

180

CONNECTIONS

DAILY CONNECTIONS BETWEEN TEACHER AND STUDENTS

Mike Scott and Darrell Scott

Forward by: Dr. Robert Marzano

Rachel's
Challenge

*Dedicated to Bob and Rita Pearlman,
who made this book and its accompanying
program become a reality.*

FOREWORD 180 CONNECTIONS

In this book, Mike and Darrell Scott provide strategies that are instantly usable by classroom teachers at any level. These strategies focus on two of the most important yet under-addressed factors in student learning: the extent to which students perceive that they are understood by their teacher and their peers, and the extent to which students perceive that they are valued by their teacher and their peers. The first perception results in a sense of belonging. The second perception results in a sense of esteem within a community.

It is important to understand how a sense of belonging and a sense of esteem within a community can dramatically enhance students' motivation. If students don't feel that they are accepted by their teacher and their peers, they will disengage. If they don't feel that they are valued by their teacher and peers they will disengage. On the other hand, if they believe they are both welcome and valued, their willingness to engage in complex academic activities is greatly enhanced.

Both of these perceptions are fostered by human interactions of a specific nature. This is the expressed focus of the 180 Connections program. Each day the teacher engages students in activities that help them know one another better and celebrate their similarities and differences. This does not take a great deal of time or energy. Indeed, the Scotts have laid out a simple three step process that can be executed quickly and efficiently. These steps can be carried out in dyads or triads and then debriefed with the entire class.

The first step, INFORMATION, prompts a student to share something about himself or herself. Commonly, this involves a characteristic, topic, or event that is important to the student. The second step, ILLUSTRATION, prompts a student to provide a concrete example of the characteristic, topic, or event that has been identified. The third step, INTERACTIVE exercises, engages students in a type of interaction where they learn more about each other often going beyond the initial characteristic, topic, or event.

To a great extent, 180 Connections can be thought of as a proactive approach to classroom management. If students were to systematically learn more and more about each other while interacting in respectful and authentically inquisitive ways, many of the discipline issues teachers frequently face might "magically" fade away over time.

– Robert J. Marzano, CEO Marzano Research

Introduction

This book is written to provide a bridge of connection between teacher and students and students with each other. There are approximately 180 active days in the school year so we have created 180 informative, creative, and interactive connections that only require approximately three minutes of each class period.

You, as a teacher, are swamped with school work preparation, and this book provides an easy, no-brainer, no sweat, “little or no preparation required” roadmap.

Each day of the school year you will be provided with one personal connection point. This is something that you and every teacher in your school can do in every classroom every day!

You will also be provided with simple interactive exercises that engage the students with you and each other.

There are three levels provided for every connection point:

1. INFORMATION you share about yourself with your students
2. ILLUSTRATIONS or quotes that amplify that information
3. INTERACTIVE exercises to engage the students to connect with each other

There are no dates, just numbers, allowing you to skip any day or week that you need to and pick up where you left off. You also have the freedom to substitute the suggested theme with one of your own on any given day.

You may choose to only share the information portion or just the information and illustration portion. We recommend that you do all three, every day, to ensure that the bridge of connection is well built.

After five connection points you will find a tip or project that will help with those connections. There are 10 of these projects through the first 50 days.

IMPORTANT: Watch the training by using the QR code below before beginning this program. It will maximize the impact you have on your students with this program.



Prelude

Research shows that the simple daily act of greeting each student by name along with a form of physical contact can raise the level of his or her engagement by up to 27% (Allday & Pakurar, 2007).

Research also shows that students who volunteer in a class exercise are 19% more likely to volunteer a second time when given a physical touch of encouragement on their upper arm (University of California, Berkeley, The Greater Good Publication, Sept. 1, 2004, quoting French psychologist, Nicolas Gueguen, Ph.D.).

In addition, warm human touch activates the frontal cortex, which is where warmth and compassion are felt and expressed, reinforcing positive behavior (Rolls, 2010).

A simple touch can also double the likelihood that a student will speak in class (Tiffany et al., 2008).

Premature babies have an average weight gain advantage of 47% when frequently touched by their caregivers (Tiffany et al., 2008).

Before going into the 180 connections, there are two important projects we strongly urge you to consider: “3 H” and Classmate of the Week. The 3 H project (a hug, a handshake, or a high five) is an application from the above-mentioned research to ensure connectedness, trust, collaboration, and better academic performance.

3 H Project

Stand at the door of your classroom every day, greet each student by name, and give him or her a hug, a handshake, or a high five. Let them know that you will be greeting them every day with one of the 3 Hs and ask which one they prefer.

Make a list of their names and which method of greeting they prefer and greet them that way every single day, calling out their first name.

They (and you) may feel like it is awkward at first, but this is a proven connection point that will pay big dividends. Soon you will both look forward to the ritual every day. This alone may win you the lifetime label of “my favorite teacher!”

Classmate of the Week

You may not need these instructions if you already do a variation of this project. This project is a map designed from proven methods. Notice that the project is not called “Student of the Week,” which would be from your viewpoint. Instead, Classmate of the Week is from the students’ viewpoint.

STEP 1: *Determine the Student and Time Ratio*

There are approximately 180 days in a typical school year. If you use 150 of those days for recognizing your students, you can honor each and every student throughout the year. You do not want to honor a student on a week in which a holiday or vacation time will break up the full week. That’s why we use the number 150 instead of 180.

Let’s say you have the same 30 students in your class all year long. That becomes an easy formula: divide the number of students (30) into the 150 days, and you get five days per student. This allows you to honor a student every week for the 150 days. However, most classes won’t have exactly 30 of the same students all year long.

If you have rotating classes and you teach, for example, six different groups throughout the day with each class ranging from 23 to 37 students, then you have to adjust down from the largest number in any one class, in this case, 37 students. For classes with 30 or less students, you can honor one student per week until all have been honored. For classes with more than 30 students, you can honor two students per week in a shorter time frame.

Obviously, you would honor different students in each class if you have rotating classes. This could mean up to six students are honored each week, one per class (or two when the number exceeds 30). Use common sense and adjust your time frame to fit your classroom and the number of students.

STEP 2: *Get to Know Your Students*

One of the great benefits of doing a Classmate of the Week program is that it causes you to pay more attention to who your students are as human beings. If you begin this at the start of the school year, you may want to pass out a sheet for them to fill out during the first week of school. Below are sample questions you might ask them, assure them this is not a “test,” but simply a desire on your part to get to know each one of them a little better.

Before you pass out the sheets, model what you want from them. Tell them about your family, your hobbies, your pets, your favorite sports and sports teams, your favorite music, movies, etc. Help them see you as a caring person. After sharing about yourself, pass out the sheets. Allow space between each question for them to write out their answers.

About Me

Here’s a list of the family members I live with:

Here’s what my family is like:

These are my pets:

My favorite sports:

My favorite sports teams:

My hobbies:

Things I like:

Things I don’t like:

Just a simple questionnaire like that will put you way ahead of the curve in getting to know your students. Elementary teachers with first- and second-grade children may want to do this as a verbal exercise.

Hold on to these sheets throughout the year and refer to them when you choose to honor a specific student.

STEP 3: *Introducing the Program to the Students*

Below is a suggested script for how to introduce the program to your students.

"In our class this year, I want us to take time to really get to know each other throughout the school year. So, every person in the class will be recognized and honored by the rest of us for a full week. Beginning next Monday, we are going to recognize and honor one of you as the Classmate of the Week. I'll give you more instructions on Monday."

STEP 4: *Appoint a Photographer*

Appoint an official "photographer," or two, to take the picture of the person to be honored each week. Their job will be to take a picture of the student (close up of their face) and provide you with either an 8x10-inch or a 5x7-inch copy from a copy machine.

You will provide a frame that can be used over and over. If you have more than one class, you should have a corresponding number of frames available. Hang the picture up on Friday after dismissal of your last class.

STEP 5: *Appoint "Bio-readers"*

Also, appoint three to five students who are good vocal readers and are not afraid to read to the whole class. They will become the official "biography readers." Their job will be to take turns honoring different students by reading a brief bio of the person being honored on Monday when class begins. Be sure to coach them to read with enthusiasm and respect.

STEP 6: *Meet With the Student to be Honored*

You should meet with the student to be honored by no later than Wednesday of the week before the student is honored. Spend about five minutes with the student asking a few questions that the bio-readers can read to the entire class on Monday.

Make sure you find out their favorite song, and download it from Amazon or iTunes to play as the students all file in to class the following week.

A biography may go something like this:

"This week, we will recognize and honor Ima Zampel as our Classmate of the Week. Ima lives with her Mom, Barbara, her older brother, Heza, and younger sister, Sheza. She loves playing Scrabble with her close friends, Tony and Cassandra. Ima is an avid golfer and likes to play on the Forest Hills course near her home.

She is a Denver Broncos fan and watches every game faithfully. Ima's dad,

Tom, was killed in action while serving our country in Iraq. She misses her dad every single day.

Ima has a cat named Skittles and a small aquarium with tropical fish. She loves rock and roll and her favorite band is U2.

She likes this class and thinks the rest of us are a pretty good group to hang around with. Let's give a hand for our classmate of the week, Ima Zampel!"

Have the photographer take a good close-up on Wednesday when you meet with the student, and by Friday have the bio prepared for the bio-reader to take with him or her over the weekend to practice.

Also, get the mailing address from the parent and let him or her know that you will be sending a greeting card to their child from the entire class sometime during the following week.

STEP 7: *Monday Morning*

On Monday morning, you should have the picture of the Classmate of the Week hung in a visible place. Have their favorite song softly playing as the students file in. After all the students come in, greet them and point out the picture by saying something like, "Before we get started this morning, I want us to honor our (point to picture) Classmate of the Week for this week, Ima Zampel."

If parent(s) attend, welcome them by saying something like: "We are glad Mrs. Zampel could join us today as we take the time to honor her daughter. I have asked Jim Parsons to come up and read a short biography about Ima (the bio is read and then applause). So, throughout this week, we are going to spend a little extra time just letting Ima know that she is appreciated.

STEP 8: *Appreciation Card*

Make sure you send an appreciate card to the Classmate of the Week. A suggested script to get the card written is below.

"One way we will show our appreciation to the Classmate of the Week by sending him/her a greeting cards. I will pass around a greeting card for all of us to sign, and we will send that to him/her in the mail this week."

STEP 9: *Comments Box*

"Also, I have a box here on my desk that I would like for you to use to express

your thoughts and appreciation to Julie throughout this week. I will have the right to edit or eliminate any comments that are not appropriate, but I don't expect to have to do that. You may sign your name to your comments or you may remain anonymous, your choice. On Friday, at the end of our class, I will be giving all the comments to Julie to take with her."

And make sure you do that.

STEP 10: *Final Recognition on Friday*

"As you all know we have been honoring Ima Zampel as our "Classmate of the Week" and this is our final day to put in any comments or words of appreciation. Let's just show her one final round of appreciation (clap). Thank you Ima, we appreciate you for being a part of this class."

Your Cost and Involvement

Be sure you affirm the Classmate of the Week throughout the week, write your own comments, and sign the card. Students will probably keep that card and those comments for the rest of their lives.

The cost to you is minimal. You can get free greeting card downloads, or go to a Dollar Store, if there is one in your area, and buy a bundle of greeting cards for a buck. The biggest expense may be the stamp you need to send the card to the student. If you want to eliminate that cost, you can simply hand them the card along with the comments in the comment box on Friday.

You should provide the picture frame(s), which might cost, at most, a few dollars each for six of them. You should also be able to find them at garage sales for pennies. The music downloads may be a buck or so each, or you may eliminate that part of the program.

The greatest investment will be your time and energy, but the reward will diminish the small sacrifice you make. Your students will never forget you or your class because of this simple program.

Two Optional Steps You Can Add:

A: *Communicate With Parent(S)*

For this step, you will need to get the phone number of the parent(s) of the student being honored, and the evening after you meet with the student, call his or her parent(s) to let them know on Monday, at such and such a time, your entire class will honor their child.

Give the parent a special invitation to come and sit at the back of the class to hear the bio read and the class applaud for their child. This, of course, should help with the teacher-parent relationships.

B: *Restaurant or Movie Certificate*

In most parts of the country, chain restaurants such as Chili's or Applebee's will have "educational certificates" that honor students or teachers. The certificate is usually a free meal for one person. Go to local restaurants and explain your Classmate of the Week program to them, and chances are you will have all the meals you need donated. Some movie theaters may also work with you for a free movie ticket.

Let them know you will tell all the students that their restaurant or movie theater is honoring the student. At the close of the "honoring" time, present the student with the certificate: "Ima, as a small token of our appreciation for you in this classroom, Chili's has donated a free meal for you to enjoy. Once more, let's give a round of appreciation (clap) for our Classmate of the Week, Ima Zampell!"

180 TEACHER/STUDENT CONNECTIONS

Students who feel connected with their teacher and fellow students are far less likely to drop out of school than those who feel isolated and unconnected. Research shows that, by high school, as many as 40%–60% of all students—urban, suburban, and rural—are chronically disengaged from school (Klem & Connell, 2004).

The exercises in this book provide a huge opportunity to create a safe learning environment in which the power of touch and connection can increase academic achievement, communication, creative thinking, and collaboration.

There are three recommended components of each connection: INFORMATION, ILLUSTRATION, and INTERACTION. You provide the information and illustration to create a bridge between yourself and the students.

The interaction part is to help the students build a bridge between each other. Keep the number of students in the interactive groups to no less than three and no more than four. If there are two students left over, then place each one with a group of three. Make sure that the students are rotated into different groups every day. Do not allow the same three students to huddle up in a group every day.

So, let's get started with the 180 connections!

1

- 1. INFORMATION:** When I was your age: Describe where you lived. What your life was like. Where you went to school. Any other personal information from when you were their age.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Show pictures of you when you were their age (later, you will show baby pictures and pictures from different times in your life). Share what your personal dreams were at their age.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Students share what they would like to be doing when they are your age.

To be of help...

Share a little about your life at their age:

Some of you may think I was always this old. But the truth is, I started out life as a child, like you did, and was once your age— believe it or not! I remember when I was in the ____ grade I thought my teacher had been around forever (describe your teacher if you remember her or him). Back then I lived in (city)."

Put up pictures of yourself at their age: "Here's what I looked like when I was your age (say something self-deprecating or humorous). At that time in my life (share what dreams you had). I never dreamed I would be teaching ____ grade, or I knew then I wanted to be a teacher."

"I want you to break down in groups of three or four and share with each other what you think you will be doing when you are my age."

Additional Material

Here are some things you might share with them about when you were their age:

Who was President of the United States?

Who were the famous musicians, rock stars, etc.?

What was the popular television show?

What movies had just come out?



2

- 1. INFORMATION:** My grandparents. What were/are they like and share a little about them.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Show pictures of you with your grandparents and share a story about a favorite memory with one or all of them
- 3. INTERACTION:** Share about your grandparents.

These first few connection points will enable your students to get to know you better through your family, pets, etc.

3

1. **INFORMATION:** My spouse, partner, or best friend. Share a little about them.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Show pictures of you together with your spouse or partner or best friend and share about a favorite memory.
3. **INTERACTION:** Share about one of your best friends.

4

1. **INFORMATION:** My parents or guardians. What they were like. What they did for an occupation. Where they were from and so on.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Share pictures of you and your parents or guardians and a memory.
3. **INTERACTION:** Share about your parents or guardians.

5

1. **INFORMATION:** My pet(s) or my favorite animal.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Show pictures of your pet(s) or favorite animal.
3. **INTERACTION:** Share about your pets or favorite animal.

Project: Teacher's Corner

Choose a corner of the room to create a display of your life so your students can better appreciate you as a person. Include pictures, from birth to the present. Also, put on display certificates, trophies, awards, etc. Feature pictures of yourself when you were your students' age.

The more they can see about you the better. If you played sports, were in the band, were on the debate team, choir, clubs, etc.

If you want to go to the trouble of setting up a video display through a television or monitor of home movies when you were a kid, then that would be icing on the cake!



6

- 1. INFORMATION:** The saddest day of my life. Describe.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Share a picture, poem, or just the story.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Share about the saddest day of your life.

This one may seem morbid, but people draw closer together when they share about the deepest hurts in their lives versus their greatest triumphs.

If you have rotated them into different groups each day, then by now they will have made several new friends or at least have gotten to know one another better.

7

1. **INFORMATION:** My favorite uncle or aunt (or equivalent).
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Share a picture or a story about them.
3. **INTERACTION:** Share about your favorite uncle or aunt (or equivalent).

8

1. **INFORMATION:** My favorite sports team and something about them.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Share a picture or a story about your connection with that team.
3. **INTERACTION:** Share about your favorite sports team and something about them.

9

1. **INFORMATION:** My favorite place to eat and why.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Show pictures of restaurant or you eating there.
3. **INTERACTION:** Share your favorite place to eat and why.

10

- 1. INFORMATION:** My favorite vacation.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Show pictures or describe what happened.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Share about your favorite vacation and explain why.

Project: The Letter

Throughout the school year, write letters to the parents of your students and have the student hand deliver them. Put them in an unsealed envelope addressed to: The Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of (Name of Student). Most likely, the student will read the letter before handing it to the parent or guardian and that's okay.

In the letter, tell the parents how pleased you are to be (student's name) teacher. Then, with honesty and integrity, describe the strengths and positive things you see in that student. Avoid false flattery—you will make a deeper connection with the student and the parents. If the student reads the letter (which they probably will), then they will want their parents to see it. Don't be surprised if you hear back from those parents in a positive way.

11

- 1. INFORMATION:** One of the funniest movies I ever saw.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Share a picture or describe a funny scene from the movie.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Share one of the funniest movies you ever saw and why.

12

- 1. INFORMATION:** Something that has been bothering me that I need to deal with.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Explain.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Share something that has been bothering you that you need to deal with.

13

- 1. INFORMATION:** My favorite book and why.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Show the book or a picture of it.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Share your favorite book and why.

14

- 1. INFORMATION:** A place I would like to visit and why.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Share pictures of that place or a verbal description.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Share a place you would like to visit and why.

15

- 1. INFORMATION:** A close friend and what friendship means to me.
 - 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Share pictures or a memory.
 - 3. INTERACTION:** A close friend and what friendship means to me.
-

Project: Leave the Nest

Often the only interaction a teacher has with his or her class is in the classroom. As you find out about your students' jobs, athletic involvement, club memberships, etc., make a point of occasionally going to their "turf," where they are the focal point, and interacting with them. For example, if you know Jim works at a nearby Village Inn, purposefully eat there when he is on duty. Just make sure you leave a good tip!

If Julie works at the local movie theater, go to a movie when she is there and make a connection. If Ryan is on the golf team, go watch him practice for a while. These encounters can mean a lot to the student, especially away from "the nest."

16

- 1. INFORMATION:** A struggle I went through and am grateful for.
 - 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Describe.
 - 3. INTERACTION:** Share a struggle you went through and are grateful for.
-

17

- 1. INFORMATION:** Something about me you probably don't know.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Describe and illustrate if possible.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Share something about yourself that we probably don't know.

18

- 1. INFORMATION:** My favorite board, video, or card game.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Describe the game and why it is your favorite.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Share your favorite game and why.

19

- 1. INFORMATION:** A trait I admire in others.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Describe the trait and give an example.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Share a trait you admire in others. Describe and give an example.

20

- 1. INFORMATION:** My favorite kind of art.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Show examples.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Share your favorite kind of art.

Project: Test to Music

Some teachers have used this very successful approach during times when the whole class was taking a test. Play soothing music that begins at the start of the testing period and ends when time is up. This can be classical music, mood music, or artists like Enya, who provide a haunting sound. It is better if there are no loud crescendos, heavy bass or drums, or harsh vocals. The students will come to expect the music as a cue to start and stop the testing. Music can also calm them down, making testing easier for them.

21

- 1. INFORMATION:** What integrity means to me.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Share a story (see below) or an example.

Bobby Jones is the only golfer to win the Grand Slam of golf in one calendar year. His accomplishments are legendary, but one story that stands out above all others was something he did in the 1925 U.S. Open. He lost that tournament in a playoff round by one stroke, but the thing every avid golfer will always remember is what he did in the first round on the 11th hole.

Bobby addressed the ball with his club face and then backed off, claiming he had caused the ball to move slightly and that he should be penalized a stroke. None of the fans, the referees, or even Walter Hagen, Bobby's opponent, saw the ball move. But Bobby insisted on the penalty because he believed it did. Without that penalty, he would have won the U.S. Open that year. His act of integrity will be remembered forever.

3. INTERACTION: What does integrity mean to you? Describe someone you know who has integrity.

22

1. INFORMATION: Something I would like to do before I die.

2. ILLUSTRATION: Describe it or show picture.

3. INTERACTION: Share something you would like to do before you die.

23

1. INFORMATION: Something I love about this school.

2. ILLUSTRATION: Describe.

3. INTERACTION: Share something you love about this school.

24

1. INFORMATION: Today, we will discuss quotes from two philosophers.

2. ILLUSTRATION: Read or put the quote on screen:

A famous philosopher by the name of Renee Decartes (pronounced Rahnay Daycart) once said, "I think, therefore I am."

A recent philosopher by the name of Eckhart Tolle said, "No, I am, therefore, I think."

3. INTERACTION: : Discuss which of these two quotes you would agree with and why.

25

1. INFORMATION: How close or how far I live from the school.

2. ILLUSTRATION: Describe how you get to school each day.

3. INTERACTION: How close or how far do you live from the school?

Project: Birthday Celebrations

Whether students are in 3rd or 12th grade, everyone likes to be recognized on their birthday. Find out the birthday of all of your students and write them down on a calendar. The simple act of acknowledging them on their birthday will help them feel more connected in the classroom. Have the whole class sing "Happy Birthday" to the student. This may seem awkward at first, but they will quickly get into it as they realize they too will be the recipient sooner or later.

Mondays are the day to celebrate birthdays that took place on the weekend. For birthdays that fall on a holiday, celebrate them the day after. For birthdays that occur during summer vacation, sprinkle them in on days when no other student is being honored, or pick the day of the month they were born and celebrate that day in a different month. For example, if Joe was born on July 21st, then celebrate his birthday on October 21st.

You can choose other options as well, such as having the whole class sign a birthday card.

26

- 1. INFORMATION:** Something I really regret.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Describe.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Share something you really regret.

27

- 1. INFORMATION:** Something that makes me happy.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Describe or tell a story about it.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Share something that makes you happy.

28

1. **INFORMATION:** My favorite dessert.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Share pictures or describe it.
3. **INTERACTION:** Share what your favorite dessert is.

29

1. **INFORMATION:** Something I am really thankful for.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Description and/or picture.
3. **INTERACTION:** Something I am really thankful for.

30

1. **INFORMATION:** Something I would like to change about our school.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Describe it and give possible remedy.
3. **INTERACTION:** Share something you would like to change about our school.

Project: Integrating Personal Stories in Lessons

As you learn more about your students throughout the year, find ways to integrate parts of their story, or parts of your story, into the lesson plan. For example, if you are teaching on history focusing on World War II or the Vietnam or Korean wars, you might have one of your students talk about their dad's or grandparents' involvement.

In geography, you might point out where someone's ancestors migrated from. The more personal you can make the teaching, the more involved the students will be.

31

- 1. INFORMATION:** Something I wish people knew about me.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Describe or tell a story.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Share something you wish people knew about you.

32

- 1. INFORMATION:** Something I think people misjudge about me.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Describe or tell a story.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Share something you think people misjudge about you.

33

- 1. INFORMATION:** A memory from my past.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Describe or tell a story about it.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Share a memory from your past.

34

- 1. INFORMATION:** What I usually do after school every day.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Describe and/or illustrate it.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Share what you usually do after school every day.

35

- 1. INFORMATION:** The college/university I attended.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Share pictures of the college and you and other students. What college life was like (the edited version!). Why you attended that particular school, etc. Show your diploma and any awards.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Describe which college you would like to attend when you graduate.

Project: Marketing a Friend

This project, geared for high school students, may take up half a day's teaching time, but the results will be well worth it. Break down into teams of three to four students. Have them interview each other and determine a marketing plan to "sell" each of them to the public as "a friend for sale." It could be a plan for a television, radio, or newspaper ad. It can include a jingle, pictures, poem, skit, or objects in the room. Give the students 20 minutes to create their marketing plan and then 10 minutes for the groups to share their ideas with the whole class.

This exercise will help students get to know each other at a much deeper level. They will be motivated to ask questions, and by creating a positive plan for each other, they will end up with a more positive view of each other.

36

- 1. INFORMATION:** The worst physical pain I ever experienced.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Tell a story or illustrate.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Share about the worst physical pain you ever experienced.

37

- 1. INFORMATION:** The best action movie I ever saw.
 - 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Share pictures of the movie and/or description.
 - 3. INTERACTION:** Share the best action movie you ever saw.
-

38

- 1. INFORMATION:** If I could visit with one famous person who affected our world, who would it be?
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** What would you say or want to know from this person?
- 3. INTERACTION:** If you could visit with one famous person who affected our world, who would it be and what would you ask them?

39

- 1. INFORMATION:** My favorite vegetable is _____
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Show a picture and explain what you like about it.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Share what your favorite vegetable is and why.

40

- 1. INFORMATION:** About my brothers and sisters (if none, a good friend).
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Show pictures of you with them and tell a story about them.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Share about your brothers and sisters (if none, a good friend).

Project: Seating Arrangements Matter

Research shows that seating arrangements can enhance, or detract from, the learning process. Students who sit nearest to the teacher are usually more attentive and responsive than those who sit near the back of the classroom (Rennels & Chaudhari, 1988).

Those who sit by windows or doors are the most easily distracted. In fact, one study (Giles, 1982) showed that students in the front, middle, and back rows scored 80%, 71.6%, and 68.1%, respectively, on course exams, whether the seating was voluntary or mandatory! That is an 11.9% average difference between the front and back row test results.

The front row students have advantages in eye contact, hearing, seeing the whiteboard or projections, and fewer distractions between themselves and the teacher.

*In *Awaken the Learner* (Scott & Marzano, 2014, Chapter 5), the authors suggest a variety of seating arrangements for different styles of teaching. For example, circular seating lends itself to group discussion versus row seating, which is geared for lectures.*

Some teachers rotate students so every student ends up sitting in the front, the middle, and the back. However, if your classroom space allows it, one of the optimum seating arrangements is the V-shaped seating that puts all the students in the first 2 rows. It also places their backs to windows and doors, leaving the focus on the teacher in the center of the V. A U-shaped seating arrangement also provides this possibility.

One proven way to increase a low-performing student's learning ability is to move him or her as close as possible to the teacher.

1. INFORMATION: My favorite elementary school teacher.

- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Describe why they were your favorite and show a picture of them if you have one. If not, a picture of you when you were in that grade.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Share about your favorite elementary school teacher.

42

- 1. INFORMATION:** Something I like to collect.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Show pictures of your collection.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Share something you like to collect.

43

- 1. INFORMATION:** Why I believe honesty is important.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Share a story about honesty, or you can use the one below:

From a column in the July 10, 1989, issue of Sports Illustrated magazine.

During a T-ball game in Wellington, Florida, Tanner attempted to tag a player leaving first base. When the umpire called the player out, Tanner immediately informed the umpire that he hadn't managed to tag the runner.

Two weeks later, Tanner encountered the same umpire in another T-ball game. This time, Tanner was playing shortstop and tagged a runner as they approached third base. When the umpire called the player safe, Tanner didn't say a word, but the umpire noticed his surprise at the call.

"Did you tag the runner?" she asked Tanner. When Tanner affirmed that he had, the umpire changed her decision and called the player out. When the coaches and other parents protested, the umpire stood by her decision, informing them that she had learned to trust Tanner because of his honesty.

3. INTERACTION: Why do you believe honesty is important? Share a story about honesty, if you know one.

44

1. INFORMATION: My favorite fruit.

2. ILLUSTRATION: Share a picture of the fruit and why you like it so much.

3. INTERACTION: Share what your favorite fruit is.

45

1. INFORMATION: An injury I experienced and how it affected me.

2. ILLUSTRATION: Share pictures of your cast or scar or explain what happened.

3. INTERACTION: Share about an injury you experienced and how it affected you.

Project: If You Really Knew Me

This is a whole class activity that will take more time than the normal three minutes. Model this activity first by sharing from your heart, beginning with the statement "If you really knew me." The more vulnerable and open you can be, the more open they will be with each other. Share your hopes, dreams, pain, sorrows, disappointments, etc. in a three minute time frame.

Break them down into teams of no less than four and no more than five and give them two minutes each to share "If you really knew me" with each other. Then

allow another three minutes of open discussion within the group. This activity takes approximately 15 minutes. You may then follow the group discussion with open sharing for the whole class. Powerful connections are made through this exercise.

46

- 1. INFORMATION:** An amazing magic trick I once saw.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Describe the trick.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Describe an amazing magic trick you once saw.

47

- 1. INFORMATION:** What I plan to do this weekend.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Explain.
- 3. INTERACTION:** What you plan to do this weekend.

48

- 1. INFORMATION:** Today, we are going to discuss a quote by Henry David Thoreau.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Read or put the quote on screen: "It's not what you look at that matters. It's what you see." –Henry David Thoreau
- 3. INTERACTION:** Discuss what that quote means to you.

49

- 1. INFORMATION:** My favorite toy when I was a kid.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Share a picture of the toy and why you enjoyed it.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Share about your favorite toy when you were younger.

50

- 1. INFORMATION:** If I could be any animal I would be_____.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Share a picture of that animal and explain why.
- 3. INTERACTION:** If you could be any animal what would you be and why?

Project: Outdoor Class

Many students around the world have no classroom to learn in. They sit outdoors under a tree or in a field. They are often exposed to extreme weather during the school year. This exercise will give your students a small taste of what other students around the world experience every day. It may seem a little radical, but we think your students will love it. Be sure to clear it with the principal's office before proceeding.

After greeting them with the 3 Hs, let them know that you are going to take them all outside for class today. Be sure and pick a pleasant day to do this! Bring a number of blankets from home and find a grassy spot to spread them out on, and proceed with the lesson for the day.

30 years from now, students will still remember the "outdoor class."

51

- 1. INFORMATION:** My favorite quote and why.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Share vocally or show a picture of the quote.
- 3. INTERACTION:** What is your favorite quote and why?

52

- 1. INFORMATION:** Something I am proud of myself for accomplishing and why.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Describe the story and/or share pictures.
- 3. INTERACTION:** What are you proud of yourself for accomplishing and why?

53

- 1. INFORMATION:** The best advice I ever received.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Describe the advice and what it meant to you.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Have you ever received good advice? What was it?

54

- 1. INFORMATION:** My favorite superhero and why.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Show pictures/video of the superhero.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Who is your favorite superhero and why?

55

- 1. INFORMATION:** When is my birthday and what was my most memorable birthday and why?
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Describe your birthday and/or show pictures/video.
- 3. INTERACTION:** When is your birthday and what was your most memorable birthday and why?

56

1. **INFORMATION:** A time when I helped someone in need.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Share the story.
3. **INTERACTION:** Share a time when you helped someone in need.

57

1. **INFORMATION:** My favorite Holiday and why.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Describe and show pictures/video of the holiday.
3. **INTERACTION:** What is your favorite holiday and why?

58

1. **INFORMATION:** An embarrassing moment.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Describe what happened (you can make this one humorous).
3. **INTERACTION:** Have you experienced an embarrassing moment? What was it?

59

1. **INFORMATION:** My current car and my dream car.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Describe your dream car and show pictures.
3. **INTERACTION:** What is your dream car and why?

60

1. **INFORMATION:** The worst villain who was an actual person.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Show a picture of that villain and tell a story about them.
3. **INTERACTION:** Talk about a villain that you have heard or read about.

61

1. **INFORMATION:** Something unusual or special I own.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Bring it in or show pictures and describe it.
3. **INTERACTION:** Is there anything unusual or special you own? Share about it.

62

1. **INFORMATION:** Something I am very talented at.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Describe or perform the talent.
3. **INTERACTION:** Do you have any talents? How did you discover that talent?

63

1. **INFORMATION:** Something I want people to remember me by and why.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Describe what it is or share a story/poem about it.
3. **INTERACTION:** What do you want people to remember you by and why?

64

1. **INFORMATION:** If I had one wish what would it be and why?
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Describe your wish and find pictures/video that would describe it.
3. **INTERACTION:** If you had one wish, what would it be and why?

65

1. **INFORMATION:** One of the most dangerous things I ever did.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Describe story.
3. **INTERACTION:** Have you done anything dangerous? What was it?

66

1. **INFORMATION:** My favorite actress and why.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Show video clip/pictures of the actress.
3. **INTERACTION:** Who is your favorite actress and why?

67

1. **INFORMATION:** Something I want to learn.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Describe and show pictures of the activity.
3. **INTERACTION:** What would you like to learn about and why?

68

- 1. INFORMATION:** A time a friend stuck up for me.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Share the story.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Have you ever had a friend stick up for you? Would you stick up for your friends?

69

- 1. INFORMATION:** Someone who has affected my life in a positive way and how.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Describe and show pictures of that person.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Is there someone who has really affected your life in a positive way? How?

70

- 1. INFORMATION:** My favorite room at my house and why.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Share pictures of the room or give a description.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Share about your favorite room at your house and why.

71

1. **INFORMATION:** A time I felt rejected.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Share story.
3. **INTERACTION:** Is there a time you felt rejected? Share.

72

1. **INFORMATION:** Today we are going to discuss a quote from Steven Covey.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Read or put on screen “Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply.” —Stephen R. Covey
3. **INTERACTION:** Discuss this quote and what it means to you

73

1. **INFORMATION:** My favorite subject in school and why.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Describe and show pictures of subject.
3. **INTERACTION:** What’s your favorite subject and why?

74

- 1. INFORMATION:** If I could have one superpower, what would it be and what would I do with it?
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Share pictures of a superhero who has that power.
- 3. INTERACTION:** What superpower would you want and what would you do with it?

75

- 1. INFORMATION:** One of my hobbies and why I enjoy it.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Describe and show pictures/video.
- 3. INTERACTION:** What is one of your hobbies? Why do you enjoy it?

76

- 1. INFORMATION:** My favorite actor and why.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Show pictures/video clip of the actor.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Who is your favorite actor and why?

77

1. **INFORMATION:** My least favorite vegetable and why.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Show pictures and describe what you don't like about it.
3. **INTERACTION:** What is your least favorite vegetable and why?

78

1. **INFORMATION:** Something I am excited about or worried about this week.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Explain.
3. **INTERACTION:** Share something you are excited or worried about this week.

79

1. **INFORMATION:** What does a typical school day look like for me?
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Share about it.
3. **INTERACTION:** What does a typical school day look like for you?

80

1. **INFORMATION:** What I like on my pizza?
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Show pictures of your favorite pizza.
3. **INTERACTION:** What do you like on your pizza?

81

1. **INFORMATION:** My favorite season and why.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Show pictures/video depicting the season.
3. **INTERACTION:** What is your favorite season and why?

82

1. **INFORMATION:** The best amusement park I ever visited.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Show pictures or describe it.
3. **INTERACTION:** Share about the best amusement park you ever visited.

83

1. **INFORMATION:** Something I learned from failure.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Describe what happened.
3. **INTERACTION:** Is there anything you've had to learn through failure?

84

1. **INFORMATION:** The season of year I like the least and why.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Explain or illustrate the season.
3. **INTERACTION:** Share the season of year you like the least and why.

85

1. **INFORMATION:** A movie that made me cry or I thought was sad.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Show a clip from movie.
3. **INTERACTION:** Has there ever been a movie that brought you to tears or that you thought was sad? What was it?

86

- 1. INFORMATION:** A time I felt accepted.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Share your story.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Was there a time when you felt accepted? Share.

87

- 1. INFORMATION:** The strangest thing that's ever happened to me.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Share your story.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Has anything really strange ever happened to you?
What was it?

88

- 1. INFORMATION:** My celebrity crush.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Show pictures/video of that person.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Do you have a celebrity crush? What do you like about that person?

89

1. **INFORMATION:** My all-time favorite song.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Play the song.
3. **INTERACTION:** What's your favorite song? What do you like about it?

90

1. **INFORMATION:** The oldest person I ever met.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Describe that person.
3. **INTERACTION:** Who is the oldest person you ever met.

91

1. **INFORMATION:** What has been going on in my life recently.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Describe.
3. **INTERACTION:** Share what has been going on in your life recently.

92

1. **INFORMATION:** A time I felt betrayed.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Share the story.
3. **INTERACTION:** Have you ever felt betrayed? What did you learn from it?

93

1. **INFORMATION:** My best summer.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Share pictures/videos or stories about it.
3. **INTERACTION:** When was your best summer? What did you do?

94

1. **INFORMATION:** Someone close to me that I lost.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Share a memory or picture of that person.
3. **INTERACTION:** Have you lost anyone close to you? What will you remember from them?

95

1. **INFORMATION:** The best gift I ever received.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Bring in/show pictures or describe the gift.
3. **INTERACTION:** What was the best gift you ever received? When and where did you get it?

96

1. **INFORMATION:** Today we are going to be discussing this quote by Ralph Waldo Emerson
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Read or put on screen: "Our greatest glory is not in never failing, but in rising up every time we fail." —Ralph Waldo Emerson.
3. **INTERACTION:** Discuss. Do you agree with this. What does this mean to you?

97

1. **INFORMATION:** Something I'll never forget.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Share pictures/videos or describe what it was.
3. **INTERACTION:** Is there something that you will never forget? What was it?

98

1. **INFORMATION:** If you had to live in another state which one would it be?
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Describe why.
3. **INTERACTION:** If you had to live in another state which would it be and why?

99

1. **INFORMATION:** New musical artist I've come to like.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Play a song by the artist.
3. **INTERACTION:** Is there any new artists you really enjoy? Who is it and what do you like about them?

100

1. **INFORMATION:** Which President of the U.S., who is no longer alive, would I like to meet and visit with?
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Share a picture of that president and why.
3. **INTERACTION:** Which President of the U.S., who is no longer alive, would you like to meet and visit with? Why?

101

- 1. INFORMATION:** If I could have lived in any era, past or present, when would it be and why.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Show pictures of that era.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Which era would you have liked to live in and why?

102

- 1. INFORMATION:** If I could have invented anything in history, what would it be and why?
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Show pictures or describe it.
- 3. INTERACTION:** What would you like to have invented and why?

103

- 1. INFORMATION:** An area of my life I would like to improve.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Explain why.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Share an area of your life you would like to improve.

104

1. **INFORMATION:** A peaceful place I like to go.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Describe it or show pictures of that place.
3. **INTERACTION:** Is there somewhere you like to go and feel at peace?

105

1. **INFORMATION:** A challenge I had to overcome.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Share your story.
3. **INTERACTION:** What was a challenge you have had to overcome? What did you learn from it?

106

1. **INFORMATION:** A song I wish I had written.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Play the song or share some of the lyrics.
3. **INTERACTION:** What song do you wish you had written?

107

- 1. INFORMATION:** An interest I have that you don't know about.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Describe and show pictures of it.
- 3. INTERACTION:** What's an interest you have that you don't get to talk about a lot? Why do you like it?

108

- 1. INFORMATION:** A time when I got stung by an insect (bee, wasp, scorpion, etc.).
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Share a picture of the insect and tell the story.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Share a time when you got stung by an insect (bee, wasp, scorpion, etc.).

109

- 1. INFORMATION:** A favorite memory with one of my grandparents.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Show picture of that grandparent if you have one or describe.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Share a favorite memory of one of your grandparents.

110

1. **INFORMATION:** What time I normally get up and what time I normally go to bed.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Describe the first thing you do and the last each day.
3. **INTERACTION:** What time you normally get up and what time you normally go to bed.

111

1. **INFORMATION:** My favorite fast food restaurant.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Show a picture of it.
3. **INTERACTION:** What's your favorite fast food restaurant and why?

112

1. **INFORMATION:** My favorite memory with a cousin, aunt, or uncle.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Share a story or show pictures.
3. **INTERACTION:** Share your favorite memory of a cousin, aunt, or uncle.

113

1. **INFORMATION:** My favorite place to shop and what I like about it.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Show a picture of your favorite place.
3. **INTERACTION:** Where do you like to shop and why?

114

1. **INFORMATION:** A favorite memory with my mom or dad.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Show a picture or describe it.
3. **INTERACTION:** Share a favorite memory with your mom or dad.

115

1. **INFORMATION:** The best costume I ever wore.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Describe it or show a picture.
3. **INTERACTION:** What's the best costume you ever wore?

116

1. **INFORMATION:** Something I will never do again and why.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Describe or show pictures.
3. **INTERACTION:** Is there something you've done that you would never do again and why not?

117

1. **INFORMATION:** My favorite place to hang out with friends.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Describe it or show pictures.
3. **INTERACTION:** Where do you like to hang out with your friends? What's it like?

118

1. **INFORMATION:** A new gadget I want.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Describe it and show pictures.
3. **INTERACTION:** Is there a new gadget you would like to have? What does it do?

119

- 1. INFORMATION:** The family member I am closest to.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Show a picture of that person and tell a story.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Who are you the closest to in your family? Share about them.

120

- 1. INFORMATION:** Today, we are going to discuss a quote from Carl Jung, a famous psychiatrist.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Read or show the quote on screen: “Your vision becomes clear when you look inside your heart. Who looks outside, dreams. Who looks inside, awakens.” — Carl Gustav Jung
- 3. INTERACTION:** Discuss what this quote means to you.

121

- 1. INFORMATION:** My earliest memory.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Describe your memory.
- 3. INTERACTION:** What is your earliest memory? Why do you think you remembered it?

122

1. **INFORMATION:** If I could speak another language, what would it be and why?
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Show a picture or phrase in that language.
3. **INTERACTION:** What other language would you like to speak and why?

123

1. **INFORMATION:** If I had \$5,000 dollars to spend with my friends, what would we do with it?
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Describe it and show pictures of what you might do.
3. **INTERACTION:** What would you do with \$5,000 dollars that you had to spend with your friends?

124

1. **INFORMATION:** The sport I would least likely want to play and why.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Show pictures and describe it.
3. **INTERACTION:** Which sport would you least want to do and why?

125

1. **INFORMATION:** The movie I have seen the most.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Show clip or pictures of it.
3. **INTERACTION:** What movie have you seen the most? How many times did you watch it and why?

126

1. **INFORMATION:** An instrument I would like to learn to play.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Show videos or pictures or play a song with the instrument.
3. **INTERACTION:** What instrument would you like to learn to play and why?

127

1. **INFORMATION:** Which would I prefer to be famous as: a musical artist, an actor/actress, or an athlete? Why?
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Describe and show pictures or video of your preference.
3. **INTERACTION:** Which would you prefer to be famous as: a musical artist, an actor/actress, or an athlete? Why?

128

- 1. INFORMATION:** If you had to live in another country, which would you choose and why?
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Show pictures of where you would live.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Which country would you choose to live and why?

129

- 1. INFORMATION:** If I could create a charity of my choice, what would it stand for and why?
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Describe your charity.
- 3. INTERACTION:** What charity would you like to create and why?

130

- 1. INFORMATION:** Which is the most important to me: loyalty, honesty, or trust?
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Explain why.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Which is the most important to you: loyalty, honest, or trust and why?

131

- 1. INFORMATION:** If I could choose any subject to be an expert in, which would I choose?
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Show pictures or explain.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Which subject would you choose and why?

132

- 1. INFORMATION:** Another great memory with a grandparent or grandparents.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Share a picture of you with them or story.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Share another great memory with a grandparent or grandparents.

133

- 1. INFORMATION:** Which do I prefer, Apple or Microsoft and why?
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Explain or show pictures of both.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Which do you like best and why?

134

1. **INFORMATION:** Other places I have lived.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Show pictures or describe it. Share which was your favorite?
3. **INTERACTION:** Have you ever lived anywhere else? Where? Which place did you like the best?

135

1. **INFORMATION:** Am I more outgoing or shy?
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Explain advantages or disadvantages.
3. **INTERACTION:** Which are you? Why do you think that is?

136

1. **INFORMATION:** The craziest storm I have ever experienced.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Describe or show pictures depicting the storm.
3. **INTERACTION:** Have you ever experienced a crazy storm? What happened?

137

1. **INFORMATION:** If I could live forever, would I and why?
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Explain.
3. **INTERACTION:** If you could live forever, would you and why?

138

1. **INFORMATION:** If I hit the lottery, what is the first thing I would do and why?
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Show pictures/video depicting what you would do.
3. **INTERACTION:** What's the first thing you would do? Why would you do that?

139

1. **INFORMATION:** If I could spend the day with one person, who would it be?
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Show a picture of that person and tell why.
3. **INTERACTION:** Who would you like to spend the day with more than anyone?

140

- 1. INFORMATION:** If I could have any animal as a pet, what would I want and why?
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Show pictures of the animal.
- 3. INTERACTION:** What animal would you love to have as a pet?

141

- 1. INFORMATION:** If I could write a book about anything, what would I write about?
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Describe your book and why you wanted to write it.
- 3. INTERACTION:** What would you write about and why?

142

- 1. INFORMATION:** For \$500, would I spend the night in an abandoned, scary house?
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Show a picture of a scary looking house.
- 3. INTERACTION:** For \$500, would you spend the night in an abandoned, scary house?

143

1. **INFORMATION:** Which do I like better, sweet or tart, and why?
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Show pictures of your favorite food of choice.
3. **INTERACTION:** Which do you like better, sweet or tart, and why?

144

1. **INFORMATION:** Today, we are going to discuss a quote from W. Clement Stone.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Read or show the quote on screen: "Like success, failure is many things to many people. With a positive mental attitude, failure is a learning experience, a rung on the ladder, a plateau at which to get your thoughts in order and prepare to try again." —W. Clement Stone
3. **INTERACTION:** Discuss what this quote means to you.

145

1. **INFORMATION:** My favorite current TV show.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Describe why or show a picture of it.
3. **INTERACTION:** What is your favorite TV show?

146

- 1. INFORMATION:** Your definition of bravery.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Describe an act of bravery you saw, heard about, or read about. See the story below as an example:

In 1986, a sudden surge of power during a reactor systems test destroyed Unit 4 of Chernobyl's nuclear power plant, spewing massive amounts of deadly radioactive material into the environment. The death toll was unknown and rumored to be anywhere from a few hundred to a few thousand. While many perished, three clean-up volunteers, Alexi Ananenko, Valeri Bezpoalov, and Boris Baronov, willingly met their fate.

During the well-documented disaster, a pool of water used for emergencies in case of a break in the cooling pumps or steam pipes became flooded with a highly radioactive liquid that was in danger of blowing up. These three men suited up in scuba gear and swam into the radioactive waters of the flooded chamber, knowing full well they would die as a result. They opened up a gate valve, which allowed the contaminated water to drain out.

Days after reaching the surface, all three men succumbed to radiation poisoning and were buried in lead coffins. If not for the bravery of the "Chernobyl Suicide Squad," a thermal explosion would have taken place resulting in unfathomable disaster.

- 3. INTERACTION:** Share your definition of bravery and a story, if you have one.

147

- 1. INFORMATION:** If I could be any athlete, I would be_____.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Share a picture of that athlete and why you would want to be them.
- 3. INTERACTION:** If you could be any athlete, who would you be? Why?

148

- 1. INFORMATION:** Something I am excited for and why.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Share/show pictures of something you are excited about or look forward to.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Is there anything you look forward to? Why?

149

- 1. INFORMATION:** What I like about myself.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Describe or demonstrate what it is you like.
- 3. INTERACTION:** What do you like about yourself?

150

- 1. INFORMATION:** If I could play any professional sport, what would it be and why?
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Show pictures/video of a highlight of your sport.
- 3. INTERACTION:** If you could play any sport professionally, what would you choose and why?

151

- 1. INFORMATION:** Which do I like better, the ocean or the mountains, and why?
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Show pictures/videos of either.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Which do you prefer and why?

152

- 1. INFORMATION:** A recurring or memorable nightmare I had.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Describe your nightmare.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Do you have a recurring nightmare or vivid one you remember? What do you think it means?

153

- 1. INFORMATION:** The scariest movie I have ever seen.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Show pictures or a clip from the movie.
- 3. INTERACTION:** What is the scariest movie you have ever seen?

154

- 1. INFORMATION:** My favorite cartoon as a kid?
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Explain why and/or show pictures.
- 3. INTERACTION:** What was your favorite cartoon and what did you like about it?

155

- 1. INFORMATION:** Something I wish I could change about myself.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Tell a story about that.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Share something you wish you could change about myself.

156

1. **INFORMATION:** Share something about my parent(s).
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Picture of you with your parent(s) and story.
3. **INTERACTION:** Share something about your parent(s).

157

1. **INFORMATION:** Someone I learned to be patient with.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** A personal story of patience.
3. **INTERACTION:** Who have you learned to be patient with?

158

1. **INFORMATION:** A favorite camping or fishing experience.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Tell story about it and/or shares pictures.
3. **INTERACTION:** Share a favorite camping or fishing experience.

159

- 1. INFORMATION:** A time when I felt alone. Discuss the following quote.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Read or put the quote on the screen: "The individual has always had to struggle to keep from being overwhelmed by the tribe. If you try it, you will be lonely often, and sometimes frightened. But no price is too high to pay for the privilege of owning yourself." –Friedrich Nietzsche
- 3. INTERACTION:** Was there a time when you felt alone?

160

- 1. INFORMATION:** What I would like to be if I were not a teacher.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Show pictures of what you would want to be.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Share what you would like to be someday.

161

- 1. INFORMATION:** Something I want you to know about me.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Describe or illustrate it.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Share something you want people to know about you.

162

- 1. INFORMATION:** A time when I turned a bad situation into something good.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** “When life hands you a lemon, turn it into lemonade.”
– Zig Ziglar
- 3. INTERACTION:** Share about a time when you turned a bad situation into something good.

163

- 1. INFORMATION:** A dream or nightmare I once had.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Describe how it made you feel when you woke up.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Share a dream or nightmare you once had.

164

- 1. INFORMATION:** A big disappointment in my life.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Describe it.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Share about a big disappointment in your life.

165

1. **INFORMATION:** I feel happy when _____.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Describe.
3. **INTERACTION:** Share when you feel happy.

166

1. **INFORMATION:** Let's discuss this great quote from Eleanor Roosevelt.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Read or put the quote on the screen: "Great minds discuss ideas; average minds discuss events; small minds discuss people." – Eleanor Roosevelt
3. **INTERACTION:** Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?

167

1. **INFORMATION:** A time when I lost something of value.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Describe what it was, how you felt, and what you did.
3. **INTERACTION:** Share about a time when you lost something of value.

168

- 1. INFORMATION:** The most beautiful place I have ever visited.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Show a picture and/or describe it.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Share the most beautiful place you ever visited.

169

- 1. INFORMATION:** Which would I choose in cool weather - a jacket or a sweater?
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Explain why.
- 3. INTERACTION:** Which would you choose in cool weather - a jacket or a sweater?

170

- 1. INFORMATION:** Let's discuss this quote from Rachel Scott.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Read or put the quote on the screen: "Don't let your character change color with your environment. Find out who you are and let it stay its true color." – Rachel Scott

3. INTERACTION: What does this quote mean to you?

171

1. INFORMATION: My favorite story from history.

2. ILLUSTRATION: Share pictures and story.

3. INTERACTION: What's your favorite story from history?

172

1. INFORMATION: Let's discuss this quote from Rachel Scott.

2. ILLUSTRATION: Read or put the quote on the screen: "Glory only comes to those who dare to dream. How many of us know what we really want and go after it? How many of us have enough trust, strength, and faith to believe that we could do the impossible?" – Rachel Scott

3. INTERACTION: Discuss what this quote means to you.

173

1. INFORMATION: A favorite memory with a friend.

2. ILLUSTRATION: Show a picture of you and your friend or tell a story.

3. INTERACTION: Share a favorite memory with a friend.

174

1. **INFORMATION:** Something that really annoys me.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Show a picture or tell a story about it.
3. **INTERACTION:** What is something that really annoys you?

175

1. **INFORMATION:** Things I plan on doing this summer.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Show pictures or elaborate.
3. **INTERACTION:** What do you plan on doing this summer?

176

1. **INFORMATION:** Something I really loved about this class this year.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Show pictures or elaborate on it.
3. **INTERACTION:** What did you really love about this class this year?

177

1. **INFORMATION:** What I am going to miss most from this class.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Show pictures or elaborate on it.
3. **INTERACTION:** What are you going to miss most from this class?

178

1. **INFORMATION:** What my pet(s) likes to do.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Show pictures of pet(s).
3. **INTERACTION:** What do your pet(s) likes to do?

179

1. **INFORMATION:** Another family memory.
2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Share pictures or a story.
1. **INFORMATION:** Share another family memory.

180

- 1. INFORMATION:** Say “goodbye” to your class in a unique way from your heart and then discuss the following quote from Trey Parker.
- 2. ILLUSTRATION:** Read or put the quote up on screen: “Saying goodbye doesn’t mean anything. It’s the time we spent together that matters, not how we left it.” – Trey Parker.
- 3. INTERACTION:** As a whole group, allow each student to say goodbye to the class in their own way.

Supplement

Rachel's father, Darrell Scott, wrote all of the following poems. Teachers from all over the nation use them as discussion pieces. They are intended to provoke interactive discussions for the whole class.

Dare I Let My Drawbridge Down?

Words, like arrows, pierce my soul, words that tear me down
Joking, insults, snide remarks, flying all around

Hiding in my castle walls, feeling isolated
Like a prisoner locked away, lonely and deflated

Texting, gossip, cyber pain, catapults I fear
Flung from unexpected places, when there's no one near

So I raise my drawbridge up, high above the moat
Meanwhile I am going down, just like a sinking boat

When suddenly each one of you, arrive outside my castle
All of us with hurt and pain, we're weary from life's hassle

Reaching out with trembling hearts and learning how to cope
Seeing through each others eyes with promises of hope

I yearn to leave these walls of stone, but all of that depends
On whether I can trust once more, my family and my friends

So can you help me find the way that leads to stable ground?
And dare I trust, yet once again - - - to let my drawbridge down?

The SHADOW and the MIRROR

Though I'm a little overweight, my shadow's good to me
'Cause early in the morning hours, it's so tall and thin, you see

It changes shapes throughout the day, this shadowy protrusion
But now and then, when it is thin — I love this kind illusion

My mirror on the other hand, reveals reality
Reflecting just exactly what I didn't want to see!

So do I want to know what's real? Or do I choose the fake?
Illusion is the choice, I fear, that most will often take

So some will choose to fill their days, surrounded by illusion
And then they wonder why they live, a life of such confusion!

Renew Your View

A wise old man once said to me
"Don't trust the things your eyes can see
For if you do, you'll know confusion
Always judging by illusion

Don't look at - - see through my friend
Beyond the frown, the sneer, the grin
Peer deep into the living soul
Where beauty, wonders will unfold

Fear and judgment fall apart
When our view is from the heart
So don't look at, adjust your view
And focus deeper, seeing through

Et Tu?

Last week in Mrs. Wilson's class we learned of Julius Caesar,
The story was quite boring, but I read it just to please her
It told about a man betrayed by those who knew him well
They stabbed him in the back and then he died, so goes the tale

Now Marcus Brutus was a man who Caesar called his friend
But when the stabbing started, there was Brutus joining in
And Caesar with his dying breath, would slowly turn his way
He looked at him with words so grim, and said, "Et Tu Brute"?

The story didn't mean too much until today at school
When I was shoved and yelled at, and was called a brainless fool
I thought that you and I were close, but when they bullied me
You stood there just pretending that you didn't even see

I thought that you and I were friends, but when you saw my fear
You joined in with the others, as you stood there with a sneer
And then I knew how Caesar felt when Brutus stabbed him too
The words that hurt the deepest, were the ones that came from you

In the Quiet

In the quiet, I find peace, Where the outside noises cease

When my mind has settled down, and my thoughts no longer race

In the chambers of my spirit, I have found a secret place

There the unseen things embrace us, the invisible that's real

And we enjoy the treasures, that activity would steal

Hear the whisper of the poets, who have beckoned us to know

Of that inner sanctuary, where we seldom ever go

In the quiet of our being, creativity is born

And it rises to the surface, to a world that's hurt and torn

Deep within me, love replaces, all the anger and the fear

In the stillness is a knowing, who I am and why I'm here



Don't Judge the Cover

Too often we evaluate another human being
Because of what they wear or say, or what we think we're seeing
We criticize the words they speak and judge the things they do
And never seem to take the time to hear their point of view

For if we did, then we might find a person just like us
Someone that we could call a friend, or even come to trust
That someone hidden by their skin deserves a deeper look
So please don't judge a cover friend, until you've read the book

Listen

Have you ever shared your feelings
To a friend whose eyes were glazed
And you knew she wasn't listening
'Cause her mind was in a haze

She was waiting till you finished
Just ignoring every word
Unconcerned with your opinions
She just wanted to be heard

Let her rudeness be a lesson
Others think that you are smart
When they have your full attention
And you're listening from the heart

Just one mouth is all we're given
But two ears are also there
So it seems that we should listen
Twice as much as we should share

There Goes the Rose

If the petals told the prickly thorns

“You’re ugly, dull, and plain”

And if the thorns should answer back

“We’re sharp, while you’re just vain”

And if they both should tell the stem

“Your view is just too straight

You have no personality

So boring is your fate”

And if the stem should tell the leaves

“You’re always wearing green

You’re using me to just hang out”

Now wouldn’t that be mean?

And if the leaves should tell the roots

“You’re stuck beneath the ground

Invisible, and useless

And you never make a sound”

And if their friendships fell apart

Then everybody knows

Their awful fight would seal their plight

And there would be - - no rose!

Aimless Path

If you don't know where you're going

Any path will take you there

You will wander in the darkness

Of frustration and despair

In the quiet, learn to listen

You will find your proper course

In the stillness of your being

Hear the wisdom from the source

Cancel all the noise and clamor

Hear the whisper of the wind

For the path to true fulfillment

Is the path that lies within

Beauty and Ugly

Beauty and Ugly went out for a swim
They put all their clothes on a low hanging limb
Soon Ugly climbed out (he was ready for bed)
He reached for his clothes but grabbed Beauty's instead
When Beauty got out, she had nothing to wear
So she grabbed Ugly's clothes that were still hanging there
Now Beauty is hidden by Ugly's disguise
And Ugly's attractive to gullible eyes
So Ugly gets praised, and poor Beauty abused
And too many times, people get them confused
'Cause Ugly looks good 'till he's fully exposed
And Beauty is often disguised by her clothes

A Seed Succeeds

A flower seed is small indeed

There's nothing much to see

It tumbles down – upon the ground

Beneath a shrub or tree

But deep inside – there does reside

A flower - - - unassuming

That in the spring, will do its thing

And slowly start a-blooming!

It first must lie there in the ground

Invisible awhile

Until the sun invites it out

And greets it with a smile

With culture right, and climate bright

That shell will slowly break

And life within, will now ascend

A flower will awake

Emerging slow, that plant will grow

And everybody knows

That from that seed, the life indeed

Will thrill us - - as a rose

Sticky Pals

Both postage stamps and envelopes

Are really good at sticking

They never shirk their postal work

Although they take a licking

And once they're licked – they still persist

Through any kind of weather

They reach their goal – through heat and cold

If they just stick together!

Old Folks Talk

Can a nose really run

And can time really fly?

Can our feet really sleep

And can wind really die?

Does a cat have nine lives

And can fear make you melt?

And do old folks believe

All the things that they've telt?

Duel Disguises

Emerging from our common source

We started down this human course

Until illusion blocked our way

And ego taught us what to say

With words like “you” and “them” and “me”

We lost our true identity

And blinded by our selfish pride

We choked the peace we had inside

So separated from our source

We lived by cunning, wit, and force

Until we came to realize

The emptiness of our disguise

But through humility and grace

We traveled to that quiet place

Of peace, and love, and harmony

For all of us are one, you see

We ceased from treating others wrong

Our uni - verse became one - song

No longer seeing “her” or “him”

‘Cause “they” are “us” disguised as “them!”

Twinkle, Twinkle

Twinkle, twinkle, little star
Now I know just what you are
All the awe and wonder's gone
Years have passed, and I am grown

When I see you in the sky
I'm no longer asking "Why?"
'Cause I learned in science class
You're composed of fire and gas

Old Books

They're pages are tattered, they're covers are dusty
They've yellowed with age and they sometimes smell musty
They've served, oh so many, and all through the years
They've challenged us, humored us, brought us to tears

Their authors are gone but their words still inspire
They prompt us to action and help us acquire
The wisdom of prophets, the knowledge of ages
By reading their words, we can all become sages!

But now they are threatened, and I greatly fear
That if we're not careful, they'll all disappear
The web has become an incredible crook
It's stolen the pleasure of reading a book!

Memory Lanes And Future Paths

Memory lanes and future paths that steal my thoughts away

Sounding so romantic, but distracting from today

Endless past that lies behind with laughter, pain, and tears

Winding road that lies ahead with anxious hopes and fears

Past and future, thieves of now, causing me to see

Not what is, but what has been, and what is soon to be

Playgrounds of a restless mind, thoughts that never cease

Past and future tantalize, but never bring me peace

“Oh if only,” “How I wish,” deep regret and yearning

Always seeking after truth, but somehow never learning

Searching past and future for identity and pride

While the answer waits for us, hidden deep inside

Not aware of present things that often I would miss

By dwelling in a memory, or in thoughts of future bliss

Letting go of both I find, such beauty HERE and NOW

Living in Awareness as each moment shows me how

You Can't Glue Wings On a Caterpillar

You can't glue wings on a caterpillar
And you can't teach it how to fly
You can't make a tadpole learn to croak
Or to leapfrog to the sky

But deep inside, there does reside
A dream that will not die
That tadpole will become a frog
That worm - - a butterfly

You're destined to become the person
You were meant to be
Just let it all unfold, my friend
And someday you will see

That built into your DNA
Is all you need, and more
To live a life of meaning
That will open every door

It's not about the things we do
Or the people we may know
And it's not about the fame we gain
Or the trophies we may show

But deep within a call ascends
A voice that can't be stilled
It beckons us to spread our wings
And live a life fulfilled

Seed Thoughts

A little seed fell in the ground beneath a massive tree
Someday, it mused, when I grow up, I wonder what I'll be
And so it lay there in the dirt, just dreaming in the gloom
And wondering what it would be when it began to bloom

It thought awhile and with a smile it analyzed the rose,
"It comes in different colors, and it's pretty I suppose,
But thorns are there and I declare, there seems to be a lot
So when it comes to roses, well, I think I'd rather not"

"The daisy seems quite happy as it wiggles in the grass
But yellow's not my color, so I think I'll let it pass
The lily is a noble plant, but just too white, you see
It's not the kind of flower I would really like to be"

It lay there in its bed of dirt and spent each passing hour
Just judging and eliminating each and every flower
And so it analyzed them all, this criticizing seed
Until it woke one summer day, a scraggly bitterweed!



Determination

Set your goals and never quit, I promise, you'll succeed
'Cause it's the giver-uppers who will always be in need

If you can be determined in the things that you pursue
Then you will be successful all your life, with what you do

Obstacles get in the way that you will learn to beat
While all the giver-uppers quit and go down in defeat!

Hold fast to all your dreams and plans no matter what unfolds
And you will be a champion as you realize your goals!



Champions

You were one of many millions
Striving for a single goal
The first act of your existence
To become a living soul

From the start you were a winner
As the masses surged ahead
Only you would have a future
All the others would be dead

So the spark of life ignited
As the sperm and egg embraced
And another mighty champion
Now had joined the human race

There's a purpose to your being
There's a call to destiny
You were skillfully created
To be all you're meant to be

So when life seems disappointing
And you're tempted to lose heart
You can look back and remember
"I'm a champion, from the start!"



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