

Table of Contents

25 pages of Lessons, Activities, Thinksheets,
and Discussion templates to kick off **2025!**

Featuring some of our favorites from 2024

Page(s)

1 - 2	Thinksheet: Getting myself Ready for _____(event)
3	Strategy Card: Asking for Help
4 - 5	Thinksheet & Infographic: 3 Parts of Play
6	Lesson & Discussion Template: 5 Steps to Getting Things Done
7	Thinksheet and Discussion Template: How to Solve Problems Before (or After)
8 - 12	Activities and Thinksheets: Thanks to Who? Thanks to You!
13 - 14	Thinksheets: The Social Risk Scale [blank and filled out]
15	Discussion Template/Thinksheet: I Don't Care Scale
16 - 17	Lesson and Thinksheet: The Direction of Reflection – Checking in on ME
18 - 19	Thinksheet(s): Social Detective Log
20	Superflex Story and Thinksheet: What is a Chore?
21 - 22	Thinksheet: What is the Group Plan? Make a Smart Guess [blank and filled out]
23	Activity or Game: Hooray and Oh No!
24 - 25	Activity or Game: Two Truths and a Trick

Getting myself ready for:



What will the place look like?

Have I been there before?

What do I remember?

Will there be special items or decorations to go with the celebration?



Who will be there?

What will people be doing?

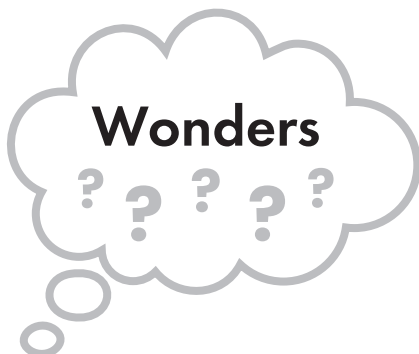
Who can help me?



What do I think the group plan will be?

When I've been there before...

The plan last time...



What are my questions?

What do I want to know?

Helping Myself to Feel More Comfortable

What do I know? What do I need to know? What can I do to find out what I need to know?

.....



Thinking about a situation *before* it happens can help to create a mental blueprint so a person has a better idea of what they can expect. Planning for the unknown can also help people to feel more comfortable and even think about strategies they might use to help them meet their goals for the situation. You can start planning for the unknown by thinking about what is known or what you already know.



What do you already know?

Consider the questions below to think about the situation (Place? + People? + What's happening?)

.....

Where will you be?

- Have you been there before?
- Have you been somewhere similar?
- What do you already know about the place?
- What can you guess based on similar experiences?

Who will be there?

- Who will you be with?
- Who do you know?
- What do you already know about the people that will be there?

What will people be doing?

- What is your goal for the situation?
 - What are people's goals? (hanging out, waiting in line to check out library books, eating lunch, watching a movie, etc.)
 - What or who will people be thinking about?
 - Where will they have their bodies?
 - What will they be doing? (standing in a line, eating, sitting in small groups, etc.)
 - What will people be talking about?
-

What do you still need to know?

If you don't know the answers to the questions that would help you feel more comfortable, you may need more information. What information do you still need?

.....

What can you do to find out what you need to know?

Where can you go for the information you need? Is there somewhere you can find the information? (posted online, in a book, on a class website, etc.) Who can you ask for support or information? Remember, most people like to help others!

.....



What is your plan to get the information you need?



If you can figure out some of the information above, you will likely have a better idea about what is happening around you or what you may encounter in an upcoming situation. This can help you anticipate more about the situation and what your choices are within it. And the more information you have about something, likely the more comfortable you will feel!

Asking for Help Strategy Card

Asking for help requires self-awareness
of one's own perspective taking

When students notice that other kids understand
something they don't — it's a good time to ask for help

We started putting simple strategies on index cards
and here's one your student can use to ask for help

Learn more:

www.socialthinking.com/webinar-perspective-taking

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I NEED HELP!

On **PART** of it. On **MOST** of it. On **ALL** of it.

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Name: _____

Date: _____

Talking About The Three Parts of Play/Hanging Out in My Own Words

Chapter 11: Thinksheet 3

Page 1 of 3



For the following activities, describe in your own words what set up, doing the activity/hanging out, and clean up would be.

ACTIVITY: PLAYING CATCH DURING RECESS AT SCHOOL

Set up: _____

Activity: _____

Clean up: _____

ACTIVITY: WATCHING A MOVIE WITH A FRIEND

Set up: _____

Activity: _____

Clean up: _____

Remember: There are 3 Parts of Play

1) Setting up play

MAKE A PLAN.

Think about possible problems.

Get everything we need.



2) Playing/Doing

PLAY THE GAME/DO THE ACTIVITY!

Pause... How are things going?

What am I noticing?

Am I feeling comfortable?

Am I moving toward my goal? Need a strategy?

Anything I might change?



3) Cleaning up

REFLECT! HOW DID IT GO?



Put all the things away.



5 Steps to Getting Things Done (all involve your executive functions)

1. Develop a goal:

Something you think about accomplishing

Requires you to imagine your future as being different from today.

2. Develop your action plans:

Have a series of sequenced or parallel action plans you plan to do across a period of time.

3. What's your plan to carry out your action plans?

4. Self-regulate your behavior and emotions to carry out the action plans to accomplish your goal – what do you need to do to get yourself in motion?

- **When will you get started?**
- **How will you encourage yourself to keep going?**
- **How will you know you are succeeding?**

5. Use flexible thinking across all steps! Do you need to modify any part of the above now that you've thought through it?

What type of voice do you use inside your head to help guide you through this process?

Inner Coach Voice: encourages you to make a plan, work through it, focus on the positive emotions and thoughts you will experience when you accomplish the goal. When something is hard to do, know you can do it and that people will help you get through it if you ask. Remember, it's good to ask for help!

Self-Defeater Voice and Activities: This voice makes you feel you can't, won't or should not do something. Self-defeating activities are things you choose to do with your time instead of doing what you should be doing to help you accomplish your goal. For example, knowing you should be working on your long-term assignment, but you choose to play video games instead.

How to Solve Social Problems Before (or After) They Become Problems

1. How do I know I have a problem? _____
2. What's the problem? _____
3. Is this problem one I need to help solve? _____
4. Think flexibly: what are some good and not-so-good choices to solve the problem?

Choice 1 (not-so-good choice)	Choice 2 (good choice)	Choice 3 (good choice)
Example: Do nothing to address the problem		
↓	↓	↓

5. Make smart guesses: what's the likely consequence for each choice?

Consequence for Choice 1	Consequence for Choice 2	Consequence for Choice 3
↓	↓	↓

6. List which choice number(s) I will make based on the desired consequence. _____
7. Get started: when will I start to apply my choices to help solve my problem? _____
8. Who do I need to talk to help solve this problem? _____
9. When and where will I talk to them? When? _____ Where? _____
10. What will I say to help others understand or discuss the problem in a way that likely makes them feel OK?

11. I am likely to feel some stress or anxiety talking to this person. What's my strategy for managing my anxiety?

12. Once I've worked to resolve my problem, evaluate my success. Is the problem feeling less "big"?

If yes, great job! If no, re-evaluate my choices/consequences. Figure out what I need to do differently and then try again!

Activity 1: Thanks to Who? Thanks to You!

1. Start your morning meetings with 1–2 minutes of telling students about a moment where someone did something that was helpful to you. Or tell about something that just made your day a little easier. Write this simple phrase on the board/smartboard/digital platform:

Thanks to _____ for _____. It made _____.

Make sure to give grown-up examples like these or from your own life:

- **Thanks to** Principal Dorsey **for** reading *the group plan* and helping with student drop off this morning! **It made** things move so much faster.
- **Thanks to** the whole class **for** getting their *bodies into the group*. **It made** it easy for me to teach the lesson.

Next, give kid examples too:

- **Thanks to** my Nana **for** making a *smart guess* about which cereal I liked. **It made** me feel special.
- **Thanks to** Ms. Alvarez **for** helping build my math *smarts*. **It made** me understand math better so I can help other kids too.
- **Thanks to** Riley **for** helping me understand the game instructions. **It made** me a *flexible thinker* and player.

Note: Some kids might have a harder time thinking of what to draw or write or talk about for this activity. Consider starting with pets, stuffed animals, or characters in books. For example: Thanks to my dog Amber for sitting with me during the storm. It made me feel safe.

2. Next use the free printable (or make your own) and cut into pieces.
3. Get a cardboard box with a lid or make a slit in a box and label it the GREAT GRATEFUL CRATE or THANKFUL THOUGHTS or any other catchy phrase.
4. Have each student fill a **Thanks to**___ slip by writing, drawing a picture, telling another person a story. Drop all of the slips into the box.
5. Leave a stack of **Thanks to**___ slips and encourage students to fill out a slip once a day OR set aside a few minutes for discussions about social interactions during recess. Emphasize times where students helped one another, included someone in play, took time to clean up, etc. Ask students to reflect on their experiences—what felt good, who helped them, and how they helped others to have fun.
6. Pull and read or show 5–10 **Thanks to**___ slips every Friday.
7. Make a **We Are Grateful** bulletin board or collage and then share with other classes or groups or families. Note: This can also be done digitally with online teaching or with digital tools.

Activity 2: Gratitude Challenges to Support Learning about ALL Perspectives

Rally your class to enter into a Playground or Classroom Gratitude Challenge with other classrooms or grades!

- Start by giving students concrete examples of how their words and actions can positively affect others, and make sure to emphasize the focus is on understanding others' feelings and viewpoints. In fact, understanding someone very different from you should be emphasized as part of the process.
- Give concrete examples of how words and actions can positively affect peers. For example, after a group or pair project is completed, have students think about and reflect on how their partner or peers helped. You can use the downloadable from Activity 1 as a starting point for how a person might state their gratitude.
 - Encourage students to be specific about what they appreciated. You can use the downloadable from Activity 1 as a starting point for this as well. For example, "Thanks to Oliver for asking me if I wanted to play too. It made me want to play again."
 - Note: Some kids may say they appreciated a peer for giving them space and time to think or allowed them to participate differently from the rest of the group. There is no right or wrong answer here! The point is for kids to notice and show appreciation.
- Next, organize a playground (or library or hallway) challenge that encourages students to perform purposeful (as opposed to random) acts of kindness or gratitude. Consider developing a *Helpful Heroes* checklist where classrooms can check off acts like sharing equipment, including a peer who may be anxious or reticent to participate, offering help, consoling one another, coaching each other, complimenting a peer, etc.
- Buddy systems are a great way to practice helping and receiving help. Encourage kids to think about and tell that they are grateful for each other's time, companionship, ideas, help, etc.
- **Teach advocacy!** One of the things we may forget to do is teach students that they can share what is helpful or not for them. It's never too soon to teach kids to speak up about what works for them!

Gratitude Challenge(s) Checklist example

	Playground Challenge:	Done
Kick-off	<p>Introduce the challenge to students.</p> <p>Discuss how words and actions can positively impact others and the importance of understanding different perspectives (e.g., some kids like quiet games and others like loud games; it's easy for some kids to go last and harder for others; most of us like it when someone helps us if we don't understand the rules, etc.).</p>	
Give Concrete Examples	<p>Share specific examples of actions that support others.</p> <p>Ask students to brainstorm their own ideas.</p>	
Buddy System	<p>Pair students to encourage support and gratitude for one another.</p> <p>Remember to encourage advocacy for what the buddy can do or say to support them.</p>	
Set Up	<p>Organize purposeful acts of kindness during recess, such as sharing equipment, including others, or helping classmates.</p>	
Reflect and Share	<p>After completing group projects, ask students to tell, draw, or show gratitude for someone who was helpful.</p> <p>Give time for students to share their experiences about their acts of gratitude and kindness.</p> <p>Create a gratitude wall or collage and invite other classes or students to view.</p>	
Involve Parents and Caregivers	<p>Send home information about the challenge and encourage them to support the theme of gratitude at home.</p> <p>Have kids think about and express gratitude to family members too!</p>	
	Library Challenge	
Kick-off		
Give Concrete Examples		
Buddy System		
Set Up		
Reflect and Share		
Involve Parents and Caregivers		

Thanks to Who? Thanks to You!

Write, draw, or tell about a time when you were grateful for something someone said or did.



Thanks to...

for...

It made...

Thanks to...

for...

It made...

Thanks to...

for...

It made...

Thanks to...

for...

It made...

Thanks to Who? Thanks to You!

Write, draw, or tell about a time when you were grateful for something someone said or did.



Thanks to...

for...

It made...

Thanks to...

for...

It made...

Name _____

Date _____

The Social Risk Scale

Consider what you've said or done in the past,
or are considering saying or doing in the future.

Indicate your perceived level of social risk for each of these actions.

High Risk



Moderate Risk



Low Risk



Name T.A.G

Date X/X/XXXX

The Social Risk Scale

Consider behaviors or types of statements you have said or done in the past,
or are considering saying or doing in the future,
and indicate what you perceive as their level of social risk.

There is no right or wrong answer.

High Risk

- I tell the class the teacher doesn't know what he's doing, while he's teaching a math concept.

- I start a fist fight in school.
- A classmate is presenting their project and I put my head on my desk and say out loud "so boring!!"

- I'm not supposed to play video games until my homework is done, but I play them anyway.

Moderate Risk

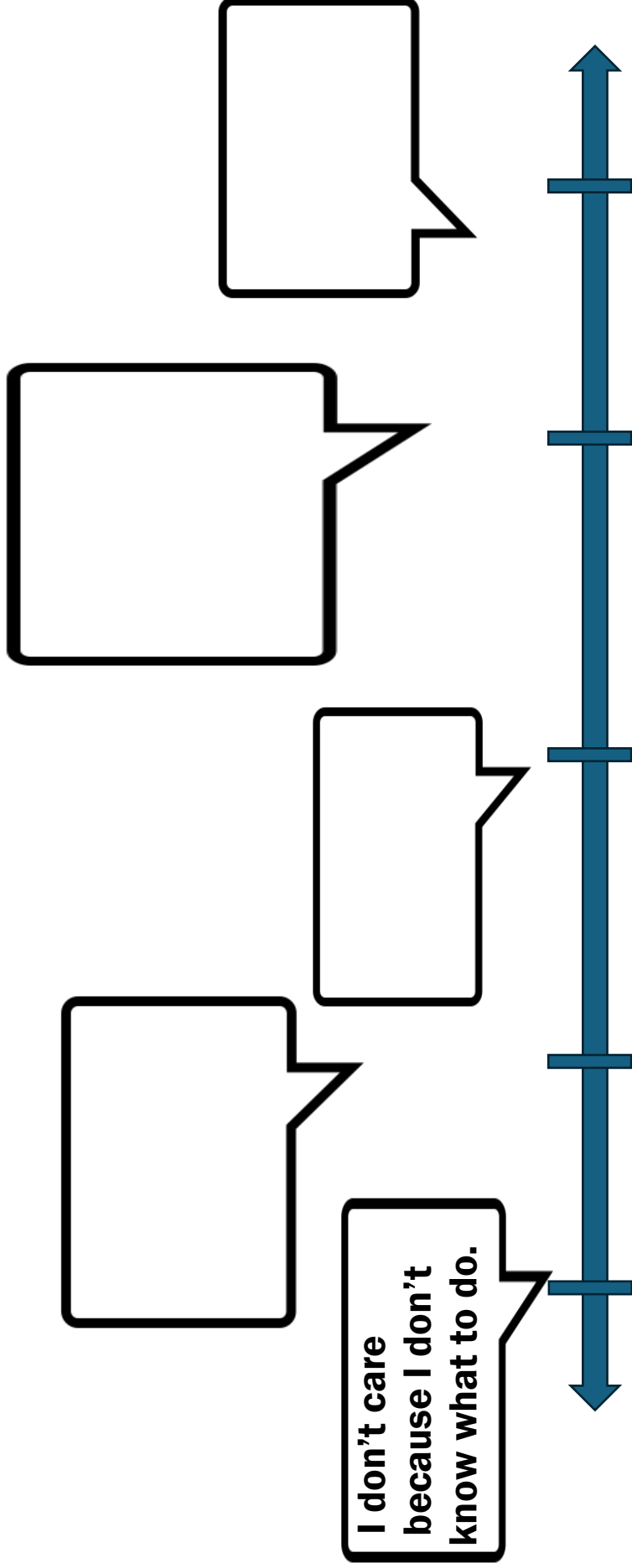
- At a family dinner, I tell my sibling how stupid they are knowing my parents will punish me.
- My friends and I make fun of each other as we hangout.
- Two friends are talking, and I join their group.

- As I work on a project with 3 peers, I do my part even though I'm upset with them, and I tell them I don't like working with them.
- I initiate raising my hand & say why I disagree with the teacher.
- I don't go out with my friends so I can study for a test.

Low Risk

I Don't Care

A scale that gets that “you don't care.”



The Direction of Reflection: Checking In on Me

1. Introduce the visual below and begin by pointing to the middle (Me). Remind students the activity is all about them and their thoughts, feelings, needs, wants, and what helps or gets in the way.
2. Have them start in the middle with, “*What am I thinking about right now?*” Note: Some students might start with “*What am I feeling right now?*” As a reminder, naming how they are feeling can be harder. If the student struggles to name a thought or a feeling, then this is probably not a good fit for teaching this concept.
3. Next, the direction of the reflection can take any path within the circle or on any point. It doesn’t have to include every icon, and you might end up generating your own discussion questions or icons from this exercise or lesson.

In the example below, the student responded by saying, “*I’m nervous about my 1st period quiz.*”



I’m nervous about my 1st period quiz.

So now the direction of the reflection, in this case, progressed in the following manner.

- What about my energy level? Am I tired or charged? *I’m ok.*
- What’s going on with my body? Am I hungry or thirsty? *I’m ok.*
- Do I need more information about the quiz? How would I get it?
 - *Maybe. I could ask my teacher.*
- Am I getting stuck on remembering how I did on the past quiz?
 - *Yes, I failed the last quiz because it was too long!*
- How am I feeling?
 - *I don’t know how long it will be, so I guess that’s why I’m nervous.*
- What’s my goal? Am I making gains or stuck?
 - *Pass the quiz. Feel ok about how I did.*

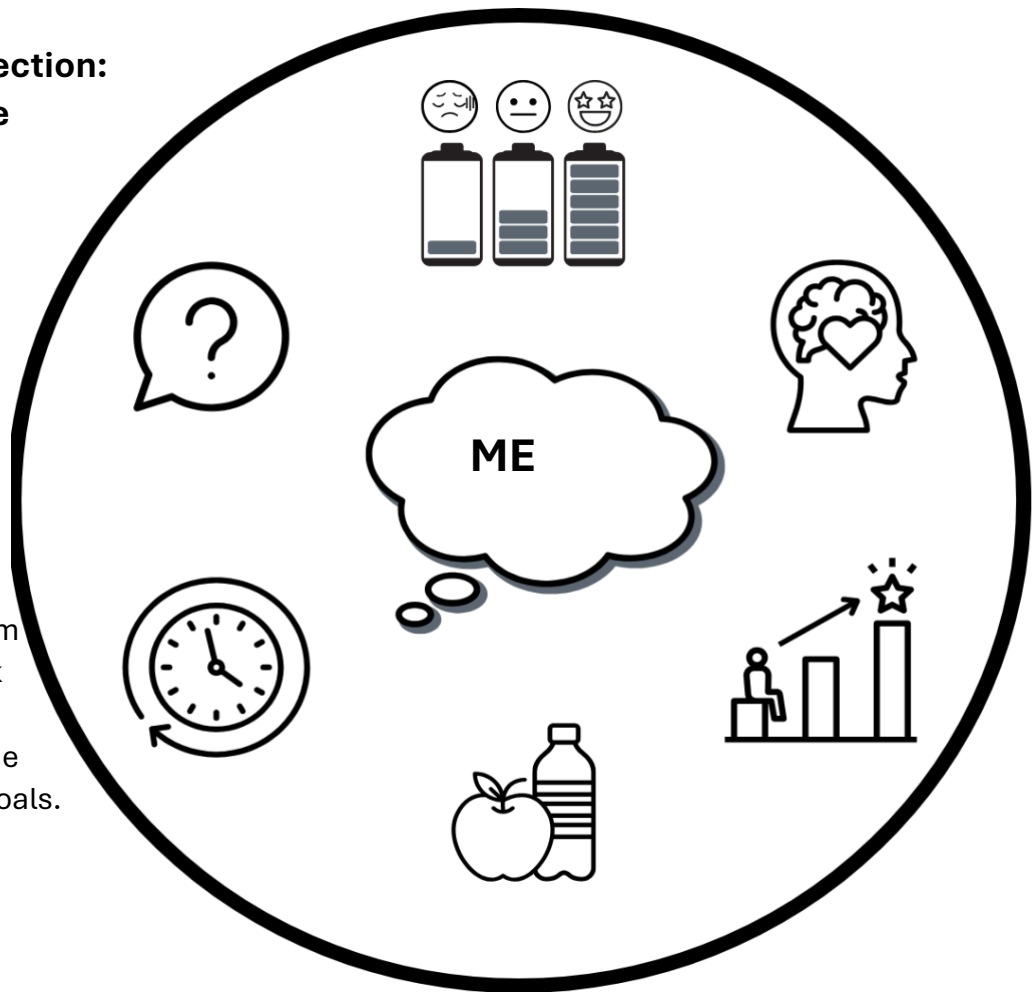
There is no right or wrong way to move around the circle and not all components may be relevant. But some students might need a more linear way of thinking about this process because the circle is just too open-ended. For these cases, we’ve provided a question grid to guide reflection or help with discussions. When using either tool, always consider which reflection component is the most relevant for that person, whether it makes sense to ask questions or make comments, and how long to spend talking about each.

**My Reflection Direction:
Checking In on Me**







Start in the middle.
Ask yourself,
“What am I thinking
about?”

Progress in any
order around the
circle.

Use the questions from
the grid below to think
about what might be
helping or getting in the
way of meeting your goals.



Me: What am I thinking about right now?

	Am I rested? Energized? Tired?
	How am I feeling?
	Am I hungry or thirsty?
	Do I need help or more information?
	Am I thinking about something that happened earlier? Going to happen later?
	What is my goal? What do I want? What do I need?

Next steps?

Social Detective Log

Gather Clues to Make a Smart Guess



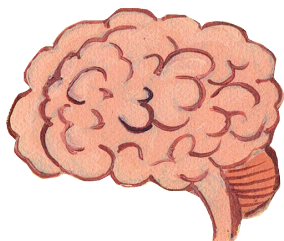
A social detective uses their brain, eyes, and ears to gather clues about others and make SMART GUESSES about what they are thinking and feeling.

Sometimes people follow their own plans, but often they make group plans around things people enjoy thinking about and doing. Noticing what is going on around us and noticing things about others help us figure out what someone might want to do for fun or when we spend time together.

This Social Detective Log can help! Below are some ideas for making observations or gathering clues about others. Add up the clues you gather to help you make smart guesses about them!

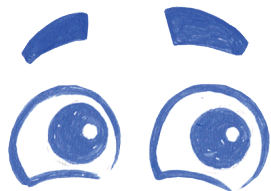
Let's think about the different types of clues we can gather to help us figure out what the people in our families like to think about and do.

Brain



We use our BRAIN to think about others. We can use our brain to remember things about people, such as what they like and what they don't like. If you remember that your family member told you they really liked something, that's a clue that will help you figure out what they might like to do together.

Eyes



We can use our EYES to think about others. We can notice what they are doing at different times of the day. If we see they are watching a show or playing a game, then that's a clue that what they are watching or doing is something they like!

Ears



We can use our EARS to listen to others. If you notice that a family member talks a lot about something, that could mean that they really like it! That's a clue that will help you figure out what they might like to do together. Ask wonder questions to help you gather even more clues from what you hear.

Social Detective Log



Social Detective's Name:

Who I'm Gathering Clues About:

What videos, TV shows, or movies do they watch?	
What activity do they do after work or school?	
What is a snack they like?	
What music do they listen to?	

What are some colors they like?	
What book are they reading?	
What video game, iPad or board game do they like to play?	

Smart guesses about what they might like to do:

What is a Chore?

Citizens are important to any town, and social thinking citizens work hard to help! One thing all citizens expect each other to do is called chores. A chore is a routine or a task




you regularly do as part of taking care of yourself, so others don't have to do these things for you. We all have different chores we do.

emptying the dishwasher), and some chores you need to do one time a week (for example, taking out the trash).

All citizens are expected to do chores as part of every day—even adults! For example, an adult citizen may take a shower every morning before work or make his or her breakfast. When we do our chores, we not only help ourselves but others around us. People in our family depend on us to get our chores done because it helps out the family. This should also make you feel proud that you are taking care of yourself. For example, if you do the chore of throwing out the trash each week without having to be reminded to do it over and over again, your family may feel proud that you are helping to keep the house clean and working as part of the group. Write or draw some chores that you do at home at different times during the day to help yourself and those around you. @

Many chores can be done at home. Two examples of chores done at home are making your lunch for school and setting the table for dinner. Once you learn a chore, you're expected to do it the same general way over and over again. Many chores need to be done one or more times in a day (for example, brushing your teeth). Some chores are done one time a day (for example, getting dressed in the morning). Other chores you have to do a few times a week (for example,

 Write or draw some chores that you do at different times during the day to help yourself and those around you.

Morning Time Chores:

Afternoon or Night-Time Chores:

1. Brush your teeth

1. Make a snack

2. _____

2. _____

3. _____

3. _____

4. _____

4. _____



Name: _____

Date: _____

What is the Group Plan? Make a Smart Guess!

Social Detectives use their eyes, ears and brains to make a smart guess. Go out and observe any situation at school. Then, use this Thinksheet to make smart guesses about the group plan.

What do you see?



What do you hear?



What do you know?



Smart Guess: What is the Group Plan?



(FILLED-IN EXAMPLE)

What is the Group Plan? Make a Smart Guess!

Social Detectives use their eyes, ears and brains to make a smart guess. Go out and observe any situation at school. Then, use this Thinksheet to make smart guesses about the group plan.



What do you see?

- Students at their desks
- Teacher walking around, stopping to talk to students
- Paper on desk
- Some students are reading
- Some students are talking



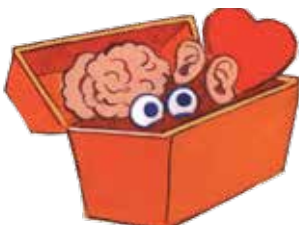
What do you hear?

- Quiet voices, mostly talking to teacher
- Students talking about multiplication



What do you know?

- My 3rd grade class usually does math in the morning
- It is 9:00 am
- Sometimes we practice math by doing worksheets



Smart Guess: What is the Group Plan?

- Independent work time
- Math multiplication worksheets
- When students finish the worksheet, the plan is to read

Hooray! and Oh no!

A Shared Imagination Activity

This activity or game can be played face to face or over a screen. It requires very few (if any!) props and lots of shared imagination (or imagining what others are sharing), and add their own ideas to sustain the plan. This is not too different from what happens anytime we play and pretend together –adding ideas and changing the direction that play is going as we connect and share an imagination. Shared imagination is what makes it possible to work on a group project and it’s the fuel of conversation. Shared imagination is also at the heart of classroom participation, reading comprehension, and narrative language. As with so many things, we can learn about and practice this through play!

Objective

The goal is to create a story together by taking turns adding “Hoorays” and “Oh Nos.”

Activity

Let’s get started! In order for the story to make sense, you have to imagine what each person in the group is saying—you have to share an imagination! When it is your turn, you can add one thing to the story, either a “hooray” or an “oh no.”

“Hoorays” are positive, make a problem smaller, and keep everyone feeling comfortable. “Oh Nos” are negative, create problems, or make problems bigger.

Then it will be somebody else’s turn to add to your idea. This also requires flexibility and problem solving because you can only add to the idea someone else gives you, and someone else can only add to the idea that you give.

There are a few contexts to get you started:

- **We’re riding in a flying car...** Hooray! We have jet speed!
Oh No! We ran out of fuel.
Hooray _____
- **We’re stranded on an island...** Hooray! It's Long Island!
Oh no! Everything is closed.
- **We discover we have a superpower...** Hooray! _____
Oh No! _____
- **You put your foot into your shoe and find...** Hooray _____
Oh no! _____



More on shared imagination can be found in We Thinkers Volume 2, Social Problem Solvers; and Social Thinking and Me, both published by Think Social Publishing, Inc.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Two Truths and a Trick



.....

In this game each person shares three things about themselves. Two of the things they share are true and one is a trick (not true). Everyone in the group then tries to figure out what is true and what is a trick using what they already know about each other or what they can make smart guesses about.

.....

When it's your turn to share...

Think of three things about yourself, two things that are true and one that is not true or a trick. Others will use what they know or can guess about you, so the trick should seem like something that *could* be true about you. Think about what the other people in the group know about you (and what they might be able to guess just by looking at you) and try and come up with things that are not easy to guess.

It can be helpful to think through and even write out your truths and trick before sharing them with others, so you're less likely to give away clues about your trick. Truths and tricks might include information about school, hobbies, family, pets, interests, fun facts, etc.

.....

Here are a few ideas to get started. They may be true for you, or you could use them to inspire a trick.

- My favorite subject in school is math
- I love to read
- I collect Pokémon
- I have two brothers
- My favorite color is purple
- I speak 3 languages

Let's take pets as a possible truth or trick. A truth could be that you have 2 cats. If you want to trick others, you might say you have 1 cat or that you have 2 dogs, a small change from the truth.

Truths



Trick



When it's your turn to guess...

What did the other person share?

1.

2.

3.



What do you already know about them?

What do you already have in your People File about them? For example, you know you're in the same class or group together. You might know their age or what grade they are in. They may have also shared some basics about themselves, like hobbies or interests.

Is there anything you've observed about them that can help you make a smart guess?

For example, if they're wearing a purple shirt and shared that their favorite color is purple, you might make a smart guess that that is true. Or maybe they have a book with them and shared that they DON'T like to read. You might make a smart guess that that's a trick.

Based on information you already know or that you can make smart guesses about, **what do you think they shared that is true and what is your smart guess about what is a trick?** (Circle your guesses for each)

1.

Truth

Trick

2.

Truth

Trick

3.

Truth

Trick



Once the truth (and trick) has been revealed, add that information to your people file! You can use that information to help you in the next round of Two Truths and a Trick, to connect (if that's your goal) or to help you interpret what they say and do in the future.

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