

Life is Different Now

Students Describe Personal and Social Changes Resulting from the COVID-19 Pandemic



FOR GRADES
K-2 3-5 6-8 9-12

OVERVIEW

This school year is different in so many ways for everyone, whether students are learning at home “virtually,” or in a face-to-face classroom. In this activity, students will reflect on how life has changed for them during the Covid-19 pandemic. Many societal and personal changes have occurred, and everything is still in a state of flux.

Encouraging students to discuss these issues in a personal context allows them to see they are not alone. Everyone has been affected by the pandemic. Sharing of ideas may also provide opportunities to address misconceptions and offer reassurance about healthy practices.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will create a diagram or drawing (a “Page in History”) of things that identify them at this moment of time, validating their experience during the COVID-19 pandemic.

SCIENCE, HEALTH AND MATH SKILLS

- Expressing emotions
- Communicating health concerns
- Defining stress
- Managing anxiety

NGSS SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING PRACTICES

- Asking questions and defining problems

TIME

- Set Up: 5 minutes
- Activity: Two 30-minute classes

MATERIALS FOR SCIENCE INVESTIGATION

- Paper
- Pencils or drawing media (crayons, markers, etc.) or access to drawing or presentation software on a computer or tablet

SET UP AND TEACHING TIPS

This activity may be introduced in class as a discussion, followed by an in-class assignment or homework.

PROCEDURE

■ ENGAGE

1. Ask students to look silently around their environment (home or classroom). Ask, *What do you see that is different now than before COVID-19?* Allow time for responses. Students in the classroom may notice different spacing of furniture, plastic shields in public areas, etc. Students at home may notice that everyone is at home, rather than at work or school, or that not much has changed inside their house. Accept all comments.
2. Explain that the COVID-19 pandemic has changed many aspects of our personal lives, the community and the world. Share something that has changed for you (the teacher) and how you feel about that change. Examples might include working from home, caring for someone who is sick at home, wearing a mask, stocking up on hand soap, etc.
3. Ask, *Does anyone want to share what they have noticed or how they feel about the changes around us?* Accept all responses.
4. Ask students to think about the changes they mentioned. *Can they share one change they like and one they dislike?* Examples might be they miss playing with their friends, but they like that they are spending more time with their family.
5. Some students may have trouble describing their feelings or emotions. Ask, *What would your feelings look like if you could act them out?* (for example, yelling, jumping, running).

■ EXPLAIN

6. Reinforce to students that everyone, including their own parents, grandparents, siblings, friends, neighbors and teachers, is feeling emotions or has questions that sometimes are hard to talk about. Explain that sharing our thoughts can make things less scary and overwhelming.
7. Remind students that COVID-19 is affecting people around the entire globe. We are not the only ones going through this disease! Also, as serious as the pandemic is, we all are part of history for going through this challenging time. In fact, this is not the first pandemic faced by humanity—we will get through this challenge together.

■ EXTEND

8. Ask, *If you had a page in a history book that described you now, during the COVID-19 pandemic, what would you have on your page?* Instruct them to think of the things that are part of their lives right now, in this moment. Ask, *Have you taken up a new hobby or learned something new? What are you doing to protect yourself from COVID-19? Are you doing more things outdoors, like bicycling or walking?*
9. Tell students they will create their own Page in History. Offer the following two options for doing this.
 - Draw items on a sheet of paper that represent you during COVID (like a bicycle, a book, a mask, etc.) Tell them they can draw as many items as they want! Alternately, students may want to create electronic drawings, using a computer or tablet.
 - If students prefer, they may write their names in the middle of the paper or page and find a creative way to use words or short phrases only to describe themselves now.

■ EVALUATE

10. Have students answer the questions below in their science notebooks, and then discuss their responses in class. Review the concept of vaccination. Have teams explain how vaccination helps reduce the incidence of disease in a population, using their Fairhaven sheets as evidence.

THE SCIENCE

COVID-19 is frightening. It has changed the way we live and work, not only in our own communities, but in countries all over the world. In addition to health concerns, the CDC notes that public health actions, such as social distancing, can make people feel isolated and lonely, and can increase feelings of sadness, stress and anxiety.

Talking about and naming our feelings, asking questions about things we don't understand and hearing that others have the same concerns can help alleviate some fears that we all have. Even during a pandemic, people can reach out to one another and care for their mental health. Be sure that students know that they can reach out to their parents, a teacher or school nurse, for example if they have feelings of sadness or stress that feel overwhelming.

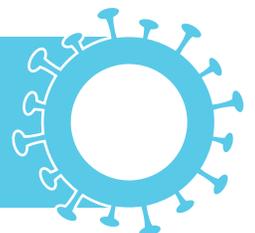
It is recommended to stay socially connected with friends and family who don't live in your home by calling, using online video applications or staying connected through social media. Remember, if meeting with others in person, it should be in a small group, outdoors, while wearing masks and staying at least 6 feet from one another.

For students of all ages, drawing, writing or other creative activities can become an outlet for the expression of emotions generated by the pandemic.

■ RESOURCES

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Coping with Stress.
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/managing-stress-anxiety.html>.
- US Department of Health and Human Services. Talk About Mental Health – For Educators.
<https://www.mentalhealth.gov/talk/educators>.

It is recommended to stay socially connected with friends and family who don't live in your home by calling, using online video applications or staying connected through social media. Remember, if meeting with others in person, it should be in a small group, outdoors, while wearing masks and staying at least 6 feet from one another.



COVID HEALTHY ACTIONS, COMMUNITY KNOWLEDGE AND SCIENCE

■ A SCIENCE-BASED CURRICULUM FOR THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

We are grateful to Laura and John Arnold and other community donors for their generous support, which enabled development of the COVID HACKS curriculum materials. We also thank the many scientists, educators and physicians from Baylor College of Medicine (BCM) who provided content, feedback and technical reviews.

The information contained in this publication is for educational purposes only and should in no way be taken to be the provision or practice of medical, nursing or professional healthcare advice or services. The information should not be considered complete and should not be used in place of a visit, call, consultation or advice of a physician or other health care provider. Call or see a physician or other health care provider promptly for any health care-related questions.

The activities described in the various components of the curriculum are intended for students under direct supervision of adults. The authors, Baylor College of Medicine (BCM) and any sponsors cannot be responsible for any accidents or injuries that may result from conduct of the activities, from not specifically following directions, or from ignoring cautions contained in the text.

The opinions, findings and conclusions expressed in this publication are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of BCM, image contributors or sponsors. Photographs or images used throughout project related materials, whether copyrighted or in the public domain, require contacting original sources to obtain permission to use images outside of this publication. The authors, contributors, and editorial staff have made every effort to contact copyright holders to obtain permission to reproduce copyrighted images. However, if any permissions have been inadvertently overlooked, the authors will be pleased to make all necessary and reasonable arrangements.

- Author: **Nancy Moreno, Gregory Vogt**
- Web and Design Director: **Travis Kelleher**
- Copy Editor: **James Denk**
- Graphic Designer: **Jose Chavero Rivera**
- Technical Reviewers: **Wayne Shandera, Jennifer Anne Whitaker**
- Project Director and Series Editor: **Nancy Moreno**

No part of this guide may be reproduced by any mechanical, photographic or electronic process, or in the form of an audio recording; nor may it be stored in a retrieval system, transmitted, or otherwise copied for public or private use without prior written permission of Baylor College of Medicine. Black-line masters, student pages and slides reproduced for classroom use are excepted.

© 2020 Baylor College of Medicine. All rights reserved.

BioEdSM

The mark “BioEd” is a service mark of Baylor College of Medicine.



Department of Education, Innovation and Technology
Baylor College of Medicine
One Baylor Plaza, BCM411
Houston, Texas 77030
713.798.8200 | 800.798.8244
bioedonline.org | edoutreach@bcm.edu