



Students discover more about their similarities with one another through an interpersonal activity.



Large glass jar or container; Index cards or small sheets of paper; Pens or pencils.



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](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

- Recognize how being curious about various subjects connects us to a broader culture.
- Explore and broaden your understanding about our collective hopes and struggles.
- Discover more about yourself and the vision you have for your life.
- Understand how DECIDE TO DISCOVER is an important part of this month's theme, MONDAY GETS CURIOUS.



## **STUDENT ACTIVITY:** **“SIMILARITY JAR”**

- 1) SHARE THE NAME OF THIS ACTIVITY WITH STUDENTS: SIMILARITY JAR**
- 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 is a SIMILARITY?**
  - Answer: Something you have in common with someone else.
- **Do you think that, as a group, we have more SIMILARITIES or more differences?**
  - Why do you think that?
- **Have you ever met a new person and been CURIOUS about what SIMILARITIES you might have?**
- **Have you ever been surprised to DISCOVER a SIMILARITY between yourself and someone else?**
- **How does finding SIMILARITIES and common ground with others help connect you to them?**
- **Has anyone ever been CURIOUS enough to ask you about your life?**
  - What was that experience like for you?
  - How did your relationship with that person change as a result of that conversation?
  - How does it feel to have someone be CURIOUS about you?
  - Were there positive feelings or not so positive feelings? (\*\*NOTE - Acknowledge the not so good feelings, but try to focus on the positive feelings.)
- **What are some barriers to finding SIMILARITIES with others?**
  - What are some ideas you have for overcoming those barriers?
- **What are some positive things that can happen when we DECIDE TO DISCOVER more about those around us?**
- **How does it show the other person, YOU MATTER?**

- 3) SET UP THE SIMILARITY JAR ACTIVITY:**

- **Explain:**
  - We've likely all had an experience where we met someone and instantly had an impression about who they were before really getting to know them.
  - In today's cultural climate, it can be really easy to see the differences between each other and ignore the SIMILARITIES.
  - It might even feel like you have nothing in common with someone you interact with on a daily basis.
  - Conversely, you've probably also had an experience where you took the time to get to know someone else and gained a great friendship.
  - Incredible things can happen when we DECIDE TO DISCOVER more about those around us: what they hope for, what they worry about, and what their individual journey has been like.
  - SIMILARITIES connects us as a human race and also fosters new friendships and understanding.
  - It takes a delicate balance of CURIOSITY to learn new things about someone.
  - We want to be genuinely interested, while respecting that what they choose to share should be on their terms
- **Ask:**
  - What DISCOVERIES do you think you will make today?

- 4) START THE SIMILARITY JAR ACTIVITY:**

- Today, we will DISCOVER more about our collective hopes and concerns by putting anonymous thoughts into a SIMILARITY JAR.
- Each of you will write one concern and one hope you have as a student for this school year.

- You will have two pieces of paper. On one paper you will write your hope. The other piece of paper you will write your concern. We will be reading them out loud.
- That said, feel free to be honest and write something you are comfortable sharing.
- **Place a large jar or container in a visible place for students to see.**
- **Set out pencils and hand out index cards or strips of paper, two per student.**
- **Explain that they will be writing a hope they have for the school year on one paper and a concern they have for the school year on the other paper.**
- **Remind them that these papers are anonymous, so they do not need to put their names on them.**
- **Once they have written their concerns and hopes, they may place the papers in the SIMILARITY JAR.**
- **When all papers have been submitted to the JAR, explain that you will be reading each one and ask them to think about whether or not that hope or concern is SIMILAR to their own feelings.**
- You can make this process more participatory. If students feel comfortable and agree with the statement, they may raise their hands, give a thumbs up or the sign language sign for agree. Otherwise, student can thoughtfully reflect to themselves.
- **Read each paper from the JAR aloud.**
- **Give students time to process each statement.**
- **Gather students for reflection.**

**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 thoughts or feelings came up as we did our SIMILARITY JAR activity today?**
- **What kinds of things did you DISCOVER about your peers and about our group as a whole?**
- **Were you surprised by any of the responses?**
- **How might this activity have changed if we knew who wrote each statement?**
- **In what ways did staying anonymous help you write your feelings?**
- **In what ways did you GET CURIOUS about our SIMILARITIES today?**
- **Did this activity make you more aware of a struggle where you could help someone?**
- **Going forward, how do you feel about GETTING CURIOUS about others?**
- **Do you think your feelings toward others have changed now that you know about their hopes and especially their worries?**
- How might you change your actions because of new understanding?
- **How might you use this approach in order to find SIMILARITIES with people that weren't here today?**
- **What other ideas do you have for DISCOVERING SIMILARITIES with those around you?**
- **How does DECIDING TO DISCOVER help you understand each person in our group MATTERS?**

**6) THANK STUDENTS FOR BEING HONEST IN THEIR HOPEFUL AND WORRISOME FEELINGS AND FOR SHARING THEM IN THE "SIMILARITY JAR". REMIND THEM THAT WE HAVE MORE IN COMMON THAN WE MAY SOMETIMES REALIZE, AND "GETTING CURIOUS" ENOUGH TO ASK IS THE FIRST STEP.**

**7) CHALLENGE STUDENTS TO SEEK OUT MORE OPPORTUNITIES TO GET TO KNOW OTHERS AND "DECIDE TO DISCOVER" "SIMILARITIES" THEY SHARE.**

**8) CONTINUE TO EXPLORE HOW TO "DECIDE TO DISCOVER" BY LEADING ONE 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) Deep Dive:** Let students find out even more about each other by sharing out something from their hopes and concerns list with each other.
- 2) Story Time:** Let students write stories about a time when they didn't think they had much in common with someone else, but took the time to GET CURIOUS. Have them share how the relationship changed and evolved. These stories can be fictional or biographical, whichever the student chooses. Students can later share these stories through an "Author's Chair" or create an anthology of DISCOVERY stories.
- 3) Decide to Discover Interview:** Let students interview each other and create Venn diagrams for things that are SIMILAR and unique to each person.

**“WHEN WE SEEK TO DISCOVER THE BEST IN OTHERS, WE SOMEHOW BRING OUT THE BEST IN OURSELVES.”**

- WILLIAM ARTHUR WARD, AMERICAN AUTHOR