

A familiar saying is that a picture is worth a thousand words. Pictures representing the condition of belonging can be quite powerful. This activity encourages students to be creative and at the same time helps them search for what belonging means to them as individuals.

**Materials**

- ▶ Magazines
- ▶ Optional: cameras, photo album
- ▶ Scissors and glue
- ▶ Writing paper and pencils or pens

**Instructions**

1. Assign students the task of either cutting out pictures from magazines or taking photos that represent to them the condition of belonging.
2. Have students create a collage, a photo album, or anything else that displays their pictures and photos.
3. Ask your students to explain in writing how these pictures and photos represent belonging.
4. Allow time for students to share and discuss their work with the class.

**Discussion**

1. In what ways do you see students belonging at school?
2. Why do some students not seem to belong anywhere?
3. How could our school enhance the condition of belonging for students?

**Enrichment**

Ask students to interview classmates and gather their ideas on belonging. What does it mean to them, for example, to belong to a group or a club?

It is fairly common to hear students utter the words “I’m bored.” By doing something different or unusual, you can help break the cycle of boredom. This activity provides you with a fun way to assign homework or even in-class tasks. It requires little preparation and can be done anytime, although it works best on special occasions or at the end of the school week.

- Materials**
- ▶ Balloons
  - ▶ Slips of paper

- Instructions**
1. On slips of paper, write several alternative homework assignments. For example, you may choose to instruct students to complete only the even-numbered math problems in their textbook, or perhaps only problems 1–10. You may even want to write, “No homework,” on a slip.
  2. Blow up as many balloons as assignments you have written, but before blowing up the balloons, insert one assignment slip in each.
  3. When it is time to assign homework, ask one student to select a balloon and pop it to retrieve the homework assignment written on the slip of paper. Whichever assignment slip floats out of the popped balloon should be the assignment for the entire class.

- Discussion**
1. What activities do you find boring?
  2. How can we make boring activities more fun and exciting?
  3. How can we make learning more fun?

**Enrichment** Another fun activity is to allow students to help create unit tests or quizzes. Assign students the task of writing three or four questions for an upcoming quiz. Prior to administering the quiz, collect all the students’ questions and use them to make up the quiz.

It is often difficult for middle school students to engage in original thought. They are used to seeing the world one way, and, in their opinion, that is the way things should be. This activity promotes creativity and encourages students to think a bit differently by having them offer original thoughts about the contents of half a dozen bags.

**Materials**

- ▶ Three Questions Worksheet
- ▶ 6 lunch bags
- ▶ Small, random items to put in the bags

**Instructions**

1. Put a random selection of items (e.g., marbles, tissue, paper clips, candy) in each of the six lunch bags and number them from 1 to 6.
2. Give students the Three Questions Worksheet and tell them they are to answer the same three questions for each bag. Be sure to inform them that you are not looking for the right answer but rather a creative and interesting answer. (Although you may allow the students to shake the bags or lift them to check their weight, you may not permit them to look inside the bags or feel their contents.)
3. Do not give the students any hints or suggestions; let their imaginations run wild.
4. Once the students have finished the assignment, collect the Three Questions Worksheets and read the students' answers aloud. After you read each answer for each bag, disclose to the class the actual contents of the bag. (It is always fun if the No. 6 bag contains candy so you can share some sweets with the class at the end of the activity.)

**Discussion**

1. Why was it difficult not to write down the "right" answers?
2. Why did the answers vary so widely?
3. Is it fun or difficult to be creative? Why or why not?

**Enrichment**

Try the same activity again, but this time allow students to see the objects in the bags and ponder, for example, What else could a pencil be? What could it be used for?

### Three Questions Worksheet

Question	Bag 1	Bag 2	Bag 3	Bag 4	Bag 5	Bag 6
What is in the bag?						
How did it get in there?						
What can the item be used for?						

As students begin to think about their future, it is important for them to understand the skills they will need once they finish school and enter the workplace. The condition of spirit of adventure challenges students to think about their future and the skills they need to reach their goals. This activity encourages students to begin thinking about their careers. Therefore, it is recommended that students scour employment brochures or classified ads in the newspaper before they begin this activity.

**Materials**

- ▶ Ideal Job Worksheet
- ▶ Optional: employment brochures
- ▶ Optional: classified ads from various newspapers

**Instructions**

1. Give students the Ideal Job Worksheet.
2. Have them think of three ideal jobs and list each one separately:  
In the first column, they should list the job. In the second column, they should list five skills they consider necessary to do the job properly. In the third column, they should list the ways they can acquire those five skills.
3. Once they have completed the worksheet, make sure you take the time to discuss job choices and skills with your students.

**Discussion**

1. What do you feel will be your greatest career challenge?
2. What do you think would be an exciting and rewarding career?
3. How much schooling is required for your chosen career?

**Enrichment**

Arrange to have some of your students job shadow. Solicit parents' and community members' help in pairing students with their job interests. Make sure students are prepared with questions and ready to learn when they go visit and observe adults in the workplace.

## Ideal Job Worksheet

Job	Five Necessary Skills	How to Acquire Skills
1.	1.  2.  3.  4.  5.	
2.	1.  2.  3.  4.  5.	
3.	1.  2.  3.  4.  5.	