

## CLASSROOM EXPERIENCE GUIDE

## EXPERIENCE 1: FOCUSING WITH FISH!

## TIME

25 minutes

## OBJECTIVES

## Students will:

- Define what it means to Be There in a variety of situations.
- Identify the value of active participation by practicing verbal and nonverbal listening skills.

## MATERIALS

- *Student FISH!* (DVD)
- To Be or Not to Be There Activity worksheet (2-1\_To\_Be\_Or\_Not.pdf)
- *Student FISH!* Film Log (2-1\_Film\_Log.pdf)
- FISH! Research Journals (in FISH! Folders)
- The FISH! Philosophy Diagram poster
- Chart paper
- Markers

## PROCESS

Distribute the *Student FISH!* Film Log and ask students to fill out the Be There portion of the log while reviewing the Be There segment of the *Student FISH!* film. This should be stored in their FISH! Folders for future reference.

Review the class's FISH! Philosophy Diagram poster for a few minutes to review what Be There means and how people succeed in being there for others.

Pair up students by directing them to line themselves up in order of their birthdays. Pair the first person in line with the second, the third with the fourth, etc.

Distribute the To Be or Not to Be There Activity worksheet.

Based on the directions on the worksheet, ask partners to face one another and determine who will be Player A and who will be Player B on the first round. Explain that Player A will ask Player B questions about his/her life (using the examples on the worksheet) and that Player A will purposely NOT be there while Player B is answering the questions (e.g., rolling eyes, listening to other conversations, looking away, etc.). After 30 seconds, reverse the roles and repeat the procedure.

Character

Community

&gt;SOCIAL SKILLS

## BE THERE

Ask:

- How did it feel to NOT Be There for your partner?
- How did it feel when your partner was not being there for you?

Repeat activity, but this time, students will Be There for their partners. Direct one partner to ask the same personal questions but to listen and Be There for their partner this time while they are answering the questions (e.g., maintain eye contact, listen, nod, don't interrupt, etc.). After 30 seconds, reverse the roles and repeat the procedure.

Ask:

- How was this experience different from the first time?

| VERBAL | NONVERBAL |
|--------|-----------|
|        |           |

Using a T-chart, list verbal and nonverbal ways to Be There on chart paper, highlighting the importance of participation.

#### Inquiry Model

##### Question:

How would practicing Be There impact your life?

#### Hypothesis:

Guide students to hypothesize how being there can impact their life. Share some of these examples:

- If I turn and face someone when they are speaking to me, I will understand them better.
- If I focus on what the teacher is saying, I will understand the lessons better.
- If I listen to my friend when s/he is talking, I will be more helpful and a better friend.

Ask students to record their hypothesis on page 3 of their FISH! Research Journal.

#### Test Your Hypothesis:

Encourage students to try out their hypothesis for several days. Their results will be discussed in the next experience.

Introduce the idea of “FISH! Focusing.” Ask students to make fists, then extend the index finger and thumb of each hand to form an “L” and backwards “L” shape. Direct them to touch their thumbs, making a frame (like a film director) that helps them

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focus on the task/person in front of them and block out distractions.

**EVALUATION**

Discuss the impact of being there for one another in the classroom. Evaluate the verbal and nonverbal ways of being there and discuss how they pertain to the classroom.

To follow up on the discussion, direct students to create a “Looks Like/Sounds Like” T-chart that shows what being there looks and sounds like in the classroom. Advise them to store it in their FISH! Research Journal for future reference.

**EXTENSIONS**

- Play “Mirror Me!,” a game that encourages students to focus on nonverbal ways of being there. Ask them to stand face-to-face with a partner and mirror his/her movements (e.g., arm movements, facial muscle movements, etc.). Remind the students to remain focused and maintain eye contact, which is an important Be There skill to learn. Reverse the roles and repeat.
- Mirror Me! Follow-up Discussion: Reinforce the understanding that, although always staying focused is hard, it leads to many rewards along the way. Explain that when we become aware of the importance of being there, we learn to Be There more often and it becomes easier each time.

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## EXPERIENCE 1: POSITIVELY PLAYFUL

## OBJECTIVES

## Students will:

- Understand the positive role of Play in the classroom.
- Actively participate in appropriate classroom Play.

## TIME

30 minutes

## MATERIALS

- *Student FISH!* (DVD)
- *Student FISH!* Film Log (in FISH! Folders)
- Beach ball (or stuffed Pete The Perch—anything soft that can be thrown indoors)
- FISH! Playing Field poster
- The FISH! Philosophy Hand-Clapping Rhyme (3-1\_FISH!\_Hand\_Clapping\_Rhyme.pdf)
- Symphony-Style Discussion Directions for teacher reference (3-1\_Symphony\_Style.pdf)
- The FISH! Philosophy Diagram poster
- Dry erase marker

## PROCESS

Students fill in the Play section of the *Student FISH!* Film Log (stored in their FISH! Folders) while reviewing the Play segment of the *Student FISH!* film.

Debrief by encouraging students to share their recorded observations. Instead of calling on them in the traditional manner, throw a beach ball (or an alternative soft item such as Pete the Perch) to them. After responding, the student tosses the item to someone else who has put his or her hand up to share.

Continue the conversation:

- Is it important to Play while you work? (Clarify how Play motivates, is a stress reliever, builds friendships, etc.)
- Can Play be harmful or hurtful at times? (Note harmful Play, such as making fun of others, disrupting learning.)

Discuss with students how sometimes Play and humor take wrong turns and hurt people's feelings. Using the FISH! Playing Field poster, compare appropriate/meaningful Play with inappropriate/hurtful Play by writing "Appropriate Play" inside the playing field and "Inappropriate Play" in the "Out of Bounds" area. (Relate to Stinky Fish from Unit 1.)

&gt; CHARACTER

&gt; COMMUNITY

Social Skills

## PLAY

Transfer the Appropriate Play observations on your FISH! Playing Field poster to your FISH! Philosophy Diagram poster. Display both posters in the classroom as reminders to Play!

Distribute The FISH! Philosophy Hand-Clapping Rhyme. Write A and Z on opposite ends of the board, ask students to line up alphabetically by their first names (without talking). Fold the line in half so the last person is partnered with the first. Partners then perform The FISH! Philosophy Hand-Clapping Rhyme.

Conduct a confidential follow-up survey by having students return to their desks, put their heads down and raise their hands in response to the following questions:

- Who enjoyed this playing time?
- How many of you laughed and smiled while you were clapping along with the rhyme?
- How many of you thought this was a fun activity?

Before proceeding to a large group discussion, explain the Symphony-Style Discussion Rules (refer to handout, as needed):

- One speaker at a time may share a thought in response to a question or discussion prompt. All ideas must relate to the discussion (no need to raise hand to speak).
- Ideas may begin with a Sentence Starter, such as “I feel that ...” or “I believe ...”. Follow up each idea with “because” statements or examples from lessons or a text that the class studied.
- After one speaker is finished speaking, the next speaker adds to the idea just shared.
- When discussion ideas become exhausted, the next student to speak may say, “I’d like to take this conversation in another direction” and do so.

Discuss the following questions in Symphony-Style (for 5 minutes):

- How did that type of Play make you feel?
- What else could we do to have fun?

### EVALUATION

In small groups, have students create a rap, chant, poem or song about the importance of Play in the classroom. It is helpful for students to work with an easy tune they already know (e.g., “Twinkle, Twinkle” or “Hot Cross Buns”). Then have each group present its creation to the class.

Students answer this question in a journal response to be saved in their FISH! Folder:

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How does Play impact you personally, your friendships and our class as a whole?

**EXTENSIONS**

- Invite students to write their own song/rap/chant about what makes the classroom special and share with the class.
- Keep joke books on hand and have “joke jams” where students take turns telling jokes to small groups or the whole group.