the day, ask students if they noticed a difference in their ability to pay attention and to focus, in comparison to days where they did not interrupt their sedentary behaviour. As a class, create a policy for when, where, and how students can take movement breaks when needed without interrupting others.

Extended Exploration: Challenge students to think about other ways they can interrupt their sedentary behaviour while at home. Students can take a few minutes to get active and move their body if they have been watching TV, playing video games, or doing school work. Encourage students to try it at home and then share what they did and how it made them feel.

Reflection Question: Why do you think learning to take movement breaks now will also help you as you get older?



#AMBCHALLENGE



FEB
2021

AT MY BEST CHALLENGE ACTIVITIES

4-5-6

BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION

Challenge Task: List reasons why some people do not participate in physical activities or sports and brainstorm possible solutions.

Challenge Details: Facilitate a class discussion about the barriers to participation that people of varying demographics face and write them down on a SMART Board or chart paper. Examples include finances, transportation, facilities, available programs, confidence, enjoyment, accessible programs for persons with a disability, or safety concerns. Brainstorm solutions to these barriers and write these down too. Invite students to brainstorm in small groups a physical activity program that would address some of these barriers and share what they developed with the class. Encourage students in an at home learning environment to complete the activity with a family member.

Extended Exploration: Try a ParaSport like sitting volleyball or boccia and learn more about the [History of the Paralympic Movement in Canada!](#)

Reflection Question: When you play games or sports, what could you do to make your peers feel valued and included?



SPREAD COMPASSION AND EMPATHY

Challenge Task: Show compassion and empathy by composing a positive message to share with someone.

Challenge Details: Talk about what it means to have compassion and empathy for others. Why is it important? In what ways can you show it? How have others shown it to you? Ask students to think about someone they could connect with to show compassion and empathy. Discuss how health care workers, grocery store cashiers, pharmacists, seniors, and others may be feeling. What positive words could they use to show compassion and empathy for these people? Encourage students to write or draw an uplifting message or image for one of these people or groups of people. After completed, ask students to come up with a safe way that they can share their message with the person or group of people.

Extended Exploration: Start a compassion and empathy chain by inviting students to create and share an uplifting message with two students in another class. Students then encourage those two students to create and share an uplifting message. Then those two students invite two more students to do the same to keep the chain going.

Reflection Question: In what ways can you show compassion and empathy to people you see every day?



#AMBCHALLENGE