



Second Step® Elementary Remote Learning Class Meeting Guide

Supporting the social-emotional well-being of children during the COVID-19 pandemic is a critical challenge for elementary school educators. Providing that support while teaching remotely, however, is an additional difficult challenge. Remote class meetings are an excellent strategy for building relationships and fostering a safe, supportive, positive learning community while schools are closed.

This guide will help you create effective remote class meetings in your classroom, school, or district. It contains general best-practices and 32 specific class meeting activities that are easily adaptable to your specific remote learning needs.

When combined with core Second Step® lessons adapted for remote use, regular remote class meetings will provide students with strong social-emotional supports in these difficult times.

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Why Students Need Class Meetings Now More Than Ever

Building Community During School Closures

The COVID-19 pandemic has fundamentally disrupted children's lives, both at home and at school. Building—or rebuilding—strong relationships with peers and school staff is a critical first step in helping students cope. Only after their basic needs for a safe, supportive, positive learning environment are met can they truly begin to focus on academics.¹

A Buffer Against Trauma

The coronavirus pandemic and related school closures are exposing many students to trauma. For students who may already experience trauma at home, school closures significantly increase their risk of exposure. Other students may be experiencing trauma for the first time as they stay at home with increasingly stressed and anxious family members, such as parents who are trying to balance work and childcare, or who may have lost jobs, or who may be caring for others who are ill. Left unaddressed, these traumas can lead to toxic stress and long-term academic, social, and physical health issues.²

Fortunately, educators can be an important buffer against trauma during this crisis. Even while physically closed, schools can provide a supportive online sanctuary where students can build strong connections with adults and safely talk about feelings. These connections and communication channels can create positive experiences that counteract the effects of trauma.³

“We shall walk together on this path of life, for all things are part of the universe, and are connected with each other to form one whole unity.”

—Dr. Maria Montessori, *To Educate the Human Potential*

“Every child deserves a champion—an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection, and insists that they become the best that they can possibly be.”

—Rita F. Pierson, EdD, *Every Kid Needs a Champion* TED Talk

Creating Successful Remote Class Meetings

Keep It Simple

Class meetings are, at their core, all about building relationships. A remote class meeting is no different. Place your students at the center of your planning. What do they need? How can you reach them? Do the best you can to connect with them through whatever channels you have available, but don't overthink things. The more complex and stressful students—and you—find the experience, the less effective it will be for building relationships.

Make It Your Own

There is no one-size-fits-all approach. Your remote class meetings will reflect the particular needs of your students and the particular constraints of your virtual classroom.

There are two broad areas of customization to keep in mind as you plan:

- **The Structure:** How will you engage with students? How will students engage with each other? Figuring out how this will work for you and your students within the constraints of time and technology is critically important.
- **The Content:** What activities will you and your students engage in during the class meeting? What topics do you want to cover? What will your students respond to? You may not have the answers to these questions right now. Feel free to experiment until you find something that works and, when in doubt, involve your students in the planning process. They often know what they need and are just waiting for someone to ask.

The Structure of a Remote Class Meeting

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.
- **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.

Synchronous Activities

Bringing students together to interact live via online meeting platforms is a powerful way to foster social interaction and connect with students. Since this is the most "school-like" of the engagement strategies, it requires the least adaptation of activities to make it work. However, it can be a challenge to manage and students may find it difficult to focus on the activities or even attend, depending on their individual situations.

- **Because this can be such an effective way to support social-emotional needs, look for ways to host synchronous activities.**
- **Use this time judiciously—a few hours per week, at most.**
- **Recognize that the students who most need the social-emotional connections of remote class meetings may also be the ones least able to attend live sessions. Make sure those students also have opportunities to build relationships with staff and peers through other means.**

Asynchronous Activities

In these activities, students collectively engage in an activity but do so on their own time. The general way this works is:

1. A teacher posts an activity in a shared online space. (Google Classroom, for example)
2. Students publicly post their responses to the activity.
3. Students and the teacher all post comments on each other's responses, engaging in an asynchronous conversation.
4. The teacher closes the activity by summarizing the conversations and optionally posting a final reflection question for students to complete individually.

While this format may be more cumbersome than a live conversation, it can allow students to have deep and meaningful conversations. This strategy gives students time to think and reflect before responding. The setup can also lead to more thoughtful responses and broader participation, as students who may not feel comfortable speaking in the moment are able to engage with the class when they feel ready.



The Structure of a Remote Class Meeting (continued)

Asynchronous activities are also more accessible to students, as they are able to participate whenever they have the time and technology available. If you are concerned about the participation in synchronous activities, moving to asynchronous ones may increase student engagement.

Individual Activities

Activities where students work individually are an important part of remote class meeting programs. These activities are an excellent way to build the strong student-teacher relationships that can buffer against the effects of trauma.

- These are the most accessible activities, as they require minimal technology on the part of students. This may be the only way to connect with students who are not able to engage in digital remote learning.
- These can be time-consuming for educators because it's important that teachers read and respond thoughtfully to students' submissions.



Remote Class Meeting Activities

Check-Ins and Check-Outs: The Heart of a Remote Class Meeting

Delivery Suggestion: Synchronous or Asynchronous

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.

Overview

Making sure a caring adult connects 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?** *I wrote a whole sentence. We celebrated my friend's birthday.*
3. **What's one thing that was hard?** *The letter Q. Not touching my friends. Remembering to wash hands.*
4. **What's one thing you want to do this weekend?** *Sleep. See my grandma. Play with my dog.*

Class Discussions: Opportunities to Connect and Collectively Process Feelings

Delivery Suggestion: Asynchronous

Conversations among students about personally important topics are a central part of class meetings and particularly critical during this crisis. These conversations provide ways for students to interact socially, and they can make space for them to talk about feelings and feel supported by friends—important buffers against trauma.⁴

Name	Grade Levels	Objective Students will be able to:
Battling Boredom	4-5	Identify ways to cope when feeling bored
Building a Respectful Community	2-5	Name ways to be respectful
Feelings About Remote Learning	2-5	Recognize that their feelings about remote learning are normal and that many other students share them
I Can Solve Problems	K-3	Explore how it feels to solve a problem Gain confidence in their problem-solving abilities
My Family	2-5	Explore the idea of diversity and the need to accept everyone's differences
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
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	Students will share what they think a safe and supportive (virtual) classroom looks, sounds, and feels like
What Are You Grateful For?	2-5	Allow the students to think about what is good in their world as many things are changing and different

Class Challenges: Fun Activities to Strengthen Relationships

Delivery Suggestion: Varies

Finding ways to have fun with friends is crucial for students during this crisis. Class Challenges provide a great opportunity to help students enjoy friendships in a safe, supportive environment. Class Challenges also provide students with novel experiences during a time when they may be feeling quite bored.

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
Fact in a Hat	K-5	Learn interesting facts about each other and build classroom community
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	2-5	Identify unexpected cultural connections between students
My Self-Portrait	K-5	Create a self-portrait Identify connections between students
One Sees Two Sees	K-5	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-5	Recognize the talents of classmates and identify something new to learn



Creating Your Own Activities with Existing Second Step® Materials

The Second Step® family of programs teaches core skills and concepts that support strong school and classroom communities. The class meetings easily integrate two of the four core components of the Second Step program: Daily Practice and Using Skills Every Day.

Daily Practice

- Many Daily Practice activities can be used as icebreakers, class or lesson openers, or prompts for sharing personal stories. You can find full details of the Daily Practice activities on the Following Through Cards for each lesson.
- In each lesson, the Daily Practice Activity for Day 5 is a reflection activity. Students are asked to draw a picture related to the lesson and then write or dictate a few words that describe the picture. Students can be invited to create their drawings and then come to the class meeting to talk about them.

Using Skills Every Day

In the Anticipate, Reinforce, Reflect process, the Reflect step can be used as a prompt for a class discussion. Students can reflect on when and how they used the skill(s) they're learning in the Second Step lesson for that week and how the skill helped them be successful.

For more valuable tools for building class meeting activities, look to our guide, *Restorative Practices and the Second Step Program*. Originally intended to help educators facilitate restorative circles to align with Second Step lessons, it offers specific guidance on how to also create class meetings to align with lessons in the Second Step program.



The Power of Unstructured Time

While building your content plan, don't be afraid to set aside time for students to talk and socialize with each other. The most important parts of an adolescent's day often happen in the moments between classes when they're connecting with friends. Giving students time to simulate this through live online meetings can mean a lot to them. Just letting kids be kids may run counter to our instincts to provide students with structured activities, but simply having the teacher present can be structure enough. Students' other social outlets during this crisis—social media, texting, online games, and so on—can be difficult spaces to navigate, with risks of bullying, harassment, and other antisocial behaviors. Your class may provide students their one opportunity to socialize with friends in a safe, supportive environment.

References

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Second Step® Elementary Remote Learning Class Meeting Activity Library

Class Discussions

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Class Challenges

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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?

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.

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 questions:

- 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?

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?

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 4-5

Second Step® Elementary Remote Learning 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.*

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.*

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

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:

- 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?

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

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2-5

Second Step® Elementary Remote Learning 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?

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



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 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 2-5

Second Step® Elementary Remote Learning 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

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2-5

Second Step® Elementary Remote Learning 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?

Class Flags

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?

Fact in a Hat

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



K-1

Second Step® Elementary Remote Learning 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® Elementary Remote Learning 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

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2-5

Second Step® Elementary Remote Learning 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?

My Self-Portrait

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?

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

Delivery

- Synchronous
- Asynchronous
- Individual

Materials

None

Preparation

None



Bold—Teacher's script

Italics—Anticipated student responses

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

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4-5

Second Step® Elementary Remote Learning 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.*



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?

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?

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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