



Session 5: Negotiating Free Time During Transitions

Transitions happen all the time, some small and some big. Some we choose, and some just happen to us. For example, transition to and from school, the weather changes from warm to cold, the school year ends and summer vacation begins, or a weekend or vacation comes and goes. Bigger changes might be a family move, a new sibling, a close one dies or parents changes jobs. These transitions can affect how we spend our free time and how we feel. This session helps students notice these changes and think about what they want to keep or change in their free time.

***** Worthwhile to revisit this session at different times throughout the year surrounding transitions.**

Timeframe:

30–40 minutes **Flexible timing/ adaptable format:** Can be completed in short segments or extended across multiple sessions.

Student Goals:

- Notice how their free time changes during different transitions.
- Reflect on how they feel during both small and big transitions and consider how free time activities can support their well-being and balance.

- Identify something they want to keep doing or try changing in their free time during times of transition.

Example Conversation Starters for different transitions:

- “What do you like to do during the time when you’re getting ready to leave school/program/activity or when you first arrive?”
 - “How do you feel during the times when you’re coming to school or going home? What helps you have a good start or end to your day?”
 - “What do you like to do when you first get home from school/program/activity?”
- “How does your free time change when the weather gets colder or warmer?”
- “What do you do differently during summer vacation or winter break compared to school days?”
- “Have you ever moved to a new house or had a new family member join your family? How did that change your free time? What other times in your life change your free time?”
- “What are some transitions you choose, like trying a new sport or hobby? Knowing when you are bored and need to do something else?”
- “What are some transitions that just happen, like changing seasons or starting a new grade?”
 - “How do you feel when these changes happen?”
- “Is there anything you want to change about your free time during these times?”

Activities:

1. Free Time Pattern Drawing

Timeframe:

10–15 minutes for each situation Flexible timing/ adaptable format: Can be completed in short segments or extended across multiple sessions.

Ask:

Draw or write what you usually do during your free time in these times:

- When you get home from school
- On weekends
- When the weather is warm (like summer)
- When the weather is cold (like winter)
- When it is sunny or raining or snowing!
- During the school year
- During summer vacation or other school breaks

Follow-up questions:

- “What stays the same? What changes?”
- “Can you think of something new you tried during one of these changes? Or something you were already doing but wanted to keep doing?”

2. Group Brainstorm: Types of Transitions

Timeframe:

10-15 minutes Flexible timing/ adaptable format: Can be completed in short segments or extended across multiple sessions.

On the board or chart paper, make two columns:

Transitions We Choose:	Transitions That Happen To Us:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>(some ideas to help with prompt)</i>• Choose to get off a screen/stop screen time• Choose to use a screen• Trying a new hobby or sport	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>(some ideas to help with prompt)</i>• An adult asks us to turn off a screen we are using.• Coming home after school

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weather changes (summer to winter)
Choosing to spend more time with friends	Starting a new school year
Picking a new game to play or choosing to stop screen time	Moving to a new house
Planning a vacation activity	Family changes (new baby, parents' job changes)
Setting new routines and activities	School vacations

Ask:

“How do these different transitions make you feel?”

“What changes in your free time with these transitions?”

3. Reflection: What Could Change?

Timeframe:

(10 minutes)

Ask students to think:

“Is there something you do during your free time that you want to keep doing no matter what?”

“Is there something you’d like to try, change, or stop doing during some of these transitions?”

Invite students to draw or write:

- One thing I want to keep doing
- One thing I want to try or change

Invite volunteers to share one thing they noticed about transitions or one way they want to change their free time habits.

Main ideas to bring into the conversation:

- Some transitions are small and happen all the time; others are big and feel very different
- We can decide how to use our free time during these changes to feel happy and balanced
- Transitions can be a chance to try new things or keep what works best for us