

Subtopic 2: Exploring My Free Time

Example Conversation Starters

How much free time do you think you have during the day or during the week? (Middle school students typically have 5 ½ to 6 hours a day of free or leisure time.)

Which would you rather do, and why?

- Play soccer with a friend, read alone, or watch TV?
- Play with a pet, do a craft or hobby, or swim at the pool?
- Play computer games, visit your grandparents, or walk in the woods?
- If you had 2 hours a day to do anything you wanted to do, what would you do?
- If you had a whole day to do anything you wanted, what would you do?

Activity 1: Exploring My Free Time Worksheet

Exploring My Free Time

Directions: In column 1 list things you do with your free time after school and on weekends. In column 2 indicate how much time you spend at each activity. In column 3 put a + if you like the activity or a - if you dislike the activity. In column 4 put a * by the activities you consider leisure activities. Don't complete column 5 until your teacher tells you to.

1	2	3	4	5	Benefits
Activities I do on a regular basis	Time I spend at this activity 1 2 3 4 5 A little Some A lot	Like + Dislike -	Leisure activities		
					Physical: Good for my body, healthy.
					Social: Time with friends, family or new people.
					Mental: Challenging myself intellectually.
					Future: Working toward goals—school and career.
					Psychological: Feeling good about myself, stress release.
					Spiritual: In touch with my beliefs, gives my life meaning.
					Natural: Appreciating nature, animals and the environment.
					Creative: Building, drawing, writing or creating something.
					Community: Helping people, animals, the community or the environment.

The purpose of this worksheet is to give the students a tool to help them more critically think about how they spend their time.

Have students complete columns 1 through 4 on the “Exploring My Free Time” worksheet (p. 4 in the Student Book). Have them follow the directions to complete columns 1 and 2 for the activities you do on a typical day (what you do most days of the week or your “regular” activities and then for your favorite activities. (I.e., Tell them to leave column 3 blank for now.)

For example, ask for the reasons they engage in the activities they listed. Which activities do they like the best. **Collect the worksheet to be used in a later discussion (which, depending on timing could be in this session or a later session).**

Possible Discussion Questions Using “Exploring My Free Time Worksheet”

Think about how you spend your time based on the worksheet.

- What activities do you spend the most time on?
- What are the activities they like the most?
- Which of the activities do they consider leisure?
- Do you have enough free time or leisure time in your life? Too little? Too much?
- Is leisure time always positive? Can there be negative activities in leisure time? Provide examples (e.g., vandalism, substance abuse).

Summarize and Next Session

As you are beginning to learn, how we spend our time is very important in many ways. Of course the focus of these topics is on making sure you spend your free time in ways that are positive and give you good feelings...that is, spending free time in ways that give you pleasure, satisfaction, stress release, and so on is called leisure, or leisure time. We will continue discussing these things as we move forward.

Now that we have had a chance to learn about the different activities that we all like to do, it is also important to recognize the **benefits** that we get from the activities we participate in. We will discuss this in the next session and fill out column 5.