





emotional

spiritual

physical

social

mental

growth

table of contents

e motional growth	1
s ocial growth	11
p hysical growth.....	21
m ental growth	31
s piritual growth	41

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



The LifeKnowledge Center for Agricultural Education is made possible by the generous support of our founding and supporting partners, as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

FOUNDING PARTNERS:



MONSANTO



SUPPORTING PARTNER:



The FFA Mission: FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education.

The Agricultural Education Mission: Agricultural education prepares students for successful careers and a lifetime of informed choices in the global agriculture, food, fiber and natural resources systems.

emotional growth



A healthy lifestyle involves emotional growth, which means acknowledging, accepting, experiencing and coping with emotions. Emotions are a part of life. They are the heart of being in love, being a sincere person, coping with bereavement, fleeing or fighting and growing up.

activity

1



Note to teacher:

While students share their responses, take note of who is identified as the person to help.

Do students elect to help the victims or the perpetrators most often? Discuss their reasons for choosing to help that person and explore potential outcomes if they had chosen to help the other person.



Lessons to use:

AHS.24, HS.59 and HS.23

One aspect of emotional maturity is the ability to identify with all humankind. Simply stated, this means putting yourself in another's shoes. Imagine you find yourself being a witness to the situations below. Rather than just ignoring the situation, you must do something to demonstrate compassion for the person you identify to help. Read the situation, identify the person you would help and describe the compassionate behavior you would demonstrate in the chart below:

Situation	Person to help	Description of compassionate behavior
A student is yelling at your teacher during class and isn't showing signs of calming down soon.		
A group of students walk by the school's janitor while she is cleaning the floor and comments how horrible that job must be.		
A student slips a candy bar underneath his lunch tray and doesn't pay for it; the cashier happens to be your friend's mom.		

activity 2



Note to teacher:

It's easy to detect when habits such as smoking and drinking become hazardous. To challenge your students, pose some other less obvious habits to explore such as having a negative attitude, gossiping, lying, exercising, spending money, etc.



Lessons to use:
AHS.16, MS.23 and MS.24

Everyone reacts differently to good news, bad news or life-altering events. It's how we cope with our range of emotions that sets the course for our lives, and from this, habits form. At what point in a person's life does a habit become a hazard? List the signs you can detect when this happens. Is it easier to detect these signs in someone else rather than yourself? Explain.



activity

3



Note to teacher:

This is a great opportunity to identify what it looks like to be humble and gracious during all phases of a competition.

Additionally, you can use this activity in preparation for a competition to introduce your expectations of student behavior.



Lessons to use:
HS.30

Our actions, comments and nonverbal expressions reveal the concept we have of ourselves. Whether or not you are truly happy for someone who was awarded something you wanted or felt you deserved, why is outwardly supporting that decision important for developing a positive self-image?

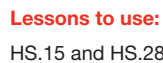
Consider and describe your feelings about the subjects in these two scenarios and the image they are projecting to others.

A parent doesn't agree with a referee's judgment during a little league game and angrily confronts the referee.

A professional sports player gloats or celebrates his accomplishment excessively.

4

Take the time to discuss why it has become too common for people to revel in others' failures. What is the purpose of airing our objections about others' decisions?



Repeatedly reacting negatively to situations has an effect on our emotional well-being. Why do we ridicule others more sharply than ourselves for committing the same offense? Consider this: Why do we insult a police officer who is seen speeding but justify it when it becomes our decision to speed?



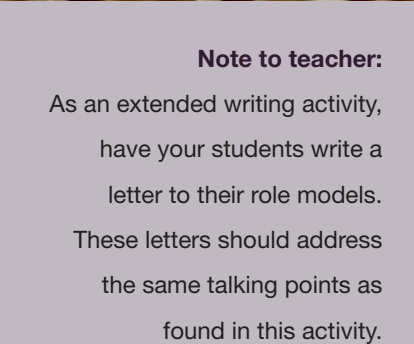
Will Durant was a prolific American writer, historian and philosopher. He stated, "To speak ill of others is a dishonest way of praising ourselves." Explain the connection you see in Durant's statement to your response in the question above.

social growth



Social growth focuses on accepting differences, using social graces, communicating within groups, relating to people of all ages, and seeing yourself in a positive way; all powerful characteristics that are manifested in our awareness of our personal needs (not wants) and of those around us.

1



As an extended writing activity, have your students write a letter to their role models. These letters should address the same talking points as found in this activity.



AHS.38, HS.49 and MS.49

Describe the kind of role model you want to be. How do you want others to use your influence in their lives?

[illegible]

2

When we choose to see the similarities rather than the differences, how does our compassion for others grow?



“An enemy is one whose story we have not heard.”
~Gene Knudsen-Hoffman, peace activist and author



It's easy to identify the ways others are different from us, but it's challenging to identify the likenesses. Even more challenging is finding the similarities that exist between you and someone with whom you choose not to interact. Imagine being this person. In the space below, write a letter from that person's point of view and tell the story you have not heard.

**Note to teacher:**

Students might reject the word “conform.” Explain that conforming in this context refers to etiquette, or aligning our behavior to fit the environment.

**Lessons to use:**

HS.103 and MS.58

Presenting ourselves appropriately in different situations takes practice. Are there certain times or ways a person should conform to social norms? For instance, is there a certain way one should act at a high school sporting event? In the grocery store? At a club meeting? At your place of employment? Explain what you believe are the advantages and disadvantages of conforming to social norms.

[illegible]

**Note to teacher:**

If technology and time permits, have students take an online assessment to determine if their use of social networking has reached an addictive level.

**Lessons to use:**

HS.51, HS.52, MS.31, MS.35
and MS.52

Facebook, Twitter and other similar social networking formats have changed the way relationships are developed, maintained and strengthened. Some will say that social networking has caused a breakdown in the way people communicate because it replaces face-to-face interaction. How has the use of these networks made an impact on your relationships?

Do you think it's the social network or the accessibility to those networks that affects how you develop, maintain and strengthen your relationships with family and friends? Explain.

physical growth



Because every person is uniquely created, there is no set prescription for keeping each of us healthy across time. Healthy lifestyle practices begin with a positive attitude toward living life to its fullest for the longest time possible.

1



Dig deeper into this subject by discussing how healthy foods can be made more accessible and why healthy foods aren't as affordable as fast food items.



Lessons to use:
MS.16

If you had \$6 and could only purchase something healthy to eat, what would you buy if you were at each of the following locations?

- A convenience store _____
- A grocery store _____
- A fast food restaurant of your choice _____

What choices would you make if you could buy anything from those places with the same amount of money?

- A convenience store _____
- A grocery store _____
- A fast food restaurant of your choice _____

If your choices changed, explain why.



Note to teacher:

Answers to the matching:

- 1 = G
- 2 = A
- 3 = B
- 4 = B
- 5 = F
- 6 = A
- 7 = D
- 8 = E
- 9 = C
- 10 = E



Lessons to use:
MS.16

Incorporating balanced and nutritional foods in addition to controlling portion sizes sets the path for a healthy lifestyle. See if you can correctly match the food item with its proper portion size. Some portion size items may be used more than once.

Food Item

Portion Size

1. ____ Small baked sweet potato (1 ½ c.)

2. ____ 1 cup carrots

3. ____ ½ cup mashed potatoes

4. ____ ½ cup ice cream

5. ____ 1 biscuit (3 oz.)

6. ____ 1 medium sized apple (1 c.)

7. ____ 1 slice of cake (3 oz.)

8. ____ 2-3 pieces of bbq ribs (3 oz.)

9. ____ 2 tbsp. peanut butter (1 oz.)

10. ____ 1 burrito (3 oz.)
- A. baseball

B. light bulb

C. golf ball

D. deck of cards

E. checkbook

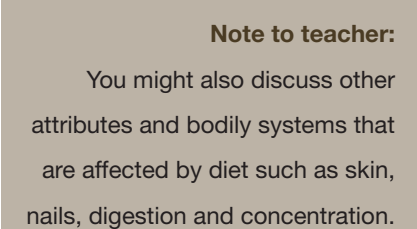
F. hockey puck

G. computer mouse

Food group	Amount needed each day
Grains	5-8 oz.
Vegetables	2-3 cups
Fruits	1.5-2 cups
Milk/Dairy	3 cups
Meat/Beans	5-6.5 oz.

Imagine consuming all 10 of the matching items in one day. Which of these food groups will have exceeded the recommended amount? Which food groups would not meet the daily requirements? Use the chart to help you.

3



MS.16

Our eating habits have long-term effects besides the numbers we see on the scale. Read the excerpt taken from Pantene's website to learn about these other effects. (Among other products, Pantene is a maker of shampoos and conditioners):

The benefits of a healthy diet are obvious when trying to watch one's weight or cholesterol level, but what we eat also greatly influences the condition of our hair, making diet and hair linked to one another. Hair is a record of one's diet and nutrition, and that means that what we are not eating can show up, too, in both our diet and hair. As protein is one of hair's key building blocks, insufficient protein in one's diet can lead to a decrease in hair's diameter, making hair less healthy strong and thick. In addition, crash dieting can result in hair loss, as hair's growth cycle can be impacted, causing a higher than normal number of hair follicles to shed their hair fibers. The conclusion? Diet and hair are linked. If you want healthy-looking and beautiful hair, eat healthy foods, don't crash diet and get plenty of protein.

Why aren't more brand name companies in the hair and skin care business adding this kind of information to their marketing campaigns? Should they? Defend your response.

**Note to teacher:**

Try turning the search in to a timed race, have students put these words to the tune of a familiar song and perform it for the class or use the words for a game of charades.

**Lessons to use:**

MS.16

Staying Healthy Word Search: Find the words inside the jumbled letters that identify ways to stay healthy. Words appear horizontally, vertically, diagonally, forward and backward.

SLEEP

WATER

MODERATION

EXERCISE

GOAL SETTING

POSITIVE ATTITUDE

NOT SMOKING

SEATBELTS

SOCIALIZE

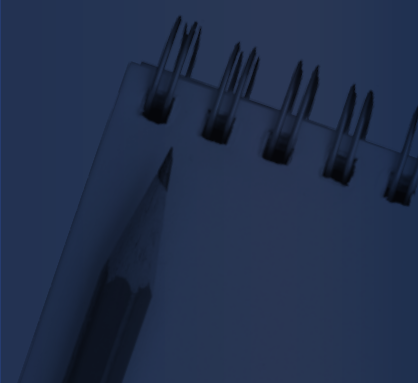
DENTAL HYGIENE

HOBBIES

SKIN PROTECTION

HEALTHY SNACKING

D S H V F H X L O F G S I W G S K B Z V
C W K E U B R S N O I T A R E D O M O V
J B P I Q K U A S T I L B X H N Z E X
C X Z U N B J L N L U U L S X L O D H R
X F M Y U P S R M K E B M U Z I L U E Z B
G I Z T Y E R M O K E B M A C Y I P T S N K Q
T N E B T P F T N O O K P M A E L T O K L A I F J
Y S I T K E E X F V E Z R T L X B E L H S
H O I R U O N X W O I C A G R X Z B H R K
U N R U O M M C Z L E T L F W X T Y G M
G X R W C E N S A D V C T I A I O A G U C
Z E Y C E N S A D V C T I A I O A G U C
I R K V W I I O I V N B T O X O E I B O
H N X V C C M T E X N K M E C I S E T T
V O Y Q O S I E X T Y H R C I S E H Y N V W
Y S B S F S M X T Y H R C I S E H Y N V W
P W P B O H E A L T H Y S N A C K I N G
Z M U P I M Q V D P D F S S U W E O K B X
N Z Z K L E O R M C Z N R U Q O O B F V



mental growth

Although basic knowledge is the root of all mental and intellectual development, knowledge without reasoning, critical thought and creativity is hollow and weak.

**Note to teacher:**

Divide your class into small groups. Give each group a different item, such as a paper clip, tape dispenser, flashlight, etc., to explore.

**Lessons to use:**

HS.26 and HS.27

Utilize the creative thinking strategy SCAMPER to design something new! Apply this method to create different uses for the item your teacher gave you. (SCAMPER is a technique, created by Bob Eberle, used to ignite creative thinking; it is based on the idea that everything new is a modification of something that already exists.)

After reading each question, brainstorm and decide how your object could be used for a different purpose. Provide that idea in the blanks below.

S = **Substitute** _____
(Can I replace or change any parts? If I did, what would it become?)

C = **Combine** _____
(Can I combine or merge it with other objects? If I did, what would it become?)

A = **Adapt** _____
(What else is it like? How could it be used in a different setting?)

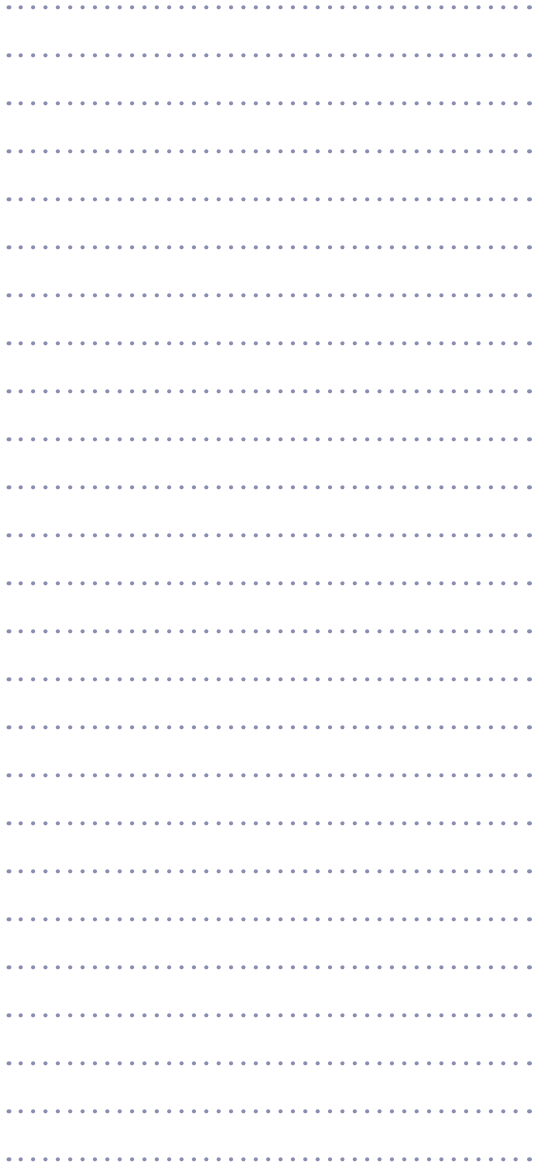
M = **Magnify** _____
(What can I add or exaggerate? If added some pieces, what would it become?)

P = **Put to other uses** _____
(What else can it be used for?)

E = **Eliminate** _____
(How can I simplify it? If I did, what would it become?)

R = **Rearrange** _____
(What if this worked in reverse, or it was turned in an opposite direction? What would it become?)

2

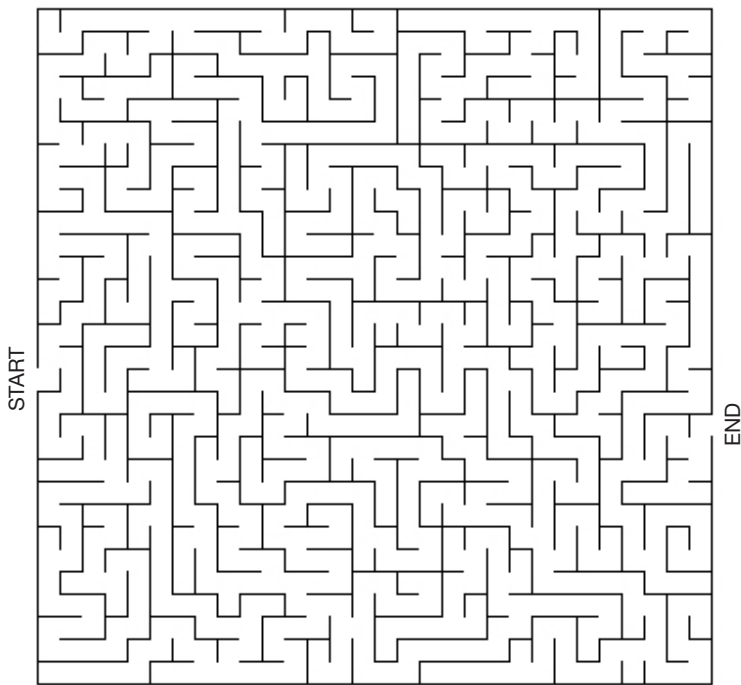


Finding the solution is not the objective of this activity, instead it's recognizing how the brain functions during the critical thinking process. Discuss other situations where students use the critical thinking process.



HS.24 and HS.25

Directions: Using a pen, instead of a pencil, draw a path showing how to move from the entrance to the exit.



Knowledge: having an understanding of the topic

Comprehension: understanding what you think about it

Application: using what you know and understand

Analyze: divide information, categorize or prioritize

Synthesize: creating the solution

Evaluate: decide if it worked or not

Examine your path. Did you restart or change directions multiple times? Next, circle all the words in the box that best identify the critical thinking skills you used to find your way through the maze.

**Note to teacher:**

Provide the class with a copy of a print advertisement. Additionally, discuss the use of colors, the background/scenery, bold print and the location of subjects in the advertisement that add to the persuasive appeals.

**Lessons to use:**

AHS.26 and HS.84

Being aware of various persuasive techniques can help you make the right decisions. Explain how effectively the advertisement your teacher gave you uses these three elements of persuasion.

Ethos: The image that is portrayed by the person(s) in the advertisement. For example, a model wearing a doctor's white coat in a cough medicine advertisement sends an authoritative message. _____

Pathos: The targeted emotions of the audience. For example, the "doctor" in the cough medicine advertisement sends the message that the product can be trusted since parents need assurance it will work. _____

Logos: The logical arguments used to convince, but sometimes not always factual. For example, the cough medicine ad might claim that "1 in 4 doctors prefer" this product over another. _____

4

Brainstorm ways to make these statements more accurate.



Lessons to use:

HS.84

Can you spot the media fallacy?

The media is an attention-seeking group and sometimes gains its viewers' attention by exaggerating. A fallacy is something that is believed to be true but the information is incorrect in some way. Carefully read each statement below, circle the word or phrase that is misleading and identify how that statement influences what to believe or feel.

1. The risk of terrorism increased after 9/11. _____

2. Living standards are increasing for all. Poor people now have TVs, mobile phones, etc. _____

3. We have increased leisure time. _____

4. Violent crime is spiraling out of control. _____

5. Society has become soft on crime. _____

6. Taxation is theft. _____

spiritual growth



What we become and how we behave or live our lives is a function of individual identity. The issue of how our individual identity evolves is spiritual growth. Deeply rooted values and principals establish a belief system, which becomes the basis of how we live our lives.

activity

1



Note to teacher:

Follow this activity by asking your class when or how our beliefs can get in the way of our personal growth.



Lessons to use:

AHS.03, HS.11 and HS.09

Discovering what makes up the foundation of your belief system is an important part of your personal growth. Have you ever questioned why you hold certain beliefs about other religions, cultures, races or cliques in your school? Let's assume that you believe cheerleaders are hyper, self-absorbed and wealthy. As a result you find them annoying and don't speak to them —ever. If you don't speak to them, then why and how did this assumption develop?

Think of a group to which you either belong or don't belong and answer the following questions:

- How would you describe this group?
- What are the attitudes, if any, that are outwardly or inwardly expressed at home toward this group?
- How much time have you spent with this group?
- What opportunities have you taken to learn more about this group?
- What message does your belief about the group send to others?

In summation, is this truly a belief that you developed or were you influenced by someone else's opinions?

activity 2



Note to teacher:

Have students create their own hypothetical situations and present those to the class.



Lessons to use:

HS.11 and HS.09

Analyzing the beliefs of others and asking yourself how you would respond to the same situation is a valuable self-reflection method. Read the scenario below and answer the questions that follow.

The Smiths were a young couple struggling to make ends meet. Teri worked at a fast food restaurant, and David was a custodian at a community church. Together their income was just enough to pay for their rent and monthly essentials.

One day Teri became ill and could no longer work. She was hospitalized for an extended period of time and soon their medical bills were more than David could pay with his current job. Teri was diagnosed with an illness that would slowly take her life. Some prescription drugs could prolong her life but only one drug was known to sometimes send this illness into remission. This particular drug was very expensive, and David's insurance would not cover the purchase of it. Many times David had tried to negotiate with the pharmacist and the drug company to purchase the drug at a discounted rate or to set up a deferred payment plan. Neither the drug company nor pharmacist would compromise.

One day he decided he could no longer accept the fate that awaited Teri. So one night, David went to the pharmacy after closing and took the drug that just might reverse the effects of the disease that was taking Teri's life. Unfortunately, David got caught.

Was it wrong for David to have stolen the drug? _____

Based on what you were taught growing up, what would you have done? _____

Should David be punished for this crime? If so, why or why not? _____

activity

3



Note to teacher:

Be sure that students realize that their actions result from the belief system they hold. For example, if students believe good grades are a sign of success it is likely they will devote more time to studying.

Additionally, if students believe politicians are untrustworthy it is likely that voting practices will be impacted.



Lessons to use:

HS.11 and HS.09

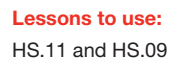
Without realizing it, we put our belief system into practice whenever a decision is to be made.
A belief system is the beliefs and standards that help guide every decision that is made.

Reflection: How do your beliefs about the items below influence the decisions you make or could make?

Issue		Belief	Influence on my decisions
Grades			
Politicians			
Underage drinking			
Curfews			
Unplanned pregnancy			
Volunteerism			

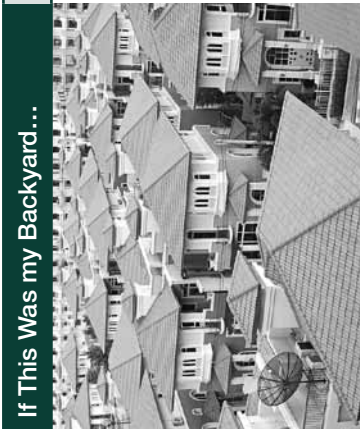
4

During this activity, be sure to address the issues of transportation, safety, privacy, social life, income level, employment opportunities, etc., in case students do not.



If This Was My Backyard... One way to nurture your belief system is to reflect on the things that you appreciate. Transport yourself into each picture you see in the first column. Imagine that these were your “backyards” or home lives. Given the different environments when compared to your own, identify the things in your current environment for which you would gain more appreciation.

If This Was my Backyard...



I would have more appreciation for...

