



Choice Board Lesson Plans



Week 2: Building Strong & Safe Foundations - Collective Identity

Division: SECONDARY

Category:

Comm & Team Building --- Physical Activation --- Social Emotional Skill Development

Lesson Title:

I Am Like - Nature Connections

Learning Goal:

Students will have an opportunity to participate in an experiential learning activity outdoors. In this activity, students will have first-hand experiences of being in touch with nature, fostering a connection to local places and ecosystems.

Student Pre-Reflection:

Before you begin, think about...

- Am I dressed for the weather?
- Am I wearing comfortable shoes? (Preferably flat, rubber soled shoes)
- Am I following proper safety protocols? (Spacing from others, etc.)
- I understand I need to stay on school property and follow the instructions as described by my teacher or designate

Learning Task/Activity:

1. Teacher will lead and accompany their students outside. Teachers are asked to remind students to stay on school property within a prescribed area, and avoid hazards by walking on walkways/fields/etc. Students should stay within sightlines of the teacher and be mindful of potential slip, trip and fall hazards.
2. Students have 5 minutes to wander and explore within a prescribed area (school field etc.) before sitting in a circle. Ask students to find something natural outdoors that captures their attention (e.g. a tree, a pebble, a ladybug, a cloud, a blade of grass) and draw a connection between that object and themselves by completing the sentence starter: **"I am like a _____ because..."**
3. Some students may be able to express the connection with few words, and others may find many connections. Examples:
 - "I am like that cloud because that cloud looks lazy and sleepy, and I love to sleep and be lazy."
 - "I am like this maple tree because it has a trunk like a body, branches like arms. It looks like it loves the sun, and I love the sun too."

- “I am like this ladybug I saw because ladybugs are beautiful and red with cute polka-dots and red is my favourite colour. They are friendly, just like me. They look slow but can suddenly open their wings and fly away. They have hidden strengths, just like we all do.”

4. Ask students to share their connections, reminding them to be mindful to listen attentively when others are sharing.

Ideas for Follow up / Discussion:

- How do you feel after spending 10-15 minutes outdoors?
- Did you find it easy or difficult to find connections between yourself and the natural object you found? Why?
- Listening to your classmates share their connections, were there any that stood out for you as being especially interesting?
- Did you notice similarities between yourself and other people that spoke?
- Why do you think it might be important to connect to nature?
- Why do you think it might be important to connect to each other?

Further Resources:

http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/environmental_ed_9to12_eng.pdf

Learning Connections

We develop social-emotional learning skills throughout our lives. SEL has been shown to support student emotional wellness, when offered in the context of a caring, inclusive, equity-minded classroom setting. When student identity is affirmed, and skills are introduced in a developmentally appropriate and sequenced manner, students can select and adopt social-emotional strategies that build on their strengths. Both elementary and secondary curriculum contain expectations for social-emotional learning. Here is an outline of the six skill categories of social-emotional learning. The highlighted skills will be the focus of this lesson:

Students will learn skills to:

- identify and manage emotions
- recognize sources of stress and cope with challenges
- maintain positive motivation and perseverance
- **build relationships and communicate effectively**
- **develop self-awareness and sense of identity**
- **think critically and creatively**

So they can:

- express their feelings and understand the feelings of others
- develop personal resilience
- foster a sense of optimism and hope
- **support healthy relationships and respect diversity**
- **develop a sense of identity and belonging**
- make informed decisions and solve problems

The resources in this series contain links to sources external to HWDSB such as YouTube and TedTalk. The written content also relies on information gathered from external sources such as School Mental Health-ASSIST, Ophea and others.

Your feedback is appreciated, please follow the link: <https://ca.research.net/r/educatorfeedback>



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