



A Program of the Lamoille Family Center

LIVE TIMEWISE MIDDLE SCHOOL



Session 4: Beating Boredom and Interest Development

If someone is bored or not interested in what they are doing, they are not getting much, if anything, out of the experience. That is especially a problem when you are bored in leisure, because leisure time is supposed to be a good experience, whether it is fun, enjoyable, relaxing, stimulating, and/or meaningful.

Being frequently bored in leisure can lead to sitting around too much, too much screen time, too little physical activity, overeating, using drugs and alcohol, or causing property damage.

Student Goals

1. Identify and understand aspects of boredom and interest.
2. Understand unhealthy consequences of boredom.
3. Learn ways to turn a boring situation into something interesting.

Students will Think About

1. What makes something boring?
2. What makes something interesting?
3. How to develop new interests.
4. How can they change a boring situation into an interesting situation?

Subtopics

1. Understanding concepts of boring and interesting
2. Developing new interests

Activity

1. Experiencing boredom
2. What Makes Something Boring or Interesting?

Materials

- Avoiding Boredom and Becoming Interested (Transparencies 4-5, Teacher Manual)
- TW student book page 17 (What Makes Something Boring or Interesting), page 18 (New Interest Inventory), page 19 (Narrowing it Down),
- TW Teacher Manual pages 31-39

Subtopic 1: Understanding concepts of boring and interesting

Having a high level of interest in an activity helps you get more healthy benefits. It is important to have interests because that gives you something meaningful and worthwhile to do in your free time, and helps you avoid unhealthy things such as sitting around too much, overeating, using drugs and alcohol, and just getting into trouble. Many studies have shown that kids who are bored tend to use more drugs and alcohol and do more vandalism than kids who are not bored. That is why we want to help you learn how to avoid boredom and develop your interests.

Boredom can also be seen as a sign that you need to change what you are doing. People who are more motivated by knowing what they like to do or doing things for a purpose (as opposed to always waiting for someone else to guide them) are more likely to be able find ways to make a situation more interesting or change what they are doing.

Activity 1: Experiencing Boredom

Have students put away everything, including cell phones, pencils, paper, books, etc. Have them sit still with their own thoughts for xx minutes (10 if you have the time).

- How would you describe this experience?
- What did you think about?
- Was anyone relaxed?
- Was anyone stressed?

Discuss

Recall that in your TimeWise journals you indicated times when you were bored and when you were interested in what you were doing.

When you indicated you were bored, how would you describe those experiences. Ask for students to provide specific examples if they can remember.

If you want to learn how to not be bored, however, first you need to figure out what makes something boring or interesting to you.

What makes something boring? What makes something interesting?

Sometimes it is hard to tell, isn't it? Because sometimes the same activity can be boring and sometimes it can be interesting.

Activity 2: What Makes Something Boring or Interesting?

Using the worksheet "What Makes Something Boring or Interesting" (below) or on another sheet of paper, have students interview a partner and list 3 activities the partner found boring (in their journals) or other activities they find boring and 3 activities they found interesting. Beside each activity indicate why they found the activities boring or interesting.

What Makes Something Boring or Interesting?

Directions: Interview a partner to find out 3 activities he or she found boring and why, and 3 activities he or she found interesting and why. Then, with your same partner, brainstorm a list of ways to avoid becoming bored and a list of ways to become more interested in things.

What makes something boring?

- It's the same thing over and over.
- You don't know what else to do.
- Nothing ever changes.
- It's too easy and there's no challenge.
- It's easy to keep doing the same things and hard to be motivated to do something else.
- You're waiting for something or someone.



My partner's
boring activities:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What made these activities
boring?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



My partner's
interesting activities:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What made these activities
interesting?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What makes something interesting?

- You really like to do it.
- You feel good about yourself when you do it.
- It's fun.
- There's the right amount of challenge (not too hard, not too easy).
- It matches your personality and helps you express who you are.



Ways to avoid becoming
bored:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Ways to become more
interested in things:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Write the following on the board or on an overhead (or whatever works for you). These are things that people have identified as common reasons things are boring or interesting.

Boring

- It's the same thing over and over.
- Nothing ever changes.
- It is too easy and there are no challenges.
- It is easier to keep doing the same thing and it is harder to be motivated to do something else.
- You don't know what else to do.

Interesting

- You really like to do it.
- You feel good about yourself when you do it.
- It's fun.
- There is the right amount of challenge...it's not too easy and not too hard.
- It matches your personality and helps you express who you are.

Think about how you tell if you are going to become bored? What are the signs? It is important to tune in to your feelings and recognize when you might becoming bored so that you can escape boredom and turn the situation into something better and maybe even interesting.

Show and discuss the following two overheads (Transparencies 4 and 5).

Avoiding Boredom

To avoid **boredom:**

- * Don't do the same things over and over.
- * Don't just do things out of habit or routine.
- * Change the activity, its location, or the people you do it with.
- * Do something to help someone else.
- * Think about the benefits you'll get. Change your attitude.
- * Explore ways to make it more challenging.



Becoming Interested

To become interested in things:

- * Try something new.
- * Plan for positive experiences.
- * Keep working to improve at things you're already good at.
- * Learn a new skill.
- * Practice to get better.
- * Remind yourself of the benefits of your activities.
- * Increase your knowledge:
 - Find someone who can teach you more.
 - Read about your activity in a magazine or on the Internet.
- * Join a group of people with similar interests.
- * Stick with it.

Subtopic 2: Developing New Interests

Many of us, including myself, would like to find new interests and activities to make our lives more well-rounded or because we feel we are lacking something in our lives. In a previous session you did the Tic-Tac-Toe activity and learned about some of the interests of your classmates. This next activity will hopefully give you some ideas about new activities or interests you could work on.

As you consider which interests you might want to develop, consider the following:

- What are you good at?
- What do you want to be better at?
- What do you want to learn?
- What do you want to contribute to your family, your community, the world?

Activity 3: Leisure Interest Inventory

Have students look over a list of various types of recreational/leisure/sport activities. Options for finding interest inventories: Live Your Why website, TimeWise student book page 18 (some modification may be needed to update the list and make it more appropriate for the community you are in, perhaps add crochet, ice hockey, field hockey, lacrosse, kayaking, knitting, overnight camp, roller derby, roller skating, rugby, sports camp, surfing, skiing, snowboarding, Tai Chi, yoga, Zumba...etc.), and these documents (links).

This may be an opportunity to weave in a discussion of benefits, motivations, obstacles, stereotypes, etc.

Use the Narrowing It Down form from the student manual, p. 19 to have a discussion on why they might choose certain activities to be interested in. Have students consider:

New Interest Inventory

Directions: Place a checkmark beside the activities you might be interested in trying.



- _____ *Aerobics*
- _____ *Art*
- _____ *Ballet*
- _____ *Riding a bike*
- _____ *Baseball*
- _____ *Basketball*
- _____ *Bowling*
- _____ *Camping*
- _____ *Cheerleading*
- _____ *Using a computer*
- _____ *Taking a class*
- _____ *Canoeing*
- _____ *Cooking*
- _____ *Dance*
- _____ *Diving*
- _____ *Drawing*
- _____ *Fishing*
- _____ *4-H*
- _____ *Gymnastics*
- _____ *Gardening*
- _____ *Hiking*
- _____ *Hockey*

- _____ *Hunting*
- _____ *Inline skating*
- _____ *Juggling*
- _____ *Karate*
- _____ *Learning to type*
- _____ *Watching a movie*
- _____ *Building a model*
- _____ *Painting*
- _____ *Photography*
- _____ *Playing an instrument*
- _____ *Pottery*
- _____ *Reading a book*
- _____ *Riding a horse*
- _____ *Rock climbing*
- _____ *Roller hockey*

- _____ *Running in a race*
- _____ *Singing/Chorus*
- _____ *Soccer*
- _____ *Sewing*
- _____ *Softball*
- _____ *Swimming*
- _____ *Theater*
- _____ *Tennis*
- _____ *Tae Kwon Do*
- _____ *Video games*
- _____ *Volunteering*
- _____ *Volleyball*
- _____ *Weaving*
- _____ *Walking*
- _____ *Writing a story*

Other new interests?



Narrowing It Down

Activities

Directions: On the 5 lines across the top, list the 5 activities you chose from the *New Interest Inventory*. For each of those activities, circle the possible benefits. Choose the one activity that is "doable" in your community and that you would most like to try and write it inside the circle.

	Benefits	Benefits	Benefits	Benefits	Benefits
Physical	Physical	Physical	Physical	Physical	Physical
Social	Social	Social	Social	Social	Social
Mental	Mental	Mental	Mental	Mental	Mental
Future	Future	Future	Future	Future	Future
Psychological	Psychological	Psychological	Psychological	Psychological	Psychological
Spiritual	Spiritual	Spiritual	Spiritual	Spiritual	Spiritual
Natural	Natural	Natural	Natural	Natural	Natural
Creative	Creative	Creative	Creative	Creative	Creative
Community	Community	Community	Community	Community	Community

Summarize

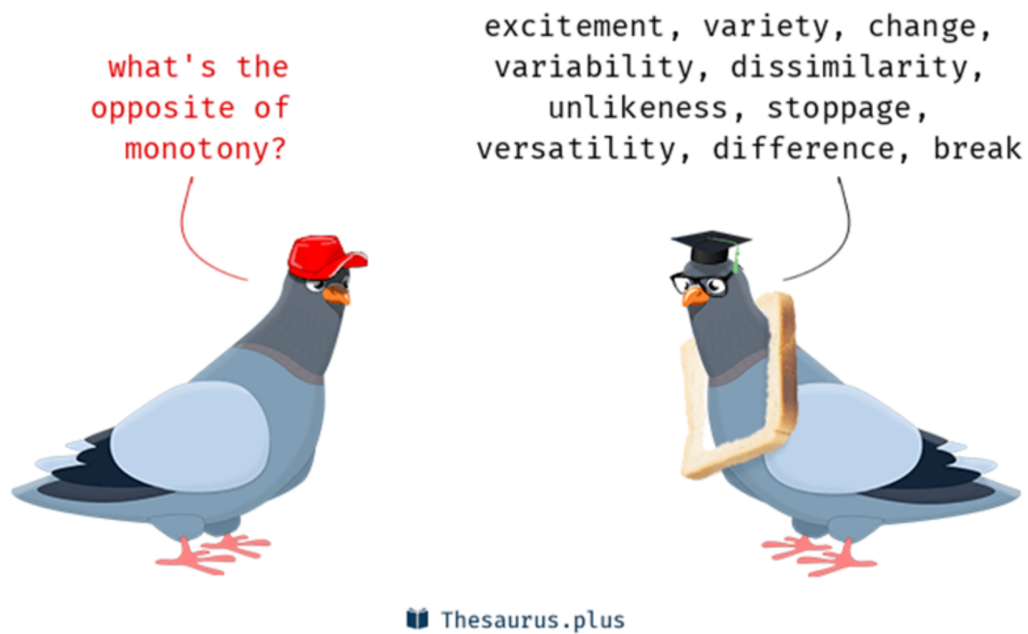
We've discussed how feeling bored is a sign that you need to change the situation to make it less boring, and hopefully more interesting. You've also learned ways to recognize when you might be getting bored, or more bored. In that case you are encouraged to restructure the situation, if you can, to make it more interesting.

Changing a boring situation into an interesting, or at least not-so-boring situation, **requires effort** on your part. It just doesn't happen by itself. You have the responsibility for taking charge of your experiences.

If you are **almost always bored** in your leisure time, this will most likely lead to long-term boredom, where nothing is ever interesting to you. This might be a sign that you don't have enough activities that you enjoy, or it could be a sign you have too many.

Another way to avoid boredom is to develop a number of interests that you can do when you don't have anything else to do. If you find an activity you are really interested in, you'll **stick with the activity** longer. You'll be motivated because you want to do it for yourself, or because you're doing it for a purpose. This will help you avoid long-term boredom. When you stick with an activity over time, you get more benefits out of the activity. You learn more and you become more competent. You get to meet more interesting people. (Tell a personal story as an example.)

In the next session we will discuss these ideas further in terms of the need for you to have a variety of activities, a balance of types of activities, and a variety and balance of the people you do activities with.



You are in charge! Take responsibility!

Restructure your situation!

Develop new interests!