

LESSON FOUR

OBJECTIVE 1: RAISING AWARENESS OF SCREEN USE

LESSON 4: Preparing For The Challenge

OBJECTIVE

- Students will become familiar with the concept of screen reduction.
- Students will be introduced to the Screen-Free Challenge.

LESSON OVERVIEW

- Students turn in and discuss their 3-Day Screen Logs.
- Students discuss screen reduction and Screen-Free Challenge.
- Students create a class or individual spirit prop. (Mystery Message from Lesson 3 can be used as the slogan.)

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Appropriate size paper for Class Spirit Prop
- Colored markers, crayons, etc.
- Other materials vary depending upon prop choice



Family Newsletter

Distribute Issue Two of the *Take the Challenge* * *Take Charge* Family Newsletter.

PROCEDURE

Step 4.1: Collect 3-Day Logs

- **Tell Students:** It has been a few days since the *Screen Logs* were assigned. Let's talk about what you've learned.
- **Ask Students:** What did you find out about your screen habits from filling out your logs?

Examples:

- I found out that I watch a lot more screens than I thought I did.
- I watch the same videos over and over again because I am bored.
- Sometimes I watch TV shows that I don't really like.
- I watch TV when I could be doing other things.
- I can play video games for hours without realizing it.

Step 4.2: Students Are Introduced to the Screen-Free Challenge

- **Tell Students:** Today we are going to talk about something very exciting! So far we have learned that as a class we spend a lot of time watching screens. We have also learned that our favorite activities are not related to screens. According to our *Things We Enjoy* chart, we prefer _____. (Mention activities cited earlier by the class.)
- **Tell Students:** Children from California to Florida to Texas to New York - children everywhere in the United States - spend more time using screens than doing anything else, except sleeping. As we know, this is the time that they could spend playing, reading, talking, creating things, or just having more fun.

Teacher's Note: You can expand this point into a quick geography review by locating example states on the map.

- **Tell Students:** Many people worry about how much time children spend using screens. Teachers, parents, doctors, members of congress and even the Vice President and President spend time wondering what can be done about all the time kids spend in front of screens. They think that kids are addicted to screens, and that even if they tried, kids wouldn't be able to control their use!
- **Ask Students:** Do you think this is true? Do you think kids are addicted to screens?

Allow students to respond. If students respond affirmatively and agree that children are addicted to screens, then challenge them to prove that they can be scientists and study how screens affects our lives.

- **Tell Students:** We are going to be one of the few schools in the United States that is going to try and take control of screen use for the entire year. It will be challenging, but that is why it is so important. We will feel a great sense of success when we prove to everyone that we are not addicted to screens!
- **Tell Students:** There are two parts to our experiment. The first part will be a Screen-Free Challenge to prove that we can go without TV and video/computer games. The second part of our experiment will involve each of us making a big effort to control our screen use for the rest of the year. During both parts of the experiment, we will examine how our lives are affected by screens, and try various ways to document our historic experience!
- **Tell Students:** We are going to prove to others that kids **can** control the amount of time they spend using screens!
- **Ask Students:** To have a successful experiment we will need all of you to do your absolute best in the challenge of reducing screen use. Every one of you will have the chance to win awards. Do you think that this class will be successful in doing our best in the experiment? (“YES”!)
- **Tell Students:** I believe we **can** prove that children can spend less time in front of screens!

Step 4.3: Students Create a Class or Individual Spirit Prop

This prop will be used at the Opening Ceremony.

- **Tell Students:** As a class about to embark on an exciting experiment, we need to create a class spirit prop to remind us that we’re all in this together!
- **Tell Students:** Soon we will have an Opening Ceremony for the Screen-Free Challenge! We will sign contracts agreeing to do our best not to watch any TV, videotapes or DVDs, play any video or computer games or surf the Internet during the Screen-Free Challenge.
- **Tell Students:** Now we will brainstorm ideas to put on our spirit prop.

Teacher’s Note: A class name or slogan can be used on the spirit props. Examples of class names, slogans, and spirit props follow.

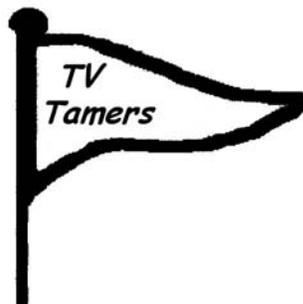
Examples of class names:

- Screen Stompers
- TV Tamers
- The No Screen Team

Examples of class slogans:

- Have no fear, the Screen Stompers are here!
- Run and play, be screen free all day.
- We say No to Screens and Yes to Me!
- Wake-up Screen Zombies!

Examples of props:





Family Newsletter - Issue Two

As part of the *Take the Challenge* * *Take Charge* program, our Screen-Free Challenge begins soon!

The Screen-Free Challenge is simple. During the challenge, students pledge to not watch television or movies and not play any video or computer games.

Your child will need your support during this Screen-Free Challenge. Any guidance and encouragement you can offer will help your child stay screen free.

The Screen-Free Challenge can be a wonderful opportunity for your child to experience new or rarely played games or pursue a new hobby.

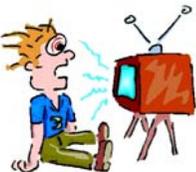
The whole family may want to join in the Screen-Free Challenge to see what neat things can happen when everyone has more time to think of new and exciting things to do!

To make the most of the Screen-Free Challenge try some of these fun activities:

- **Make a plan:** Think of a place the family will enjoy. Plan to go there on a Saturday morning when the kids are usually watching cartoons.
- **Play a game:** Bring out the board games and card games. Invite friends over to join in the fun.
- **Go outside:** Play ball, soccer, hockey, or basketball. Rollerblade, ride a bike, run a race, play Frisbee, jump rope, play with the dog or walk around the neighborhood.
- **Read a book:** Go to the library and pick out a new book or sit down with a magazine. Read to your child. Reading to children makes them feel good and helps them do better in school.

Your child will be bringing home information regarding how the challenge works and when it begins. Please join us as we turn screens off and turn life on!

Scary Statistics



- ✓ Children spend more time watching television than in any other activity except sleep.
- ✓ Children in households where screens are on "always" or "most of the time" are less likely to read than are children in homes where screen time is controlled.
- ✓ Screens are a part of our society. They're a source of information and entertainment, but excessive use takes away from family time, saps a child's creative thinking skills, and often means homework isn't getting done.