



Desire, Time, and Effort: *Table of Contents*

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Desire, Time, Effort

1. Dream Schedule

Spatial Requirements: Regular classroom setup: little or no space required

Activity Type: Group

Grades: 3-12

Group Size: 2 or more

Time: 15 minutes

Introduction: Often how we spend our time contrasts greatly with how we wish we were spending our time. This activity allows students to think about changes they can make to their current lifestyle, replacing wasted time with healthy and valuable time.

Materials:

- 3 copies of a blank daily page from a day planner for each student (These can be printed from www.whytry.org/activities.)
- Pens or pencils

Activity:

Give each student three copies of a blank daily planner page. On the first one, have them write down their entire day's schedule for an average day, from the time they get up to the time they go to bed. After this task is completed, ask them to think about the choices they make and if they would change anything if they could have their "dream" schedule. Emphasize the importance of making healthy and positive choices during leisure time as a means of bettering one's own life, and allow them to fill the second planner page with these new ideas. These choices can be a "dream" schedule. They don't have to be particularly realistic, as long as they are healthy and positive. This will help students plug into their "passion, purpose, and interests" as well as think of goals they wish to accomplish. After everyone has completed the second page, discuss the differences found in what they usually do and what they would like to do. Now hand out the third sheet and ask each student to fill this plan with realistic ideas, but challenge them to do something different and engage in as many healthy and positive activities as they can think of. Encourage them to try to incorporate activities from both previous plans that are healthy, positive and realistic. Have everyone share their plans, and if possible, bring them out again at the end of the week to see if anyone made positive changes to achieve the goals on the third plan. If they did, ask how it feels to make positive changes in the way they use their time.

Processing the Experience:

After 1st sheet:

- Do you feel like you are making healthy and positive choices with your free time?
- What could you gain in your life if you changed how you spend your free time?

After 2nd sheet:

- Are these activities realistic?
- Which activities are you most likely to pursue?
- Why aren't you doing these activities now?
- What would it take for you to change how you spend your free time?
- How would it help you in your own life to pursue new activities?

After 3rd sheet:

- Do you feel you will follow through with your plan? Why or why not?

*Follow-up/variation: Plan a day when working, when in school, when on vacation, a week with no TV, and/or a week with extra spending money.

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2. Free Time

Spatial Requirements: Regular classroom setup: little or no space required

Activity Type: Movement/group

Grades: 3-12

Group Size: 8 or more

Time: To be determined by you

Introduction: At school and often at home, we can't always choose how we use our time. During free time, however, we are able to choose our own activities. It is frequently during these unplanned hours that we can decide to either participate in negative behaviors or use the time to improve our lives. The objective of this activity is to help students see the importance of making positive choices with the free time they are given.

Materials:

- Timer
- Various game supplies
- 1 Free Time Question Sheet per person (These can be found at www.whytry.org/activities.)
- 1 pencil per student

Activity:

Gather together several materials that students can use, play, or work with during free time. This may include games, art supplies, books, music, puppets, play toys, recreation or sporting equipment, computers, etc. Make a copy of the Free Time Question Sheet for each student.

Divide the class into groups, and divide the activity time so that each person will be given an equal amount of time (i.e. if there are 6 people in the group and the activity time is 1 hour, each person gets 10 minutes). Each person decides which activity or game their group will participate in during his/her allotted time, and the whole group must participate in that activity. Choices may be limited to supplies available. Maybe one person wants to sing, another to play a card game, another to do crafts or play basketball. If these supplies are available, then the group will do all these activities, one after another. Two people may choose the same game, and it will simply be played for twice the time.

Processing the Experience:

Have each student fill out the Free Time Question Sheet, then discuss the answers. Emphasize the feelings one gets from choosing his/her own activities and the importance of making healthy choices.

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3. Leaps and Bounds

Spatial Requirements: Classroom with moderate space required

Activity Type: Movement/group

Grades: K-12

Group Size: 8 or more

Time: 10 minutes

Introduction: Desire and effort in completing a task can often be increased when we receive feedback and support from others. This activity focuses on the effects of positive support and feedback in increasing desire and effort. It gives students a chance to both give and receive supportive feedback in trying to complete a challenge.

Materials:

- Tape
- 3 colored sticky notes per team of 4 or 5 (You may also use tape, string, colored dots, or some other type of marker.)

Activity:

Divide the class into small groups of four or five. Give each team a set of three colored dot stickers. Put a line of tape on the floor. Have each team choose a team jumper. The other team members will be observers and provide feedback and support. The jumper for each team will take one try at a standing long jump starting on the tapeline. The team will place one of the sticky notes where the jumper lands to mark the distance. After each jumper makes his/her first jump, have each team gather to give feedback and discuss tactics or ways the jumper may improve his/her jump. After the feedback session, the jumper takes a second jump. The jump is marked with another color dot sticker. In most cases, the second attempt will show improvement. A final attempt is set up. This time the observers are asked to give encouragement (cheering, etc.). Before this attempt, the groups and the jumper set a goal by putting a different color dot one inch past the longest effort so far. The final attempt is then completed. In most cases, the jumper will meet or exceed that goal. If time permits, you can repeat this activity, giving others a chance to be the jumper.

Processing the Experience:

- What was it like to be the jumper?
- What was it like to be the observer?
- How did feedback help the jumper?
- How did setting a goal help the jumper?
- How did cheering and encouragement help the jumper?
- Did the observers feel like they made a difference?
- How can having others' support and encouragement help you achieve your goals in life?

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4. Monster Walk

Spatial Requirements: Gym/outdoor space required

Activity Type: Movement/group

Grades: 4-12

Group Size: Any multiple of 5 (some groups may have 6, but no more)

Time: 15-20 minutes

Introduction: We can accomplish great things when we work together; giving our desire, time, and effort to a common goal. This activity promotes the implementation of these three important principles in a teamwork setting.

Materials:

- None

Activity:

Create a starting and ending line, 30 feet apart. Divide the group into teams of five or six, and instruct the teams that they must use their team members to create a “monster” that races the other teams, beginning at the start line and ending at the finish.

Four feet and three hands must touch the ground to make the monster walk to the finish line – no more, no less. (For six people, add one more foot or hand.) After allowing sufficient time for questions, give each small group four to five minutes to come up with a plan.

All groups must be in standing position until you say, “Go!” and the monsters begin the race. The first team to cross the finish line wins.

Processing the Experience:

- How successful was your team’s monster compared to the other teams?
- With more time, what would you have done differently?
- How did your group demonstrate desire, time, and effort?
- Did everyone put forth the same amount of effort? Explain.
- What would have happened to the monster if one team member didn’t put forth effort?
- What important things in life are you putting desire, time, and effort into?

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5. Number Maze

Spatial Requirements: Regular classroom setup: little or no space required

Activity Type: Group

Grades: 2-12

Group Size: 2 or more

Time: 5 minutes

Introduction: When working towards a goal, we show our desire and effort by researching, seeking directions, and practicing. This activity will help students realize the value of obtaining as much information as possible (plugging in) before beginning an activity. It also illustrates the value of phrases like, "Try, try again, and "Practice makes perfect."

Materials:

- 3 copies of the "Number Maze" worksheet per student (These can be found at www.whytry.org/activities.)
- 1 pen or pencil per student

Activity:

Make three copies for each student of the Number Mazes worksheet. Pass out the first of the three number sheets and have the students draw a line connecting the numbers in order. This is a timed event. Give them one minute to complete as much of this puzzle as they can. After one minute, stop and have them see how many numbers they were able to locate. Discuss what they think would happen if they were given another try.

Pass out another number sheet and give them a second chance. At this point, have the students fold their sheet the long way so that there is a crease down the middle of the paper. Repeat the number activity again, giving the students the same one-minute time period.

Discuss what they see about the arrangement of the numbers. They will find that the order of the numbers follows a consecutive pattern. The odd numbers are all on the left-hand side of the page, and the even numbers are all on the right-hand side of the page.

Give the students a third and final try. They should have the best results on this attempt because of the new information they have gathered.

Processing the Experience:

- Did your frustration level increase or decrease as you learned more about the maze?
- What is the disadvantage of doing a task without information?
- What is gained by doing the activity a second and third time? What is gained by practice?
- How does additional information affect your results?
- How does this apply to reaching your goals in school? Extracurricular activities? Life decisions?

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6. Pot of Gold

Spatial Requirements: Classroom with moderate space required

Activity Type: Movement/group

Grades: 3-12

Group Size: 2 or more

Time: 5 minutes

Introduction: Achieving the goal of higher education requires desire, time, and effort. In the end, however, the rewards are well worth it. Statistics show that the more education a person acquires, the higher their average salary will be following graduation. The purpose of this activity is to instill in students a sense of the importance of education. They will learn that while higher education requires greater desire, time and effort, it brings great rewards in the end.

Materials:

- 3 large paper bags per team
- 3 pieces of letter-size paper per team
- 1 roll of masking tape
- 1 pair of scissors
- Magic markers

Activity:

Cut the tops of the large paper bags until they are about six inches tall. Divide the group into teams of five, and have them crumple their three pieces of paper into balls. Make a line on the floor with masking tape. Put one bag five feet away from this line, the second bag seven feet away, and the third bag ten feet away. These distances may vary depending on age group. Label the first bag "high school," the second one "additional schooling," and the third one "college degree." Shooting a ball into the high school bag awards the team 100 points; additional schooling gives 500, and the faraway college degree bag is worth 2000 points.

Each team member will be allowed three shots at landing a paper ball into one of the three bags. When a team member finishes their turn, they collect the paper balls, hand them over to the next player, and move to the back of the line. Allow the teams one practice round before the official scoring round begins. You may also repeat with one more scoring round to see if the students improve their score or change their choices. When the final round is complete, have each team report their final score.

Processing the Experience:

- Which bag did you aim for?
- Did shooting farther become easier after practice?
- Why were the bags worth more as the distance increased?
- Do you think with enough desire, time and effort that we could all make it into the third paper bag?
- Does this same principle apply in the real world?
- What are some things that would make higher education difficult? How can you overcome those obstacles?
- Besides money, what are some other reasons that education is important?

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7. Ring Challenge

Spatial Requirements: Gym/outdoor space required

Activity Type: Movement/group

Grades: 5-12

Group Size: 8-24

Time: 30-50 minutes

Introduction: To overcome challenges, solve problems, reach goals, and accomplish anything worthwhile, you must apply the principles of desire, time, and effort. This activity teaches that it is only through these three principles that we can achieve our life's dreams.

Materials:

- 1 throwing ring (this can be substituted with Frisbees that participants would catch)
- 10 cones (to set up playing field boundaries)
- 1 colored vest for each member of Team 1 (or some other way to differentiate the two teams, such as headbands, wristbands, or blue masking tape around the wrists of one team)

Activity:

The Desire-Time-Effort Ring Challenge is a game played between two evenly divided teams. To set up the teams, have all participants line up from tallest to shortest in a straight line. Count off one, two down the line. Have Team 1 come together and put on the colored vests and have Team 2 gather at a designated location. Use the cones to set up the playing field for the game. The size of the teams will determine how large the boundaries are. (For example, two teams of ten would require a field 50 yards long and 30 yards wide.)

Each team is assigned a specific end zone for the game, about 15 yards beyond the goal line on either end. Start the game by having the teams meet at the center of the field for the ring toss. The ring is thrown straight up about 10 to 15 feet in the air, and the team that catches or picks the ring up has first possession.

The goal of the game is to complete six passes (the ring must be passed, not handed off) without the ring hitting the ground. If the ring is dropped, intercepted, or knocked down, the possession of the ring goes over to the other team. When you pass the ring to a teammate, he or she cannot pass it directly back to you. If this occurs, possession of the ring goes back to the other team. The ring has to exchange hands with at least two other players before you can catch it again. The defensive team cannot touch, tackle, or push any member of the offense team, but they can guard, defend, and try to block or intercept the ring.

Once six passes have been completed in a row, the team with the ring runs to their end zone. The person who caught the sixth pass, without crossing into the end zone, must try to complete the seventh pass to a team member in the end zone. This pass must be caught with the hand and fingers pointed upward, allowing the ring to slide over the hand and hook on the arm. If a Frisbee is used, it may be simply caught. A point is scored for each end zone catch. After the teams have played for 15 to 20 minutes and have a good feel for the game, introduce an additional ring. All the rules apply to the additional rings. After about 30 minutes, check the energy level of the players. When the energy level starts to drop, say the next point wins.

Processing the Experience:

- What were the positive traits of your team?
- Did your team demonstrate desire? Why or why not?
- How is desire the key in overcoming challenges and problems?
- Did you have to put time and effort into this activity?

- How is your time being spent?
- Are there some important priorities in your life that need more of your time? What are they?
- How does putting forth more effort give you more control in your life?
- How can applying effort to a challenge lower your anxiety and frustration?
- Can you achieve something great without desire, time, and effort?
- How could you use desire, time, and effort to improve your home life, school life, and future?

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8. Stepping Stones or Stumbling Blocks

Spatial Requirements: Gym/outdoor space required

Activity Type: Movement/group

Grades: 5-12

Group Size: 7-13

Time: 30-60 minutes

Introduction: Instant gratification is popular in our quick-fix, fast-food society. Because of this, we are often unwilling to put forth the desire, time, and effort necessary to overcome obstacles and reach our goals. This activity teaches that positive change requires time, commitment, and focus.

Materials:

- Masking tape or rope for starting and ending lines
- Pieces of cardstock paper, cut in half, or paper plates (You may also use square or rectangular wood blocks, 3/4 inches thick. These may vary in size, from 4 to 6 inches wide and 4 to 8 inches long.) Use 2 pieces of paper less than the number of people in the group.

Activity:

To prepare for this activity, make a starting line with the masking tape or rope. Pace off one step for every person in the group and add three to five more steps before making an ending line with the tape or rope. (See the setup at the end of this activity.)

Explain that your group has been in a prisoner of war camp for the past two years. Tonight is the night you have determined you are going to make an escape attempt. Most of the guards are at a big party and are not on duty. Your group has developed some stepping stones light enough to evade the pressure sensitive alarm. Nothing can touch the playing field except the stepping stones (pieces of paper or wood blocks).

The goal of the activity is for every member of the group to step on the stepping stones and get from the starting line to the finish line with no more than three casualties. A casualty occurs if a person steps off the paper, if any part of the body touches the playing field, or if talking occurs. Only the stepping stones can be stepped on or touched. If a person suffers a casualty, he/she must return to the starting line. After three casualties, the whole group must start over. No verbal communication is allowed when the group members are on the minefield. After explaining these rules, allow the group four or five minutes to plan.

Before the first person crosses the end line, the whole group has to be on the playing field (between the start and finish line). If a person accidentally steps off, the group or members of the group must go back to the start, using the stepping stones to get to the person.

Explain that the group can lose or gain blocks throughout the activity, depending on the group's behavior. Do not tell them how the blocks are awarded beforehand, but when they do earn a block, explain why. Give them a block if they successfully get all the people on the blocks and pass one block to the front. You may also award a block when the team exhibits teamwork. If the group does not exhibit teamwork, take a block away until they do. When everyone successfully crosses the finish line, the activity is over.

Processing the Experience:

- What worked during this activity? What didn't work? (List ideas on the board)
- Why was the activity called, "Stepping Stones or Stumbling Blocks"?
- What are the stumbling blocks in your life?

- What are the stepping stones in your life?
- Did you give up in this activity? Why or why not?
- What would have happened if one person said they did not want to do the activity?
- Who were the individuals in the group that really put in some extra effort and sacrificed for the group?
- Who sacrifices for you?
- What were some of the challenges in this activity?
- What are some challenges in life that require desire, time, and effort? Why might you value these more than things that are easy to achieve?

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9. Stretch Higher

Spatial Requirements: Regular classroom setup: little or no space required

Activity Type: Movement/group

Grades: K-12

Group Size: 2 or more

Time: 5 minutes

Introduction: This activity teaches students that our worthwhile goals in life often require desire, time, and effort.

Materials:

- None

Activity:

Have the members of the group stand up. Ask them to stretch their arms into the air as high as they can. When they have done this, tell them that they can put their hands back down to their sides. Once again, ask them to put their hands into the air and try to stretch higher than they did the time before. Generally, the students will stretch higher the second time.

Processing the Experience:

- How many of you stretched higher the second time?
- Why did you stretch higher the second time when I asked you to stretch as high as you as you could the first time?
- Do you have goals, responsibilities, or dreams in life that you feel are difficult to accomplish? Do you think they are possible if you “stretch higher” through desire, time, and effort? Why or why not?

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10. Tick Tock

Spatial Requirements: Regular classroom setup: little or no space required

Activity Type: Movement/group

Grades: K-12

Group Size: 5 or more

Time: 5 minutes

Introduction: Utilizing time wisely is very important for accomplishing goals. Often time is wasted simply because we don't keep track of it. This activity is designed to help students gain a better sense of time. They will improve their understanding of how accurate or inaccurate they are at keeping track of time.

Materials:

- Timer

Activity:

Have the entire class stand up and face you. Have everyone raise one hand in the air. Explain to them that the objective of the activity is to estimate when a certain amount of time has passed. Next, have them close their eyes. Tell them that they are to keep their eyes closed and when you say, "Start," they are to try to guess when 35 seconds have passed. When they think the 35 seconds have passed, they are to put their hand down and open their eyes.

To let them know how close they were, silently count down the last five seconds with five fingers of one hand. When they open their eyes, they can look at you to see what the count is at that time. Then count five more seconds and have the people whose eyes are still closed open them. Briefly discuss how everyone did, then repeat the process again using a different increment of time.

For rounds three and four, have them repeat the same process, except during these rounds distract students by having them repeat words or phrases (pledge of allegiance, the alphabet, etc.). The point is to interrupt their internal timing process.

Processing the Experience:

- How did your guesses compare with the rest of the class?
- Were your guesses usually high or low?
- What method did you use to keep track of time? Did you change your method during the activity?
- Why is having a sense of time important?
- What are some consequences for wasting time?
- What strategies can you use to avoid wasting time?
- How is the wise use of time important to achieving your goals?