



Students plan a block party to hold in their neighborhood.



Posterboard or whiteboard; Markers or dry erase markers; Paper; Pencils or pens; Art supplies (for publicity and invitations, if using the extension activity).

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.

Educator's Note: In order to make this event a successful and safe one, and to minimize stress to students' families, the block party will be at a single location for all students, who will invite their individual neighbors to attend. Please be aware that in many locations, block parties require a permit, so check with your local municipality first.

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: **“BLOCK PARTY”**

- 1) SHARE THE NAME OF THIS ACTIVITY WITH STUDENTS: “BLOCK PARTY”**
- 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.*

- How would you describe your neighborhood?
- What kinds of things do you like about where you live?
- Do you have a lot of neighbors where you live?
- Do you know your neighbors or the people on your “BLOCK”?
- What kinds of things can keep us from getting to know our neighbors?
- When we meet new people, how can we do so kindly while also watching out for our own safety?
- Why does it MATTER if we know the people on our “BLOCK” or not?
- How would you feel if your neighbors knew and recognized you when they saw you?
- How can reaching out to those on your “BLOCK” create “CONNECTIONS”?
- How do you think you and your neighbors could more effectively “GET CONNECTED”?
- What is a “BLOCK PARTY”?
- Answer: A “BLOCK PARTY” is an event where neighbors gather to “CONNECT” by getting to know each other and (at times) have food and activities
- How could hosting a “BLOCK PARTY” in and for your neighborhood help you to get to know your neighbors?
- How will a “BLOCK PARTY” help you to “STEP OUT” of your comfort zone?
- In what ways would “STEPPING OUT” help you show each other, WE MATTER?

3) SET UP THE “BLOCK PARTY” ACTIVITY:

- **Explain:**
 - The word “neighborhood” can bring to mind a lot of different images
 - It might be houses spread out in a calm farming community
 - It could be apartment complexes in a bustling city
 - Wherever we live, there are neighbors on or near our “BLOCK”
 - But sometimes, we may not know how to reach “OUT” to them
 - Often, we’re waiting for someone else to make the first move
 - Or we might just be so distracted with our own lives that we don’t really think about it
 - A “BLOCK PARTY” is a way to get your neighbors together and to “CONNECT” with them
 - “BLOCK PARTIES” take effort, though, and that’s where we come in
 - We’ll be figuring out the details today to hold a neighborhood “BLOCK PARTY” with some of our neighbors
- **Ask:**
 - Have you ever been to a “BLOCK PARTY” before?
 - Have you ever hosted a “BLOCK PARTY” or other way to “CONNECT” with your neighbors?
 - Are you ready to plan our “BLOCK PARTY” and “CONNECT” with the people around us?

4) START THE “BLOCK PARTY” ACTIVITY:

- **Explain:**
 - Today we are going to start planning a class “BLOCK PARTY”
 - Each of us will invite some people from our own “BLOCKS” to join us at the “PARTY” so we can all “CONNECT” together

- So today, we'll figure out a date, time, and place in our neighborhood where we can throw the "PARTY"
- And we will break out into groups so we do things that fit our strengths, like planning invitations, decorations, and publicity
- **Begin by brainstorming altogether the different elements that will need to be planned out for the "BLOCK PARTY." List those planning elements out on the posterboard or whiteboard**
- Some examples of things that need to be planned include: General theme of the "BLOCK PARTY;" Date/Time (keep in mind that many members of the community may not be available until the evening, weekend, or may prefer a shorter event); Activities, games, and ice breakers; Food/Drink (is it a potluck or a different style of food/drink? Make sure to be sensitive to allergy/dietary restrictions); Clean-up/Sanitation (if people need to use the restroom, where will they go? Where will they put their trash? etc.); Publicity/Invitations; Location Coordination; Safety & Emergency Information; Follow-Up Surveys; Thank You Notes (for after the "PARTY")
- **Split students into small groups of 4-5, and if you have mixed age groups, try to mix student ages so that older students may assist younger students with planning**
- You may allow students to select what group they join based on what they're excited about planning, or you may split them up yourself and assign them a planning category
- If you have a smaller group size, students may work on more than one category
- **Give students paper and pencils to put down their plans more concretely**
- **Make sure students understand what part of the "BLOCK PARTY" they are planning and ask them to begin**
- **Remind students that the point of this activity is to "GET CONNECTED" with their neighbors, and to keep that in mind as they plan their various parts**
- **Assist students who need suggestions and/or help with their section**
- **Allow up to 10 minutes for students to begin planning their "BLOCK PARTY"**
- **If possible, allow students more time throughout the week to continue planning their "BLOCK PARTY"**
- **When all students have had a chance to plan, circle back together to finalize all plans for your "BLOCK PARTY" and support them as they make it happen**
- **If desired, take photos of your "BLOCK PARTY" once it happens, and share them on social media (with permission) using the hashtag #EMMBlockParty**

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 are some specific things we can do to welcome our neighbors to our "PARTY"?**
 - How will you invite your neighbors?
- **Once our "BLOCK PARTY" is over, how will you continue to "CONNECT" with your neighbors?**
- **What do you hope our "BLOCK PARTY" will accomplish?**
- **What will your team do to make this "PARTY" a success?**
- **What, if anything, was challenging about this activity?**
- **How did you "CONNECT" with those in your group today while you were planning?**
- **During the "PARTY," what can you do to make sure everyone knows WE MATTER?**
- **What kinds of activities during our "BLOCK PARTY" are you looking forward to the most?**
- **Do you think we could make the "BLOCK PARTY" an annual event?**
 - How could we do it?
- **Now that we've planned one larger, more involved "BLOCK PARTY," do you think you would feel comfortable planning one for your own community "BLOCK"?**
 - Why or why not?
- **How do you think this event will help others to "STEP OUT" of their own comfort zones?**
- **How will this event help us "CONNECT" with each other more often going forward?**

- 6) **THANK STUDENTS FOR PARTICIPATING IN PLANNING THE “BLOCK PARTY” SO WELL TOGETHER. REMIND THEM THAT THE “CONNECTIONS” BETWEEN NEIGHBORS CAN REALLY UNITE COMMUNITIES, AND THAT THEY ARE THE ONES WHO WILL IGNITE THAT POSITIVE CHANGE.**
- 7) **CHALLENGE STUDENTS TO CONTINUE TO REFINE THEIR PLANS FOR THE “BLOCK PARTY” UNTIL IT IS SUCCESSFUL. FOLLOW THROUGH WITH THEM ON THEIR INDIVIDUAL GROUP IDEAS AND THE PLANS AS A WHOLE, AND SEE IT TO FRUITION.**
- 8) **CONTINUE EXPLORING HOW TO “STEP OUT & OUTSIDE” BY LEADING ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING EXTENSION IDEAS.**



EXTENSION IDEAS:

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

- 1) **Individual Block Parties:** If you live in a safer area, let students define their “BLOCK” and plan individual “PARTIES” to be hosted at a later date. Involve parents, guardians, neighbors, businesses, and community partners as much as possible in the planning process.
- 2) **Publicity Posters:** For publicity, create time in class for all students to make posters or individual invitations to hand out to their neighbors, and speak with school administration to see if the event can be announced in the school newsletter, paper, or daily announcements.
- 3) **Group Work:** As this “PARTY” will be a large undertaking, you may consider adding more time for physical preparations like decorations and coordinating to secure a venue. Allow groups with less physical preparation (like those arranging food and drink) to assist in groups who need more intensive prep. Help students plan specific icebreaker activities that encourage “CONNECTION” and socialization.

**“ IT’S A BEAUTIFUL DAY IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD,
A BEAUTIFUL DAY FOR A NEIGHBOR.
WOULD YOU BE MINE? COULD YOU BE MINE?
WON’T YOU BE MY NEIGHBOR? ”**

- (MISTER) FRED ROGERS

Source credit: <https://www.chicagotribune.com/lifestyles/sc-fam-0623-neighbors-block-party-20150616-story.html>