



Students reflect on their own accomplishments and document the steps they took to achieve their goal. Together, they will become aware of their collective “EFFORTS”.



Several copies of “EVERY STEP WE TAKE” HANDOUT for each student (on cardstock or heavier paper, if possible); pencils or pens.

Total Prep Time: 5 mins.



As this is the fourth Monday of the month, please consider sharing or re-sharing the Monthly Kick-Off activity, and if appropriate, video at [www.everymondaymatters.org](http://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 how short-term accomplishments contribute to long-term character and success
- Identify what constitutes a sincere effort and put that understanding into practice
- Notice small, daily efforts to overcome or improve, and honor those efforts
- Understand how “CELEBRATE THE EFFORT” is an important part of this month’s theme, “MONDAY GETS EMPOWERED”



## **STUDENT ACTIVITY:** **“EVERY STEP WE TAKE”**

- 1) SHARE THE NAME OF THIS ACTIVITY WITH STUDENTS: “EVERY STEP WE TAKE”**
- 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.*

- **What does it mean to you to be “EMPOWERED”?**
  - Possible answers: Being free to do something without barriers, becoming independent, moving away from oppression into opportunity, feeling self-confident enough to live your dreams, etc.
- **When was a time you felt particularly “EMPOWERED”?**
  - What was that like for you?
  - How did it help your interactions with others?
- **What is one goal you were able to achieve?**
  - In what ways did you feel “EMPOWERED”, once you achieved it?
  - How do you think achieving goals and becoming “EMPOWERED” are related?
- **What “STEPS” or “EFFORT” might it take to achieve a goal?**
- **What character strengths help you to move forward in your “EFFORTS”?**
- **How many small, separate “STEPS” do you think it took you to reach your goal?**
- **How much time do you think it takes to really become “EMPOWERED”?**
  - Why do you think that is?
  - Do you know anyone who is “EMPOWERED” or inspiring?
- **Have you ever listed the “STEPS” you have taken to accomplish something?**
- **How might seeing all your “EFFORTS” laid out help you to recognize how successful you truly are?**
  - How would seeing your “EFFORTS” next to all your friends’ “EFFORTS” help you to see our collective successes?
  - How do all those collective successes let us know that WE and our “STEPS” MATTER?

### **3) SET UP THE “EVERY STEP WE TAKE” ACTIVITY:**

- **Explain:**
  - Maybe you’ve heard the phrase, “The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single STEP”, and it’s totally true.
  - Nothing we accomplish happens without at least some “EFFORT” on our part.
  - In fact, you can probably think of something right now that took many “STEPS” to achieve or become good at doing.
- **Ask:**
  - What is an accomplishment you thought of while we were discussing our “STEPS” activity?

### **4) START THE “EVERY STEP WE TAKE” ACTIVITY:**

- **Explain:**
  - Today, we’re going to “CELEBRATE” each of those “STEPS” and accomplishments together.
  - You’ll do this by thinking of something you’ve accomplished in your life, whether physical, mental, emotional, vocational/talent-based, academic or non-academic, or anything else you feel has been noteworthy for you.
  - Then, you’ll identify each of the “STEPS” to accomplishing that thing and write it on a footprint.
  - Write as many “STEPS” as you like, one per footprint.
  - Then, cut the footprints out and lay them one by one on the floor, so you can see just how many individual “EFFORTS” you have made in order to become better at something.

- Make enough copies of the “EVERY STEP WE TAKE” HANDOUT on heavy paper like cardstock so that each student has 2-3 sheets.
- Set out scissors, markers or pens, and many copies of the “EVERY STEP WE TAKE” HANDOUT for students to use.
- Have them think of an accomplishment that took many “STEPS” to achieve.
- Then have them write one “STEP” per footprint, making additional copies of the footprints if needed
- Once they are done writing all their “STEPS”, they may cut out their individual footprints and write their names on the back of each step.
- Then they will lay (or tape) them on the floor in a line as if they were walking.
- Students’ footprints should make a continuous line along the floor, with one student’s footprints beginning where another’s ended.
- Take a walk with students along the footprints on the floor, counting the individual “STEPS” they have taken as a collective group.
- Then gather them for follow-up questions.

**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 about this activity made an impression on your mind the most?
- What were some of the different “STEPS” you decided to write on your footprints?
- How did seeing all of our collective “EFFORTS” as “STEPS” make you feel?
- Were you surprised by the number of “STEPS” you have individually taken to improve?
- What did this activity tell you about your own strengths and abilities?
- What does it tell you about the abilities of those around you?
- How can you notice and “CELEBRATE THE EFFORTS” of others when they are working toward something?
- How can we avoid jealousy when we see others making great “EFFORTS” to do something?
- How can we lift and support one another in our “EFFORTS”?
- Were you surprised by how many individual “STEPS” we have taken as a group ?
- In what ways were you able to see how much WE MATTER today?
- How was it “EMPOWERING” to witness everyone writing their “EFFORTS” down?
- How can we take this “EMPOWERED” feeling forward?
- How does “CELEBRATING THE EFFORT” help us better understand “YOU MATTER”?

**6) THANK STUDENTS FOR ACKNOWLEDGING AND “CELEBRATING” THEIR OWN “STEPS” TO BECOME BETTER, AS WELL AS “CELEBRATING THE EFFORTS” OF OTHERS. REMIND THEM THAT EVERY “STEP” IS IMPORTANT ON THEIR LIFE JOURNEY, AND THAT THEY HAVE ALREADY MADE GREAT STRIDES IN BECOMING BETTER.**

**7) CHALLENGE STUDENTS TO BE “EMPOWERING” BY NOTICING THEIR OWN “EFFORTS” DAY TO DAY, AND BY NOTICING AND VERBALIZING THE “EFFORTS” OF OTHERS.**

**8) CONTINUE EXPLORING HOW TO HELP OTHERS “CELEBRATE THE EFFORT” 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) Celebrate the Steps:** After students have taken their walk with the footsteps, let them each have a share time where they can verbalize their own "STEPS" based on what they wrote. After each, have a small "CELEBRATION" of recognition.
- 2) Share our Steps:** Have students retrieve their footprints and use hole punchers and yarn to make small books of their own "EFFORTS". Let students keep them or give them to their principal as a gift.
- 3) Doodle our Steps:** Instead of writing the "STEPS" on the footprints, let students draw pictures of each "STEP".
- 4) Keep Steppin':** After students have been allowed to recognize their own "EMPOWERMENT", ask them to rediscover something they tried in the past but didn't succeed fully at, and to try again, with small "STEPS".

**“ THE JOURNEY OF A THOUSAND MILES  
BEGINS WITH A SINGLE STEP. ”**

- LAO TZU

