

Introductions



The Goal: The purposes of this exercise is to kick off the group, get to know the students, and set the tone of the meetings.

Materials: Circle of chairs, paper and pencils/pens.



Step 1: Have students sit in a circle and introduce yourself and the purpose of the group. Emphasize that the point of the group is to dive deeper into what your strengths and weaknesses are, help you grow, examine why you are at school, and figure out what you want to get out of school.

Step 2: Instruct each student to share their name, how long they have been at the school and/or lived in the area, then tell the group one thing everyone knows about them and one thing nobody knows about them. Ask follow-up questions.

Step 3: Students should get out paper and pencil/pen (or pass them out). Ask them to write down answers to the prompts below. Let them know that they will not be asked to share their favorite/least favorite things so they can be honest.

- What is your favorite thing in life right now?
- What are your top three least favorite things?
- What do you love about this particular school?
- What do you dislike about this particular school?
- What does the world look like to you?
- What do you wish the world looked like?
- How can you be a part of making this happen?

Step 4: Talk a little about the last two questions as a group. Close by explaining that the group is going to explore how each person is going to carry out that last question.

RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

Academic: *Building Supportive Adult Relationships.*

Social/Emotional: *Sense of Belonging; Self-Motivation / Self Direction; Perseverance; Self Confidence; Coping Skills; Building Positive Peer Relationships.*

Art Project

The Goal: The idea behind this exercise is to spark creativity in the students. Creativity is essential because it helps people not feel trapped in their lives. The other purpose to this exercise is to give the students an opportunity to express themselves freely. There are no restrictions, and the students will have no fears of being judged or graded.

Materials: Room, tables and chairs, [Indigo Reports](#), whatever art materials are accessible.

Step 1: Provide the students with any art materials on hand. Some examples are posters and markers, canvases and paint, modeling clay, magazines and scissors (*for those who don't like to draw*) or simply a pen and paper. Have the students create a piece of art that represents themselves. The students are free to get as creative as they want. There are only two rules: the art has to be all about themselves, and it has to all be positive. (See **An Example** on the right).



TIP: [Motivators](#) from the [Indigo Report](#) are a good place to start to inspire students to think of images that represent what drives them.

RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

Career: Creativity; Communication.

Social/Emotional: Whole Self; Sense of Belonging; Positive Attitude; Self-Direction; Open Perspective; Extracurricular Activity; Coping Skills; Empathy; Self Advocacy; Positive Relationships.

Highs and Lows

Note: Facilitator should do all suggested exercises first to show the “safety” of the group.

The Goal: The purpose of this exercise is to remind students that all of life contains both positives and negatives; life is never “all good” or “all bad.” This exercise is a good icebreaker for the first few sessions, when students are still getting a feel for the group.

Materials: Room, circle of chairs, [Indigo Report](#).



Step 1: Have the students sit in a circle. Each student takes a turn sharing one low from their week (something that made them sad, frustrated, or angry) and one high (something good that happened). Try to limit each person’s turn to one minute each.

An Example: “One low from my week was when I received a poor grade on my math test. One high from my week was when I went to the movies with my friends.”



TIP: You can use pages on the [Indigo Report](#) such as the [Communication Do’s and Don’ts](#) to highlight examples of high and low points during interactions or help them brainstorm. You can also use a hacky sack or soft object that students to throw to the next participant.

Note: Some of our SEL facilitators do a quick round of Highs and Lows before each session.

RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

Academic: *Presenting; Concepts Comprehension.*

Career: *Communication; Listening; Presenting; Empathy; Collaboration/Cooperation; Teamwork.*

Social/Emotional: *Whole Self; Self Confidence; Sense of Belonging; Positive Attitude; Self Discipline/Control; Coping Skills; Supportive Relationships; Empathy; Self Advocacy; Social Maturity.*

Use Your Unique Strengths

The Goal: This exercise helps students understand their strengths, how to articulate them, and explore how to use them.

Materials: Room, circle of chairs, [Indigo Report](#), pencil and paper.



Step 1: Have students read the [Summary: Your Strengths](#) page of the report and star the ones that stand out to them.

Step 2: Have students get in groups of three to talk about their strengths and times when they have used them.

Step 3: Now have the same groups talk about places where they could use their strengths in the future. Have them each write down three examples for themselves.

Example: Two of Sally's strengths are "Thinks outside the box when gathering information" and "Brings enthusiasm to the creative process." She realizes these could be used to excel on the multimedia research project she has been dreading in her history class.

TIP: You may need to rephrase some of the strengths on the Indigo Report if students have difficulty understanding certain words or phrases.

RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

Academic: *Results Orientation; Extracurricular Activities Participation.*

Career: *Self Confidence; Whole Self; Perseverance.*

Social/Emotional: *Building Positive Peer Relationships; Sense of Belonging.*



Voicing Your Personal Needs

Goal: This exercise will help students understand what their unique combination of needs is and how to express them to others.

Materials: Room, circle of chairs, [Indigo Report](#), pencil and paper.

Step 1: Have students read the [Things You May Want From Others](#) section of their Indigo Reports and have them star the ones that resonate.



Step 2: Have students write down their own answers to the following questions:

1. What is your most important need?
2. When has a person fulfilled your most important need? How did it feel?
3. When have you not received what you needed? How did that feel?

Step 3: Divide students into pairs. Have them share their answers with each other, and brainstorm instances or places where they need to express their most important needs to people around them.

An Example: Tom's most important need could be "Public recognition of his ideas and results." He realizes he needs to express to his teacher he would like more feedback on the projects he does for the class.

TIP: If some students would feel uncomfortable sharing, they can work alone and write down places in their lives where they need to express their needs.

RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

Academic: Critical Thinking; Positive Attitude.

Career: Overcoming Obstacles; Perseverance; Self Confidence.

Social/Emotional: Sense of Belonging; Self Advocacy; Coping Skills; Social Maturity.



Positive Self Talk

The Goal: The purpose of this exercise is to teach students to control their thinking patterns and view themselves in a positive light.

Materials: Room, circle of chairs, [Indigo Report](#), pencil and paper.

Step 1: Ask students to think of an example of negative self-talk they tell themselves frequently.

Step 2: Pair students up and have them tell their partner something they like about who they are.

Step 3: Have students practice the exercise on their own. In the next session, ask students to share stories about how positive self talk affected their week.

An Example: Instead of a student telling himself “I’m too fat”, we want to reinforce “I’m a great listener, and I make people laugh.”

**no
negative
thoughts
allowed**

TIP: Use the [Summary Page](#) in the Indigo Report and look at [Strengths](#) and [Value to a Team](#) to help reinforce positive self talk.

RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

Career: *Empathy; Teamwork.*

Social/Emotional: *Self-Confidence; Positive Attitude; Perseverance; Sense of Belonging; Coping Skills; Results Orientation; Self Motivation / Self Direction.*

Support System



The Goal: This exercise will help students understand the qualities that make up “safe” people so that they can build a better support system.

Materials: Room, circle of chairs, [Indigo Report](#), pencil and paper.

Step 1: Brainstorm qualities of “safe” people. Students can use real or imaginary people for examples.

Step 2: Have students list real people in their lives that fit these qualities.

Step 3: Challenge students to be “safe” for someone else by trying to bring out one of the qualities of a safe person in their own lives.

An Example: An example of a safe person could be “caring, a good listener who knows my needs” or “honest, direct, gives me smart advice.”



TIP: The definition of “safe” will vary from student to student. Use the [Summary Page](#) and [DISC](#) in the Indigo Report to determine what type of safe person will be the best fit for how each one communicates.

RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

Career: *Take Responsibility; Self Advocacy; Self Motivation / Self Direction.*

Social/Emotional: *Whole Self; Critical Thinking; Personal Safety; Building Positive Peer Relationships, Building Positive Adult Relationships.*

Letter to Yourself



The Goal: The goal of this exercise is to have students become more self-loving and self-empowered by making them take the time to give good advice to themselves.



Materials: Room, place to write, [Indigo Report](#), pencil and paper.

Step 1: Have students write a letter of advice to an imaginary person who is exactly like them facing the exact same problems they are. Write the advice like you would to a friend or family member.

Step 2: Upon completion, challenge students to take their own advice to see what happens.

Step 3: Invite any students who feel comfortable to share their letters and experiences with the groups.

An Example: A student could write a letter to herself to stay away from things that upset her—social media’s overstated opinions, negative people. Instead, she encourages her to spend more time creating things and less time consuming things.

TIP: If students are having a hard time thinking of advice, they can look at the [Don’ts: ... and How Others Should Not Communicate with You](#) page of their Indigo Report to get ideas of things they could tell themselves to stay away from.

RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

Academic: *Identifying Goals; Take Responsibility.*

Career: *Perseverance; Communication; Self-Advocacy.*

Social/Emotional: *Self Confidence; Self-Motivation; Coping Skills; Handling Change.*

How to Communicate with Others

The Goal: The objective is to explain to students how people are different, and how they can use their unique communication style to connect with students who are not like them.

Materials: Room, circle of chairs, [Indigo Report](#), pencil and paper.



Step 1: Split the room into two groups—those [above 50 Dominance](#) and those [below 50 Dominance](#). Review the unique strengths of each and how not to communicate with them by using the [DISC Reference Guide](#). Feel free to ask the following questions:

- What are some things we can do to make both Highs and Lows feel comfortable communicating?
- Are there any [High D's](#) or [Low D's](#) that would like to share how they communicate with others?

Step 2: Do the same for [Influencing](#), [Steadiness](#), and [Compliance](#).

Step 3: Have students go back to their seats and either write one paragraph or draw a picture talking about their strengths and potential challenges.

Example: When going over [High Influencing](#) and [Low Influencing](#), one take away may be that Highs need to make room for Lows to speak up in group projects—because the [Low I's](#) may be observing details [High I's](#) miss.

TIP: Make sure to reinforce that there are no better or worse styles. Research shows the best performing teams have a mixture of highs and lows in all categories.

RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

Academic: Communication; Building Positive Peer Relationships; Results Orientation.

Social/Emotional: Sense of Belonging; Self Advocacy; Communication; Perseverance.

Talent Show



The Goal: This exercise is designed to boost the self-esteem of the students—it also shows them that there are many ways for them to use their talents in life. Reminding students that there are plenty of options in the future is important to keep them inspired to move forward.



Materials: Room, chairs arranged audience style, [Indigo Report](#), pencil and paper.

Step 1: The week before this exercise, tell students to write down a talent they want to display or perform. Tell them to feel free to be creative.

Step 2: Allow each student time to share their talent with the group. After the student has shared, use the [Indigo Report](#) to brainstorm what sort of education or career futures could utilize their talents and abilities.

An Example: A student brings in a short story to share. You look at her [Indigo Report](#) and see she's also a [High I](#). She could do very well in journalism, travel writing, or advertising.

TIP: You can use pages on the Indigo Report such as [Potential Degree Matches](#) to help make connections between the talent and real world opportunities.

RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

Academic: Creativity; Self Motivation / Self Direction.

Career: Collaboration / Cooperation; Results Orientation; Identifying Goals.

Social/Emotional: Building Supportive Adult Relationships; Self Confidence; Sense of Belonging.

The Wrap Up



Goal: The goal of this exercise is to talk about what students learned from these sessions and what they see as practical lessons they can use in their lives.

Materials: Room, circle of chairs, pencil and paper.

Step 1: Ask them a series of open-ended questions. Feel free to guide the conversation in any direction you see fit.



- What will you take away from this group?
- What will you continue working on?
- Was there any one exercise that stuck out to you?
- Did you bond with any of the students in this group?
- Did this give you any unique ideas of how to do things in your life?

Example: Brendan shares that he really enjoyed learning how to voice his personal needs, and that he feels like Jack is now a close friend who he can talk to about these sorts of things.

TIP: If you are doing any sort of post-test / feedback form over this experience, doing it during this exercise would be the ideal time.

RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

Career: Take Responsibility; Handling Change / Adapting; Self Advocacy.

Social/Emotional: Self Confidence; Sense of Belonging; Building Positive Peer Relationships; Self Motivation / Self Direction; Perseverance; Overcoming Obstacles.

Practicing Resiliency

The Goal: This exercise is designed to remind students that “failure” is not a bad thing—our mistakes are usually the best learning experiences in our lives!

Materials: Room, circle of chairs, [Indigo Report](#), pencil and paper.

Step 2: Show [this clip](#): (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AWtRadR4zYM>) from Disney’s *Meet the Robinsons*. It’s a perfect example of how failure can be a good thing.

Step 1: Have students share with the group a time they failed and what they felt and learned. After each story, the group will applaud and cheer.

An Example: A student shares about a time he missed the details in a project and how it caused him to get a lower grade. He talks about how he learned to 1) pay attention to details and 2) communicate with the teacher if he is unclear.

TIP: Feel free to reference the [Skills](#) page in the Indigo Report—some students’ past failures may actually have resulted in certain skills being more developed.



RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

Academic: Critical Thinking; Open Perspective / Informed Decisions; Taking Challenges.

Career: Perseverance; Overcoming Obstacles; Handling Change/Adapting.

Social/Emotional: Life-Long Learning; Self-Confidence.

Conquering Fear of the Future

The Goal: The goal of this exercise is to build students' confidence about the future by remembering their past successes.

Materials: Room, circle of chairs, [Indigo Report](#).

Step 1: Ask students to think of something they are nervous about. (These fears do not need to be shared out loud.)

Step 2: Pair students up and have them both share a victory from their past. They can share with the group if they are willing.

Step 3: Encourage students to think about this past success throughout the week when facing challenges that make them scared or nervous.

An Example: A student is nervous for an upcoming test, but remember a past test that they studied for and passed. As they prepare for the next test, they will use the memory of the last test as motivation.

TIP: Look at the [Motivators](#) section of the Indigo Report for clues of how you could inspire or drive students to tackle certain challenges they fear.



RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

Academic: Results Orientation; Taking Challenges.

Career: Positive Attitude; Take Responsibility.

Social/Emotional: Self Control / Self Discipline; Perseverance; Social Maturity; Self Confidence; Empathy.

Listening



The Goal: Students will learn the value and validation that active listening provides, and they will practice providing it to others.

Materials: Room, chairs arranged in pairs, [Indigo Report](#).

Step 1: Divide students into pairs: one talker, one listener. Facing each other in chairs, have the talker speak for 30 seconds about any topic they choose.



Step 2: The listener must try to summarize what the talker told them. The talker can (politely) correct them if they are wrong.

Step 3: Repeat this exercise as many times as desired with new pairs. You can also have the listener ask a question about what they heard and summarize the answer.

Step 4: Group debrief/retrospect on what was heard/learned.

TIP: To challenge students, have them look at their partners [Do's: ...How Other People Should Communicate with You](#) page on their Indigo Report to figure out what is the best way to communicate and listen with someone

RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

Academic: Communication / Listening.

Career: Social Maturity / Appropriate Behavior; Open Perspective.

Social/Emotional: Building Positive Peer Relationships; Empathy; Collaboration,

5-4-3-2-1 Game



The Goal: The point of this exercise is to teach a coping mechanism to students to help handle stress, panic attacks, or emotional overload.

Materials: Room, circle of chairs, pencil and paper.

Step 1: Have everyone sit down (either on a chair or the ground) and think about five colors they *see*.

Step 2: Have students think about four sounds they *hear*.

Step 3: Have students touch three objects in the room and think about how they *feel* (they can move during this exercise).

Step 4: Have students think of two *smells*.

Step 5: Have students think of the one *taste* of their favorite food.



An Example: I see the colors blue, grey, white, green, and red; I hear crickets, the air conditioning, people walking, and my breathing; I feel my pen, the carpet, and my shirt; I smell fresh air and my shampoo; I remember the taste of mocha-flavored ice cream.

TIP: Encourage students to use this in stressful situations or at times when there are frustrated with the way people communicate with them.

RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

Career: *Take Responsibility; Overcoming Obstacles; Positive Attitude.*

Social/Emotional: *Coping Skills; Self Advocacy; Whole Self; Self Confidence.*

Asking “Why?”



The Goal: This exercise helps students take a deeper look into their insecurities to find ways to overcome them.

Materials: Room, circle of chairs, [Indigo Report](#), pencil and paper.

Step 1: Have students form pairs—one listener, one talker. Tell the talker to share one of their insecurities with the listener.

Step 2: Have the listener begin asking the talker “Why” questions (“Why does this make you feel insecure?”). There will be five questions each round.

Step 3: Switch roles and do another five rounds.

Step 4: Have the students talk about how they could deal with their insecurities. Ask if any groups feel comfortable sharing.

An Example: “Why” questions could allow one student to express that he wants to do well in school so he doesn’t seem stupid because it would make him feel like a loser.

TIP: For individual students that discuss deep or troubling issues, reference their [Social Emotional Scores](#) in the Indigo Dashboard.



RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

Academic: *Critical Thinking; Self Direction / Self Motivation.*

Career: *Communication; Social Maturity.*

Social/Emotional: *Identifying Goals; Perseverance; Coping Skills; Empathy; Self-Confidence; Whole Self.*

Guest Speaker



This exercise can be tailored to bring in a guest speaker to talk about any subject.

The Goal: A guest can bring an outside perspective on the problems that can help students see issues from a new light—it equips students with new ways to approach the thing with which they are struggling.



Materials: Dependent on how you tailor this exercise.

Step 1: Find a speaker who can speak on a topic that seems relevant to your students (i.e. self confidence, relating to others, sense of self).

Step 2: Bring the speaker in. S/he can be woven into any of the other exercises, or this can be a stand-alone topic on a certain issue.

An Example: If your students particularly struggle with negative self-image, bring in a speaker to address that. The speaker could have expertise on how to promote positive body image, or positive self-talk.

TIP: Use the [DISC and Motivators](#) of your group to help prep your speaker. Are your students [High D's](#) who want to be spoken to directly and firmly? Are they motivated by [Social](#) and therefore want to know how they can use this information to help others?

RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

The ASCA Mindset & Behaviors addressed depends on what the speaker presents to the students.

Understanding Your Behavior

Goal: This exercise not only reinforces self-awareness of unique strengths and skills, but how to listen and understand the strengths, skills, and styles of others.



Materials: Room, circle of chairs, [Indigo Report](#), pencil and paper.

Step 1: Divide students into pairs. Have students read their partner's [About You](#) page from the Indigo Report. Have them star things they think are accurate about the other person.

Step 2: Swap reports back, and have students star things that stand out on their individual report. Give students time to talk about why they starred the things that they did on each report.

Step 3: Ask the following questions:

- How did it feel to hear about yourself?
- Were there any similarities between you and your partner?
- How can you better use your style at home and school?

An Example: Jack discovers that what stuck out most to his partner about him is “likes to win through persistence.” He thinks about how he could apply that mentality toward the college environment.

TIP: Emphasize to the students that this exercise is about highlighting strengths, not weaknesses.

RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

Academic: Results Orientation; Communication; Collaboration; Social Maturity.

Social/Emotional: Building Positive Peer Relationships; Self Confidence; Sense of Belonging; Empathy.

Ideal Work Environment

Goal: This exercise helps students understand they need to find and create environments that fit who they naturally are.

Materials: Room, circle of chairs, [Indigo Report](#), pencil and paper.



Step 1: Have students read the [Your Ideal Environment](#) section of the Indigo Report. Have them star the things that are important to them.

Step 2: Have students describe the “perfect class” or “perfect job” by either drawing a picture or writing. When finished, ask students to share with the group. Here are a few questions you can use to guide the conversation:

- Would the teacher call on you often or not at all?
- What would the room look like?
- Would you work in teams or on your own?
- Are you graded on projects, tests, book reports or something else?

Example: Xiao Yu sees her report says she likes “Work tasks that change frequently.” She writes about a classroom where activities are different every single day.

TIP: It’s important to communicate to the group that students will have different desires for their school and work environment—and that is okay. It’s not about conforming, but about better understanding what you need.

RAMP (ASCA) Mindset & Behaviors addressed and developed:

Academic: Creativity; Results Orientation; Positive Attitude.

Career: Self Advocacy; Self Motivation / Self Direction; Critical Thinking.

Social/Emotional: Sense of Belonging; Self Confidence; Communication; Whole Self.