

## Month at a Glance: February

Activity	Enduring Understanding	Vocabulary	Time Needed for Completion
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Wonders of Life!	We are more alike than different.	past, present	45 minutes
Choose Wise All the Time	Many of the choices middle schoolers make now will impact their wellbeing beyond high school.	choice, positive, negative	45 minutes
I Got Money in the Bank!	Financial stability is a part of overall wellness.	money, bank, safe, deposit, withdraw	45 minutes
Setbacks and Snapbacks	Setbacks are inevitable. How we respond to them makes all the difference.	setback, snapback, perspective, attitude	45 minutes
What would Ace Do?	Reflective opportunities.		5-30 minutes

# February



# Activity Plan

Title: Wonders of Life!

Suggested Time: 45 minutes

Suggested Grade Level(s): 6th–8th

<p><b>Activity Objective:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scholars will discover we are more alike than different.</li> </ul> <p><b>Materials:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>paper</li> <li>pencils</li> </ul> <p><b>Vocabulary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>past</li> <li>present</li> <li>future</li> </ul>	<p><b>Activity Overview:</b> Participants will share memorable experiences and events to discover we are more alike than different.</p>	
	<p><b>Bridge (Connect &amp; Engage)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Facilitator:</b> We are going to play a little game called "The Life and Times of a Middle Schooler." Take out a sheet of paper and a pencil. Create three columns. Label the columns "Before School," "Elementary School" and "Middle School." <b>Have scholars and any participating adults list any major events they can recall. They do not need details, just the events.</b></li> <li><b>After ten minutes, have everyone form a circle.</b></li> <li><b>Facilitator:</b> Okay, someone will read something from their paper beginning with, "I remember." For example, you might say, "I remember my mom walking me to school on the first day of kindergarten." Someone who also remembers that might say, "I remember my mom walking me to school on the first day of kindergarten. Do you remember not wanting your mom to walk you in on the first day of middle school?" Someone else will respond with, "I remember not wanting my mom to walk me in on the first day of middle school."</li> <li><b>Facilitator:</b> This will continue until everyone has shared something.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Boost (Teach)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Facilitator:</b> Even though you are just in middle school, this should have felt like a trip down memory lane. You also should have noticed the many things we have in common regardless of our age, race or religion. Of course there are differences, but you probably heard more similarities.</li> </ul>

**Build (Rehearse  
& Build for  
Transfer/Close)**

- **Facilitator:** *We are going to play something called "More Alike than Different." I am going to choose 4 people to come up front. **Randomly choose four people.***
- *These 4 people will read their entire sheets. As they read, the rest of us will count the number of things we have in common with them. Once all four have had a chance to read, join the person you had the most in common with based on what you wrote on your paper.*
- **After everyone is in place say,** *We really are more alike than different!*

# Differentiation Station

**Suggestions for Remediation**

**Suggestions for Acceleration**

**Special Education & English Learner Scaffolds**



The facilitator can assist scholars with recalling any experiences they may have had over the years.

The facilitator can provide a list of familiar experiences.

Scholars can use what they learn in this activity to create a PSA entitled "More Alike than Different."

Scholars can use a translation app as needed.

The facilitator can work with scholars to recall any experiences they may have had over the years.

**Activity Reflection:** What did you learn about yourself? What did you learn about your peers?

**Supplemental Resources:**



# Activity Plan

**Title: Choose Wise All the Time!**

**Suggested Time: 45 minutes**

**Suggested Grade Level(s): 6th–8th**

<p><b>Activity Objective:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scholars will explore healthy choices to benefit their overall wellbeing beyond high school.</li> </ul> <p><b>Materials:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>choice cards</li> <li>markers</li> <li>construction paper</li> <li>timer</li> </ul> <p><b>Vocabulary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>choice</li> <li>positive</li> <li>negative</li> </ul>	<p><b>Activity Overview:</b> Scholars will engage in a healthy decision-making activity that will allow them to consider how their choices can affect their lives beyond high school.</p>	
	<p><b>Bridge (Connect &amp; Engage)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Facilitator:</b> <i>Today, we will explore how to distinguish between healthy and unhealthy choices that impact life even beyond high school. After distinguishing the difference, we will determine how to promote healthy choices that will increase our opportunities for a successful lifestyle.</i></li> <li><b>The facilitator will divide the scholars/participants into three groups. Each group will be given a set of choice cards that include physical, emotional, and social choices. Scholars will have five minutes at each station to match the choices—healthy vs. unhealthy. Scholars will rotate after the five minute timer goes off.</b></li> </ul>
	<p><b>Boost (Teach)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>The facilitator will monitor the group to ensure scholars are working to determine the difference between a healthy choice beyond high school and an unhealthy choice beyond high school. Before scholars rotate to the next station, they should shuffle the choice cards to allow the next group to have a fresh opportunity to sort the cards.</b></li> <li><b>The facilitator should ensure everyone visits all three stations.</b></li> <li><b>After all groups have been to each station. The facilitator should show the correct answers. Engage in a discussion about the statements from the sort.</b></li> </ul>



**Build (Rehearse  
& Build for  
Transfer/Close)**

- **Facilitator:** *Your group will now create a commercial, song, rap, or dance that will creatively promote the benefit of choosing positively beyond high school. Your creative performance should be a maximum of two minutes and include some healthy choices from the sort you just completed. Extra points if you have dance moves!*
- **Scholars will have fifteen minutes to create and practice their presentations. Each group will have an opportunity to share with the entire group/class.**

# Differentiation Station

Suggestions for Remediation	Suggestions for Acceleration	Special Education & English Learner Scaffolds
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<p>The facilitator can ask prompting questions.</p> <p>Scholars can reference graphics/pictures.</p> <p>Scholars can be paired with a peer for support throughout the activity.</p>	<p>Scholars can campaign to post the presentations on the community website or social media page.</p> <p>Scholars can brainstorm additional topics for discussion on a community forum about positive physical, emotional, and social choices that impact our lives into adulthood.</p>	<p>The facilitator can provide sentence stems to help scholars prepare their presentations.</p> <p>Scholars can be paired with a partner for assistance.</p>
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## Activity Reflection:

1. Why is it important to know the difference between positive and negative choices as we focus on life beyond high school?
2. What is the danger of not choosing wisely? How can these choices affect our physical, emotional, and physical wellbeing?
3. What is the benefit of choosing wisely? How can these choices affect our lives?

**Supplemental Resources:** N/A



# Choose Wise All the Time Choice Slips



Sort each statement into the categories of healthy and unhealthy behavior.

## Physical

Lack of sleep

Getting 4–5 hours of sleep each night

Exercising 3–4 times weekly

Vaping 4–5 times a week

Drinking 64 ounces of water daily

Getting Door Dash/Uber Eats for fast food weekly

Actively playing a sport

Managing stress through a balanced diet

## Social

Playing video games for various hours throughout the day

Increased screen time and falling asleep with your cell phone

Smoking at social gatherings

Scheduling the time for self-care activities

Choosing friendship circles that honor and share your values

Uncontrolled anger that leads to hostile behavior

Staying indoors for long periods of time without outside activity

Refusing to speak up/advocate for your needs



# Choose Wise All the Time Choice Slips



Sort each statement into the categories of healthy and unhealthy behavior.

Emotional
Unmanaged stress and frustration
Scheduling the time for self-care activities
Seeking counseling or therapy for difficult situations
Refusing to speak up/advocate for your needs
Being honest about your personal needs
Choosing calmness over constant disruptive behavior
Self-isolation
Increased amount of sleep and lack of healthy socialization

# Activity Plan

**Title: I Got Money in the Bank!**

**Suggested Time: 45 minutes**

**Suggested Grade Level(s): 6th–8th**

<p><b>Activity Objective:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scholars will understand the importance of saving money.</li> </ul> <p><b>Materials:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>paper</li> <li>scissors</li> <li>glue</li> <li>tape</li> <li>crayons</li> <li>markers</li> <li>stickers</li> </ul> <p><b>Vocabulary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>money</li> <li>bank</li> <li>safe</li> <li>deposit</li> <li>withdraw</li> </ul>	<p><b>Activity Overview:</b> Scholars will learn the benefits of having financial stability during a game of "Life Happens."</p>	
	<p><b>Bridge (Connect &amp; Engage)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Facilitator:</b> <i>At the end of this session, we are going to enjoy a little stress relieving arts and craft activity. We will create piggy banks. This may be considered an old school term as many of you may actually have bank accounts or some type of mobile payment system. A piggy bank is something used to store your money. Over time, you can deposit or withdraw your money from it. Many people in the past used piggy banks to store money in their homes for bills and other expenses.</i></li> </ul>
	<p><b>Boost (Teach)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Facilitator:</b> <i>Today's activity will require you to use saved money. A piggy bank or bank account are safe places to save your money. <b>Discuss why it is important to save money.</b></i></li> </ul>
	<p><b>Build (Rehearse &amp; Build for Transfer/Close)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>The facilitator will pass out amounts of money for scholars to have saved over a year. The amounts should range from \$300 to \$1,000.</b></li> <li><b>Type or write the following life events on paper and place them in a bag for scholars to choose from:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New shoes—\$150.</li> <li>Trip to urgent care for a sprained ankle—\$175.</li> <li>New phone—\$500.</li> <li>Two new tires for my car—\$200.</li> <li>Concert tickets—\$100.</li> <li>Three new outfits—\$250.</li> <li>Trip with friends—\$200.</li> <li>Breaks for my car—\$300.</li> <li>Haircut—\$40.</li> <li>Football tickets—\$60.</li> <li>Dinner with friends—\$30.</li> <li>Feel free to add more as these are just examples.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**Build (Rehearse  
& Build for  
Transfer/Close)**

- **Facilitator:** *We are going to play a game called "Life Happens—Can you Afford to Play?" I will give each of you an amount of money saved over a year. You will have to withdraw the money for two life events that can happen over the weekend. Let the group know if you stayed on the positive side—meaning you had money left over—or if your bank couldn't cover your expenses and you needed to borrow money to deposit into your bank.*
- **Additional discussion questions could include:** 1. *Consider the life events chosen. Are they things worth going into your piggy banks for?* 2. *How do you decide whether something is a need or a want?* 3. *What would you do if you did not have enough money in your piggy bank?*
- **The facilitator can show the video demonstration that shows how to make a piggy bank, distribute the supplies, and have everyone make a piggy bank.**
- **Facilitator:** *What if this piggy bank was the only thing you had to secure your money? Allow the group to discuss how things have changed over time.*

# Differentiation Station

Suggestions for Remediation	Suggestions for Acceleration	Special Education & English Learner Scaffolds
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<p>The facilitator can play the video multiple times.</p> <p>The facilitator can provide one-on-one assistance.</p>	<p>Scholars can research the types of banks they can use to deposit their money in.</p> <p>Scholars can research the types of bank accounts available and the information needed to open and maintain them.</p> <p>Scholars can research other ways to save money.</p>	<p>Scholars can use Google Translate as needed.</p> <p>The facilitator can provide written directions in the scholars' native language.</p>
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**Activity Reflection:** What are the benefits of having a bank account? How did it feel to have enough money to cover your expenses? How did it feel not to have enough money to cover your expenses? How could having enough money benefit our overall health?

**Supplemental Resources:** How to make a piggy bank - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p6v--1ZrMTA>



# Activity Plan

**Title: Setbacks and Snapbacks**

**Suggested Time: 45 minutes**

**Suggested Grade Level(s): 8th**

<p><b>Activity Objective:</b> Scholars will gain a better understanding of how having a positive mindset can allow you to progress when faced with challenges.</p> <p><b>Materials:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• setback and snapback sorts</li> <li>• glass</li> <li>• colored liquid</li> </ul> <p><b>Vocabulary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• setback</li> <li>• snapback</li> <li>• perspective</li> <li>• attitude</li> </ul>	<p><b>Activity Overview:</b> Scholars will use a glass and water to explore personal perspectives.</p>	
	<p><b>Bridge (Connect &amp; Engage)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The facilitator will divide scholars into groups. Scholars will view a glass filled halfway with a colored liquid.</b></li> <li>• <b>Facilitator: <i>Is the glass half-full or half-empty?</i></b></li> <li>• <b>If the facilitator does not have a glass to use for this activity, an image can be posted on the board or they can ask scholars to close their eyes and imagine a glass filled halfway with a liquid.</b></li> </ul>
	<p><b>Boost (Teach)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Facilitator: <i>How you see things, your point of view, is called your perspective. We can compare your perspective on this glass to your perspective on almost anything. A synonym for perspective is attitude. The glass can be half-empty (negative attitude) or half-full (positive attitude.)</i></b></li> <li>• <b>Have scholars talk with the group to discuss examples of how our perspective and attitude can allow us to snap back from a setback. Explain that a snapback is a quick return to a previous condition. A setback is something that keeps you from making progress.</b></li> </ul>
	<p><b>Build (Rehearse, &amp; Build for Transfer/Close)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Facilitator: <i>Your group will now match setbacks with snapbacks. Sort the information and be prepared to share your responses.</i></b></li> <li>• <b>Participants will have fifteen minutes to sort the information into the proper categories. Where there is not a snapback, they will work with together to come up with a snapback for the setback. Participants will then share their responses with the group.</b></li> <li>• <b>Facilitator: <i>Setbacks are inevitable. How we respond to them makes all the difference.</i></b></li> </ul>

# Differentiation Station

**Suggestions for Remediation**

**Suggestions for Acceleration**

**Special Education & English Learner Scaffolds**



The facilitator can ask prompting questions.

Scholars can be paired with a peer for support throughout the activity period.

Scholars can create a quick snapback sheet that peer scholars can refer to for encouragement.

Scholars will campaign to create motivating messages on the community website or social media page to promote positive snapbacks for common setbacks.

The facilitator can provide sentence stems for scholars' snapback responses to disappointing moments.

Scholars can think in pairs and share ideas with a partner during the activity for support.

Scholars can be given picture cards that show examples of setbacks and snapbacks that can be matched.

## **Activity Reflection:**

1. Share a setback you recently experienced. What snapback can support your setback?
2. What is the danger of not responding to our setbacks with snapbacks?

**Supplemental Resources: N/A**



# Setback and Snapback Matching Game

## Setback

## Snapback

Example:  
Failing a quiz you took a considerable amount of time to study for the week before.

Example:  
Receiving feedback from the quiz and seeking alternatives to improve your grade.

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# Setback and Snapback

Read each phrase below. Match the corresponding setbacks and snapbacks. Some phrases may not have a corresponding snapback. Work with your group members to determine an appropriate response.

- Losing a friend because your interests have changed over the past few years.
- Not making a team that you tried out for in school.
- Positively reflecting on the friends you want to engage with who have similar interests, connections, and values as you.
- Suffering an injury at the beginning of the athletic season
- Choosing to reflect on actions that will prepare you for the next job opportunity and healthy behaviors to improve your work ethic.
- Participating in mindfulness and breathing exercises consistently and speaking to a trusted counselor about your fears and concerns.
- Being fired from a job.
- Inquiring and researching other organizations or clubs you may have similar interests in at the time.
- Feeling constant anxiety in public areas/spaces.
- Attending an event with a positive friend group or someone encouraging.
- Intentionally following the health plan of the physician to become stronger while still encouraging the team throughout the rest of the season.
- Not being asked to a school dance/event.



## February—What Would Ace Do?



These are reflective open-ended questions that can serve as activity openers, closers, or check-ins throughout the month. The suggestion is to focus on one question and allow scholars to go as deep as possible with their responses.



Transitioning into becoming a teen can come with lots of changes and challenges that many adults may not talk to you about. What changes have you noticed in yourself since coming to middle school? How do these changes make you feel? What impact have these changes had on your relationships?

The topics below can be used as prompts if needed.

- Spending more time with friends and less time with family.
- Spending more time in your room alone.
- Trying out different personal styles (clothing, hair, makeup, etc.)
- Trying out different hobbies or having shifting interests.

Financial wellness is a very important part of your overall health. How would you prioritize the following? Why would you prioritize them in that way?

- Budgeting
- Saving
- Managing debt
- Investing
- Managing credit

What changes can you make now to ensure you are preparing yourself to be a financially fit adult?

