



WEEK 2



15+ MIN



Students learn about the universal need for “CONNECTION” through discussion and sketching trees in their area.



One piece of blank paper per student; Pencils or pens; Clipboards or other materials with a hard back for drawings; Photos of trees, printed or projected (optional, if not able to go outside).

Total Prep Time: 5 mins.



As this is the second Monday of the month, please consider sharing or re-sharing the Monthly Kick-Off activity, and if appropriate, video at www.everymondaymatters.org. Additionally, a three-minute recap of the previous weeks may add extra context to this week and help connect the dots around the monthly theme.

4 C's	SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL LEARNING	SERVICE LEARNING
• Critical thinking	• Self-awareness	• Integrated learning
• Communication	• Self-management	• High quality service
• Collaboration	• Social-awareness	• Collaboration
• Creativity	• Relationship skills	• Student voice
	• Responsible decision-making	• Civic responsibility
		• Reflection
		• Evaluation

GOALS FOR THE WEEK

- Discover what we have in common with one another and how we can meet our collective need for “CONNECTION”
- Forge relationships with neighbors, classmates, and others by spending quality time together
- Identify how time spent in the natural world with others can be valuable to all involved
- Understand how “STEP OUT & OUTSIDE” is an important part of this month’s theme, “MONDAY GETS CONNECTED”



STUDENT ACTIVITY: **“OUR COMMON ROOTS”**

1) SHARE THE NAME OF THIS ACTIVITY WITH STUDENTS: “OUR COMMON ROOTS”

2) ASK 1-3 QUESTIONS FROM THE LIST BELOW TO WARM STUDENTS UP ON THE ACTIVITY’S FOCUS:

***NOTE:** *Choose questions appropriate to your students’ ages, grades, ability levels, and classroom goals. Students may share their answers in pairs, small groups, or as a large group.*

- **When you “STEP OUTSIDE,” do you notice any particular trees around you?**
- **Do you have a favorite tree?**
 - What does it look like and why is it your favorite?
- **What are some things that make trees different from one another?**
- **What do all trees have in “COMMON”?**
- **What kinds of things does a tree need to survive?**
- **What is a “ROOT,” and why are “ROOTS” important for trees?**
 - Answer: Generally, a “ROOT” is the portion of a plant that grows underground (A few types of trees’ “ROOTS” are above ground, but that isn’t very common). “ROOTS” help plants to absorb nutrients from the soil
- **What are some things that, as individuals within a human race, make us different from each other?**
- **What things do all of us who are human have in “COMMON”?**
- **What do you think are some of our “ROOTS,” or the things we all need to survive and be happy?**
- **Why do you think we all share the need to “CONNECT” with others?**
- **What makes our “CONNECTIONS” with others valuable?**
- **How would “STEPPING OUTSIDE” and learning more about “ROOTS” in nature and within ourselves remind you that YOU MATTER?**

3) SET UP THE “OUR COMMON ROOTS” ACTIVITY:

- **Explain:**
 - Trees are all around us, whether we notice them daily or not
 - They may be small or large, old or young, and they may look completely different from one another
 - But they all share one trait: “ROOTS”
 - The “ROOTS” may be above ground or under it, but the purpose of every “ROOT” is to get nourishment for the tree to grow
 - “ROOTS” also give trees an anchor for when wind and storms come
 - Sometimes we think of the blue whale as being the largest living thing
 - But it’s actually a group of aspen trees, whose “ROOTS” all interconnect underground
 - In so many ways, we are like these trees: We all look different, in our physical appearances and circumstances
 - But deep within us, we have the same “COMMON” needs: To feel loved, to be valued, to contribute to our world, and to “GET CONNECTED” with others
 - And that “CONNECTEDNESS” is like our anchor for when things are hard, too
 - Whenever we see trees from now on, we can think of that “CONNECTEDNESS” we all share
 - So with this knowledge in mind, we are going to “STEP OUTSIDE” and sketch some trees
- **Ask:**
 - How can we be more like the aspen trees, all “CONNECTED” underground?
 - How can we get inspired by the trees all around us and remember to care for “OUR COMMON ROOTS”?

4) START THE “OUR COMMON ROOTS” ACTIVITY:

- Provide each student with a pencil or pen, a paper, and something sturdy (like a clipboard) to place behind their paper
- Explain:
 - We are going to go “OUTSIDE” and get inspired by the trees all around us
 - As we look at and sketch these trees, we’ll remember that we have “ROOTS” just like these trees, and those “ROOTS” need caring for and nourishing
- Make sure students are dressed warmly and head outside to look at any trees that are on or around your campus
 - If the weather is bad, or if there are not trees on your school’s campus, students may sketch pictures of trees that are displayed or printed out for them
- Allow students to quietly sketch the trees for up to 10 minutes
- Encourage students to notice both the big picture and small details when sketching, and to do the best they can as they sketch
- When time is up, ask for any volunteers to share out their tree sketches and any reflections they had while sketching their trees

5) AFTER THE ACTIVITY, ASK 1-3 OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS TO HELP STUDENTS REFLECT ON WHAT THEY’VE ACCOMPLISHED AND HOW THEY CAN TAKE THIS FORWARD:

***NOTE:** *Choose questions appropriate to your students’ ages, grades, ability levels, and classroom goals. Students may share their answers in pairs, small groups, or as a large group.*

- What have you learned today about trees, “ROOTS,” and “CONNECTEDNESS”?
- What kinds of things did you discover about humans’ universal needs?
- How does this knowledge encourage you to “GET CONNECTED” with others?
- What did you enjoy about “STEPPING OUTSIDE” today?
- What were some of your thoughts as you were sketching your tree?
- Why do you think it’s important to “STEP OUTSIDE” from time to time?
- Do you think “CONNECTING” with nature and “CONNECTING” with others are related?
 - Why or why not?
- Is there someone in your life you could be more “CONNECTED” with?
 - How will you go about making that “CONNECTION”?
- What can you do, starting today, to be more aware of when people need “CONNECTION”?
 - How will you help them find it?
- How were you able to see that YOU MATTER today?

6) THANK STUDENTS FOR PARTICIPATING IN LEARNING ABOUT “OUR COMMON ROOTS,” BOTH WITH TREES AND WITH EACH OTHER. REMIND THEM THAT THOUGH OUR LIVES AND CIRCUMSTANCES DIFFER, WE ALL “MATTER” AND HAVE THE UNIVERSAL NEED TO “CONNECT” WITH OTHERS.

7) CHALLENGE STUDENTS TO SEEK OUT WAYS TO “CONNECT” WITH OTHERS AND TO GIVE THOSE RELATIONSHIPS “ROOTS,” AND TO “STEP OUTSIDE” WHENEVER THE CHANCE ARISES.

8) LEAD ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING EXTENSION IDEAS TO CONTINUE EXPLORING HOW TO “STEP OUTSIDE” FOR “CONNECTION.”



EXTENSION IDEAS:

DO ONE OR MORE OF THESE EXTENSION IDEAS TO BRING THE LESSON FROM 15 MINUTES TO 30 MINUTES OR MORE.

- 1) Connect with Roots:** To further cement the concept that we all have needs like trees do, encourage students to draw the “ROOTS” of the trees when they do their sketches, even if the “ROOTS” are not visible on the tree itself. Then have students label each part of the “ROOT” with something they can do to become “CONNECTED” to others.
- 2) Become the Trees:** Have students stand in a circle with their feet touching (legs about shoulder width apart) to represent the aspen trees. One at a time, have students say one thing they will do this week to form a “CONNECTION” with someone.
- 3) Make a Tree:** Make an “OUR COMMON ROOTS” tree by giving students strips of fabric and letting them write what they think all humans need for happiness. These can be one-word answers or phrases. Then find a tree on campus and (with permission) tie the strips to the tree branches. Or make a bulletin board with a giant tree drawing and the strips of fabric adhered to its branches.

“**A TREE WITHOUT ROOTS IS JUST A PIECE OF WOOD.**”

- MARCO PIERRE WHITE