

# LESSON FOUR

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**OBJECTIVE 1: RAISING AWARENESS OF SCREEN USE**

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## LESSON 4: Preparing For The Challenge

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### OBJECTIVE

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

### LESSON OVERVIEW

- Students will turn in and discuss their Screen Logs.
- Students will find individual and class average viewing time.
- Students discuss screen reduction and the Screen-Free Challenge.
- Students complete a classroom name for Screen-Free Challenge.
- Students create a team slogan.
- Students will turn in their completed Smart homework.

### MATERIALS NEEDED

- Butcher paper for Banner (approximately 5 to 7 feet long): 1 per class
- Colored markers: enough for the whole class
- “Viewing Habits” Worksheet 4.1: 1 per student



### Family Newsletter

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

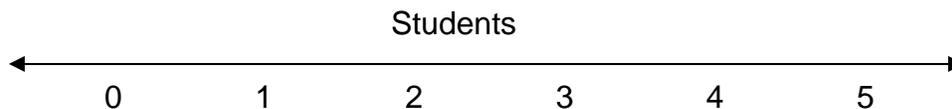
## PROCEDURE

### Step 4.1: Collect Screen Logs and Discuss Results

- **Tell Students:** It has been about a week since the *Screen Logs* were assigned. The time has come for everyone to turn in their logs.
- **Ask Students:** What did you find out about your screen viewing habits from filling out your *Screen Logs*?

*Examples/Prompts:*

- 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.
- **Tell Students:** Now let's take a look at our Screen Logs and find the amount of time we actually spent in front of a screen. Follow the steps on the "Viewing Habits" Worksheet 4.1 to calculate individual and class viewing time averages. Determine your total viewing time for the seven days. Divide the total by seven. This is your average viewing time.
- **Optional Activity:** Have students do a silent line-up to see where their viewing time fits as compared to their peers. Students can hold up their fingers to show their average daily viewing time and line up among their peers. The line-up should look like this:



- **Tell Students:** Understanding the amount of time you spend in front of screens can help you make better choices.

*Examples/Prompts:*

- Do you think you spend the right amount of time in front of screens? Would you like to reduce your screen time?
- Is there some action you will take to change the amount of time you spend watching screens?

### Step 4.2: Students Are Introduced to 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 watch an average of \_\_\_\_\_ hours of 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 watching TV 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 watching 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 the screens. They think that kids are addicted to screens, and that even if they tried, kids wouldn't be able to control their viewing!
- **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 break free of screens. If children disagree and claim that they are not addicted to screens, then suggest that they prove it to people who believe otherwise.

- **Tell Students:** This year we are going to be part of something very important that all of the people who worry about how watching a lot of screens affect children. We're going to be scientists and study how screens affect 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 viewing 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 screens. The second part will involve each of us making a big effort to control our screen viewing for the rest of the year. During both parts of the experiment, we will examine how our lives are affected by TV and video games, 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 viewing 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 viewing. 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** watch less screens if they try!

### Step 4.3: Students Create a Class Banner

- **Ask Students:** As a class about to embark on an exciting experiment, we need to create a class name to remind us that we're all in this together! What are some ideas we can come up with for a team name?

*Examples/Prompts:*

- Screen Stompers
- TV Tamers
- The No Screen Team

Write students' suggestions on the board. If students want to name their team after TV or movie characters, remind them that the goal is to reduce the role of TV in their lives, so they should choose names that prove they are not controlled by TV.

Vote on a team name. Write the team name on the banner, or have students design the banner. Display the banner, if possible. (Save this banner for the opening ceremony.)

### Step 4.4: Students Create a Team Slogan

- **Tell Students:** Soon we will have a Kick-Off Ceremony for the Screen-Free Challenge! We will sign contracts and make an agreement to do our best not to watch any TV, videotapes or DVDs, play any video or computer games, or surf the Internet.
- **Ask Students:** What we're going to do now is create a class slogan. The slogan will keep us excited throughout our Screen-Free Challenge, and for the rest of the school year. It should be something simple that we can easily remember as we begin our experiment. Does anyone have any ideas?

*Examples/Prompts:*

- Have no fear, the Screen Stompers are here!
- Wake-up TV Zombies!
- We say No to Screens and Yes to Me!
- **Tell Students:** Get ready for the Screen-Free Challenge. It will be our opportunity to challenge ourselves and to challenge all the people who think kids are addicted to TV and video games! The Kick-Off Ceremony will be lots of fun and very exciting!

Teacher's Note: Let the students know what day the Kick-Off Ceremony is scheduled to occur. During the Ceremony and throughout the challenge you can lead the students in a cheer using the slogan and team name to generate enthusiasm

### Step 4.5: Students Create Class Cheer/Chant \*Optional\*

Students may choose to create a cheer or chant relating to the theme of their banner/slogan. The class will share team name, slogan, and cheer/chant at opening ceremony.

### Step 4.6: Smart Homework Review

- **Tell Students:** Now we are going to look at our Smart homework from Lesson 2.
- **Ask Students:** Who would like to share something they found interesting from their homework?

Were any of you surprised by the amount of inappropriate behavior you saw in some of the shows, movies, and video games?

Would anyone like to share something that surprised you?

Do you think that children are affected by seeing so many inappropriate things?

Who would like to share what some of the negative effects may be?

# Viewing Habits

Hour	Number of Students
0	
$\frac{1}{2}$	
1	
$1 \frac{1}{2}$	
2	
$2 \frac{1}{2}$	
3	
$3 \frac{1}{2}$	
4	
$4 \frac{1}{2}$	
5+	



## 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.