



LIVES IN BALANCE

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING ACTIVITIES

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

NORM SETTING

Use this activity to help your role-playing teams create and agree on norms for interacting and communicating before playing **Lives in Balance**.

SUPPORTING RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING

Use this sequence of one pre-sim and one post-sim activity to help students reflect on and assess their decision-making behaviors before and after **Lives in Balance**.

SUPPORTING VIRTUAL CONNECTION

Use this sequence of one pre-sim and one post-sim activity to practice noticing how different behaviors impact everyone's learning experience in a virtual learning environment like **Lives in Balance**.

SUPPORTING EMOTIONAL AWARENESS

Use this sequence of one pre-sim and one post-sim activity to help students build awareness of how emotions impact interactions and decisions, both within and outside of **Lives in Balance**.

To view a black and white, printer-friendly version of this packet, click [here](#).

<h2>OBJECTIVE</h2>	<p>The role-playing team(s) create and agree on norms for communication and behavior during the simulation to support everyone’s enjoyment and learning. If your class has already established norms, this can be a great opportunity to revisit and refine them.</p>
<h2>TIME</h2>	<p>25 minutes</p>
<h2>SEQUENCE</h2>	<p>Set norms before playing the simulation. Teams of six can decide on norms for their own role-play, or you may choose to do this activity all together as a class.</p>
<h2>INSTRUCTIONS</h2>	<p>NOTE: As you think about norms for engaging with this scenario, remember that it centers on a pandemic and includes themes of infection and loss of life, unemployment, lockdowns, and systemic marginalization and disproportionate suffering of communities of color. These issues may trigger unpleasant or even traumatic experiences for students that may impact their participation.</p> <p>Consider offering alternatives, one-to-one check-ins, and/or extra support (including access to counseling staff) for students who may find this content especially difficult. You may also want to offer some type of journaling or reflection prompt related to how students have coped with a pandemic prior to playing.</p> <div data-bbox="488 1167 667 1220" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; text-align: center;"> <p>STEP ONE</p> </div> <p>Facilitate a discussion using the following prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What’s different for you in your experience of learning when we are together in the classroom compared to when we are together virtually? • What do you know you need to do to stay alert and engaged as we play the simulation? • How will we signal to each other that something isn’t okay and needs to change? • What do we each commit to doing to support a simulation where we can all participate and learn? • How will we notice and respond to the feelings that come up when we disagree and still need to work together, both as characters in the simulation and as ourselves? • During the simulation, what should someone do if they feel upset or anxious, or if they need to stop participating for some reason?” <div data-bbox="488 1633 667 1686" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; text-align: center;"> <p>STEP TWO</p> </div> <p>As a class, vote on and rank the most important norms.</p> <div data-bbox="488 1780 688 1833" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; text-align: center;"> <p>STEP THREE</p> </div> <p>Make a list of the key behaviors, strategies, and signals the class has agreed are most important. Consider “pinning” this list in the chat box of your video conferencing software or other shared online space so everyone can revisit it regularly during the simulation.</p>

<p>OBJECTIVE</p>	<p>Students reflect on and describe factors that impact decision-making before participating in the simulation.</p>
<p>TIME</p>	<p>25 minutes</p>
<p>SEQUENCE</p>	<p>Use this activity prior to playing <i>Lives in Balance</i>.</p>
<p>INSTRUCTIONS</p>	<div data-bbox="500 688 706 747" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>STEP ONE</p> </div> <p>Review the components of the Decision-Making Rubric with students.</p> <div data-bbox="500 913 706 972" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>STEP TWO</p> </div> <p>The rubric looks at how you deal with data and information, and also how you use emotions, others' perspectives, and advocacy to come to decisions. Ask students to discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do our emotions influence our decisions? • How do our values influence our decisions? • How do our relationships influence our decisions? <div data-bbox="500 1297 734 1356" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>STEP THREE</p> </div> <p>Frame up the simulation. Share with students that as they play, they should try to notice how they're going about making decisions.</p> <p>Importantly, since they'll be playing a character, ask them to notice if trying to act as that character causes them to use an approach to decision-making that "goes against grain" for them (that does not feel natural).</p> <div data-bbox="500 1759 712 1818" style="background-color: #00728f; color: white; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>OPTIONAL</p> </div> <p>Tell students that they'll be evaluating themselves using the Decision-Making Rubric after the simulation, to increase their awareness of how they go about making decisions.</p>

<p>OBJECTIVE</p>	<p>Students reflect on how they made decisions as their character during the simulation, and identify their personal strengths as decision makers.</p>
<p>TIME</p>	<p>25 minutes</p>
<p>SEQUENCE</p>	<p>Use this activity in class or as homework after playing <i>Lives in Balance</i>.</p>
<p>INSTRUCTIONS</p>	<p>Have students complete the individual reflection exercise on the next page (available here as a Google doc). Optionally, discuss as a role-play team or whole class afterwards.</p> <p style="text-align: center; background-color: #00728f; color: white; padding: 10px; border-radius: 15px;"> CLICK HERE TO ACCESS THE DECISION-MAKING ASSESSMENT (GOOGLE DOC VERSION) </p>

DECISION-MAKING ASSESSMENT

ITHRIVE SIM: LIVES IN BALANCE



You are a decision-maker. Everyone can make decisions and solve problems, and everyone does that in a slightly different way. The goal of this activity is to reflect on how your character made decisions in *Lives in Balance* as a way to explore your unique decision-making strengths.

STEP ONE: As YOUR CHARACTER, what did you choose for the major decisions in this simulation?

Decision 1: Approve or deny the Bubble Plans for Arizona and Nevada. My character chose:

Decision 2: Whether to close state borders to prevent further virus spread. My character chose:

STEP TWO: Evaluate your character's decision-making process.

1. Using this [Decision Making Rubric](#), assess your character's decision-making process. Score your character in each dimension.

_____ **Identified Main Issue / Question**

_____ **Examined My Options**

_____ **Found and Evaluated Relevant Information**

_____ **Predicted Impact on Self, Others, the World**

_____ **Channeled Emotions in a Helpful Way**

_____ **Advocated for My Point of View Without Alienating Others**

_____ **Made and Communicated My Decision**

DECISION-MAKING ASSESSMENT

ITHRIVE SIM: LIVES IN BALANCE



2. What advice would you give to your character about their decision-making approach?

3. Would you personally have made the same decisions your character made? Why/why not?

STEP THREE: There are different styles and strengths when it comes to solving problems and making decisions, even when the same facts are available. What's your personal style as a decision-maker?

Read all the options below, then circle or highlight the one you consider to be most like you. Explain your choice.

- A.** I try to build consensus (agreement) among all the people the decision impacts.
- B.** I take my time researching; I look for all the data I can find before making a decision.
- C.** I organize information into a system or procedure so that it's clear and easier to make a decision next time.
- D.** I think of many unique possibilities and try approaches others haven't thought of before.
- E.** I build models, sketch, or otherwise demonstrate to others how a solution can work.

I chose this option because:

<h2>OBJECTIVE</h2>	<p>Students and teachers in virtual classrooms reflect on what supports authentic connection in the virtual classroom and play a simple game called Mute-iny to practice paying attention to each other before engaging in the simulation. This can help to focus attention on how each class member can contribute to an inclusive and engaging virtual space where everyone experiences warmth, belonging, and respect.</p>
<h2>TIME</h2>	<p>25 minutes (for each group of six)</p>
<h2>SEQUENCE</h2>	<p>You can use this activity prior to any <i>iThrive Sim</i> scenario.</p>
<h2>INSTRUCTIONS</h2>	<div data-bbox="483 630 657 676" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>STEP ONE</p> </div> <p>Reflect and discuss. Share with students that to stay connected from a physical distance in the virtual classroom, you might need to use some different strategies than you use when you're together in person. Ask students to reflect and share:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does feeling connected mean to you? • During periods of stay-at-home orders or social distancing, what are/were some ways you stayed connected to people you care about? <div data-bbox="483 940 657 987" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>STEP TWO</p> </div> <p>Tune in through play. Introduce the lip-reading game Mute-iny and orient students to it with something like, "Let's see how closely we can pay attention to one another."</p> <p>Play Mute-iny, a simple game that works with any video conferencing software with video and chat functions. Have each student who'll be playing prepare one sentence that they will say on mute while others try to guess what they are saying.</p> <p>TIP: You may want to have each role-play group of six play this game together in breakout rooms (if that is allowed in your school). If you want to play as a whole class, ask six students to volunteer to say sentences while the rest of the class guesses what they're saying.</p> <p>Directions (Source: www.zoomjam.org)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Everyone is muted, and the volume is turned down. 2. Pick an order for people to go (for instance, number each person 1, 2, 3, 4....) 3. One person starts by counting down from 3, then says a sentence really slowly. 4. Everyone else - type and send your response to the group chat and see what everyone else said. 5. Have the next person signal or post in the chat that they're starting, and repeat steps 3-5 until everyone has had a chance. 6. Once everyone has finished their turn, unmute yourselves and reveal your sentences. <div data-bbox="483 1696 678 1743" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>STEP THREE</p> </div> <p>Briefly discuss. Ask students to reflect and share: What did you notice about how we connected and tuned into each other while we played Mute-iny?</p> <div data-bbox="483 1864 669 1911" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>STEP FOUR</p> </div> <p>Set the stage for play. As we play <i>iThrive Sim</i>, pay attention to what we're doing when we feel connected, and what things prevent us from feeling connected.</p>

<h2>OBJECTIVE</h2>	<p>Students and teachers who played <i>iThrive Sim</i> virtually reflect on the factors that supported and prevented connection among class members during the simulation and work together to develop norms that foster connection in the virtual classroom going forward.</p>
<h2>TIME</h2>	<p>45 minutes</p>
<h2>SEQUENCE</h2>	<p>You can use this activity after any <i>iThrive Sim</i> scenario.</p>
<h2>INSTRUCTIONS</h2>	<div data-bbox="488 657 664 705" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>STEP ONE</p> </div> <p>Reflect and discuss. Ask students to think about how connected they were to each other during the simulation. Ask them to consider moments when they felt really connected to others, and also to consider moments when they did not feel connected. Then, pose some discussion questions to raise up their reflections through sharing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does feeling connected mean to you? • When we played <i>iThrive Sim</i>, what did you notice was happening when you felt connected to the group? • When we played <i>iThrive Sim</i>, what did you notice was happening when you did NOT feel connected to the group? <p>TIP: To promote authenticity, offer different sharing options: students can discuss verbally, write in the chat, and message you directly.</p> <div data-bbox="488 1226 664 1274" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>STEP TWO</p> </div> <p>Co-create norms that support connection going forward. Using the behaviors and factors that came up in discussion, create together a list of norms (things we agree to do, things we agree not to do) to support feeling connected in the virtual classroom. Invite students to vote on and rank behaviors they think are most important, and to explain why.</p> <p>Determine a list of norms that you all agree are a good fit for your class at this moment, recognizing that they may need to be flexible as circumstances change.</p> <div data-bbox="488 1661 683 1709" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>STEP THREE</p> </div> <p>Strategy time. Brainstorm together about how you will keep the norms alive. Discuss the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will we remind ourselves of the norms we created? (For example, by pinning them in the chat window for every class meeting.) • What's our signal to each other that norms for feeling connected are slipping? • What are 2-3 strategies we can use to reset when problems arise?

<h2>OBJECTIVE</h2>	<p>Students and teachers practice building awareness of how they experience emotions in the body, and how emotions impact their interactions and decision-making in the simulation and beyond.</p>
<h2>TIME</h2>	<p>15 minutes</p>
<h2>SEQUENCE</h2>	<p>You can use this activity prior to any <i>iThrive Sim</i> scenario.</p>
<h2>INSTRUCTIONS</h2>	<div data-bbox="487 640 662 688" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>STEP ONE</p> </div> <p>Introduce “emotions as information.” Share with students that we often think of emotions as good or bad depending on how they feel. But all emotions are really just information – important information.</p> <div data-bbox="487 865 662 913" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>STEP TWO</p> </div> <p>Invite students to notice and name emotions. Share with students that emotions show up pretty consistently in different places of the body. Ask students to notice and share in the chat how they feel right now.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anger tends to show up in the upper back, neck and jaw. • Fear tends to show up in the belly. • Sadness tends to show up in the throat. • We usually feel joy all over. <div data-bbox="487 1228 685 1276" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>STEP THREE</p> </div> <p>Briefly discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do emotions impact your interactions with other people? • How do emotions impact the decisions you make? <div data-bbox="487 1453 678 1501" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>STEP FOUR</p> </div> <p>Set the stage for play. Orient students towards noticing emotions as they play the simulation. Say something like: As we play <i>iThrive Sim</i>, pay attention to your emotions and how they’re changing and where you notice them in your body.</p> <div data-bbox="487 1711 669 1759" style="background-color: #00728f; color: white; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>OPTIONAL</p> </div> <p>The teacher or facilitator can pause the gameplay anytime during an <i>iThrive Sim</i> scenario. For this lesson, pause the game at a couple of key moments and remind students to notice how they feel and jot down a note for themselves. Places to consider pausing for an emotional check-in: before making a big decision, after making a big decision, after a lively or tense debate, after players make a significant compromise or come to an agreement.</p>

Emotion Word List. Share this word list with students to encourage building accuracy and specificity in naming emotions.

ANGRY	SAD	ANXIOUS
GRUMPY	DISAPPOINTED	AFRAID
FRUSTRATED	MOURNFUL	STRESSED
ANNOYED	REGRETFUL	VULNERABLE
DEFENSIVE	DEPRESSED	CONFUSED
SPITEFUL	PARALYZED	BEWILDERED
IMPATIENT	PESSIMISTIC	SKEPTICAL
DISGUSTED	TEARFUL	WORRIED
OFFENDED	DISMAYED	CAUTIOUS
IRRITATED	DISILLUSIONED	NERVOUS

EXTENSION RESOURCES

HURT	EMBARASSED	HAPPY
JEALOUS	ISOLATED	THANKFUL
BETRAYED	SELF-CONSCIOUS	TRUSTING
ISOLATED	LONELY	COMFORTABLE
SHOCKED	INFERIOR	CONTENT
DEPRIVED	GUILTY	EXCITED
VICTIMIZED	ASHAMED	RELAXED
AGGRIEVED	REPUGNANT	RELIEVED
TORMENTED	PATHETIC	ELATED
ABANDONED	CONFUSED	CONFIDENT

Source: ["3 Ways to Better Understand Your Emotions" by Susan David, Harvard Business Review.](#)

<h2>OBJECTIVE</h2>	<p>Students and teachers reflect on emotions that arose while playing <i>iThrive Sim</i> and learn a strategy for managing emotions.</p>
<h2>TIME</h2>	<p>15–20 minutes</p>
<h2>SEQUENCE</h2>	<p>You can use this activity after any <i>iThrive Sim</i> scenario.</p>
<h2>INSTRUCTIONS</h2>	<div data-bbox="492 619 667 663" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>STEP ONE</p> </div> <p>Reflect and discuss. Ask students to think and/or write about the following prompts. They could write reflections individually and then share observations with the group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What emotions did you notice while we played <i>iThrive Sim</i>? • How did emotions impact your interactions? • How did emotions impact the decisions you made? <div data-bbox="492 968 667 1012" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>STEP TWO</p> </div> <p>Acknowledge that emotions are always present. Tell students that you are aware that as you go through this class, semester, or year together, a whole range of emotions will come up. Those emotions will tell you all important information, and they will impact how you interact and make decisions.</p> <div data-bbox="492 1283 688 1327" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>STEP THREE</p> </div> <p>Strategy time. Tell students that science shows that naming an emotion actually helps to manage it. Let them know that in this class, you’re going to practice this strategy together, Pause, Breathe, & Name:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pause: Take a pause from whatever we’re doing in the moment. • Breathe: Take a couple of breaths and notice how we feel and where it shows up in the body. • Name: Name the feeling in our heads or out loud before we move on. <p>TIP: You can keep the Pause, Breathe, & Name strategy alive in your classroom by weaving it into an existing routine, or by assigning a different student to lead the activity once per class period and as needed.</p>
<h2>EXTENSION RESOURCES</h2>	<p>Why Does Naming Emotions Help Us Manage Them?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read “That Tarantula Is Terrifying!”: The Power of Naming Emotions to Reduce Anxiety”. • Listen to “Got Anger? Try Naming It To Tame It”.