5 Radical Minutes – Introduction

The first couple of weeks at school are going to be fraught with changes and frustrations as teachers try to guide their students in whatever new protocols are being implemented. Because we know that students can only learn when they feel safe, it makes sense to put extra time into helping students find what still feels familiar, to re-establish or build new friendships, and to find ways to have fun.

Creating the classroom climate you want is going to be more challenging than ever before, but it will also pay off by allowing students to be more productive in academics in the days to come.

Implementation Options

Decide how best to have students be able to see one another and be in the best place possible for being willing to share:

Classroom: Entire Group

When you have all students at their desks facing the teacher, it feels more of a learning time than a sharing time. It would be best to have students all in a circle. It is fine for students to stand during this short activity — the goal is for each person to see everyone else.

Classroom: Small Group

Given the unusual circumstances, changing each day as we used to do would likely be too time-consuming. Instead, divide students into groups of 4-6 for the week.

Note: Some students are returning with trauma and anxiety. Interactions with a stable group over some period of time might be much easier. Consequently, it may work better in some cases for small group make-up to be stable for two weeks instead of just one week.

Online: Video Call

Teachers may present the prompt to all students on a video call and hold open discussion. Allowing students to respond randomly might be less stressful than calling on individuals, but do whatever works to get participation. Implementation options include:

● Using the break-out session function on the distance learning platform may work for some.
• When a prompt involves drawing, invite students to hold their picture up so others can see could work.

• In other cases, try allowing students to draw and then just come up with a word or phrase to share with classmates.

Materials Needed

Daily:

• **Bell, cymbal, or chime.** Using this lets students know when it’s time to start, transition, or conclude the activity without having to raise your voice.

• **Timer.** This allows you to keep the activity to 5 minutes.

Occasional:

• Post-It Notes

• Flip Chart

• 3x5 Cards

• Crayons or Felt Pens

• A way to play audio or videos with sound
**WEEK 1: DAY 1**

**Introduction - For Teachers**

Whether you are using the program in the classroom or with distance learning, you will want to have your bell, cymbal or chime at the ready so it is easy to let students know when you’re beginning or ending each portion of the activity. Using the bell to get their attention will allow you to give the instructions without having to raise your voice.

Because everyone has gone through at least inconvenience and for many, varying levels of struggle and sorrow, the first several activities bring students together in a shared understanding of the commonness of their experience and – to an appropriate degree – the vast difference. This is the foundation for understanding, acceptance, compassion and empathy.

**Prompt**

*Blue boxes denote content to read directly to students. Read the following:*

*Whether you are using the program in the classroom or with distance learning, you will want to have your bell, cymbal or chime at the ready so it is easy to let students know when you’re beginning or ending each portion of the activity. Using the bell to get their attention will allow you to give the instructions to find what they have in common without having to raise your voice.*

*Because everyone has gone through at least inconvenience and for many, varying levels of struggle and [suffering], the first several activities will be bringing students together in a shared understanding of the commonness of their experience and – to an appropriate degree – the vast difference. This is the foundation for understanding, acceptance, compassion and empathy.*

Depending on physical distancing or platforms, you might add that you’re hoping others from the building will join us occasionally so you also have the opportunity to work on these concepts with all of the adults who are a part of the school.

*Let's just each share something about coming back to school that you have been looking forward to.*

Allow students to take turns sharing their perspective. Encourage others to listen respectfully and wait their turn to speak.

You may want to give each student 5 seconds to share, or just ask for volunteers.

Allow 2 minutes for this conversation.

**Connecting**

*This will be a whole class discussion, whether you're in-person or virtual. It is a response to what students have just heard.*

*What were the common themes in your replies?*

Allow students to take turns sharing their perspective. Encourage others to listen respectfully and wait their turn to speak.
You may want to give each student 5 seconds to share, or just ask for volunteers. Allow 2 minutes for this conversation.

**Daily Challenge**

This allows you to close the discussion on a positive note.

*Today, let’s all return to gratitude for being able to be together again (whether online or in school).*

**High Five Finale**

This serves as an end-of-day check-in. It’s especially effective for younger students.

*What was one part about today that went better than you expected?*

Allow for a popcorn type response if all together. If remote learning, consider a text or quick email to each of your students individually.
WEEK 1: DAY 2

Introduction - For Teachers

Choose Delivery: Choose what method of delivery will work, given your circumstance. Options can be reviewed here.

Prompt

Blue boxes denote content to read directly to students. Read the following:

In-School Settings:

This is just our second day using 5 Radical Minutes! Yesterday we talked about what we’d been looking forward to in returning to school. Today we’re going to focus on what you’d like the school to know about what will help you feel safe.

Distance Learning Settings:

This is just our second day using 5 Radical Minutes! Yesterday we talked about what we’d been looking forward to in returning to school. Today we’re going to focus on what you’d like the school to know about what will help you feel safe when we return to the school setting.

Give students 2-3 minutes to share their thoughts, whether in pairs, small groups, or as a whole class discussion.

Connecting

This will be a whole class discussion, whether you’re in-person or virtual. It is a response to what students have just heard.

What were the common themes in your replies?

Give students 2-3 minutes to share their thoughts, whether in pairs, small groups, or as a whole class discussion.

Daily Challenge

This allows you to close the discussion on a positive note.

Did you have any new realizations during the day today about what will help you feel safer at school?

High 5 Finale

This is for an end-of-day check-in. It's especially effective for younger students.

How did listening to other’s concerns and voicing your own help you today?

Allow for a popcorn type response if all together. If remote learning, consider a text or quick email to each of your students individually.
WEEK 1: DAY 3

Introduction - For Teachers

Choose Delivery: Choose what method of delivery will work, given your circumstance. Options can be reviewed here.

Prompt

Blue boxes denote content to read directly to students. Read the following:

*What are the activities we do at school you most enjoy?*

Allow students to take turns sharing their perspective. Encourage others to listen respectfully and wait their turn to speak.

You may want to give each student 5 seconds to share, or just ask for volunteers.

Allow 2 minutes for this conversation.

Connecting

This will be a whole class discussion, whether you're in-person or virtual. It is a response to what students have just heard.

*What were some of the common themes?*

Allow students to take turns sharing their perspective. Encourage others to listen respectfully and wait their turn to speak.

You may want to give each student 5 seconds to share, or just ask for volunteers.

Allow 2 minutes for this conversation.

Daily Challenge

This allows you to close the discussion on a positive note.

*What is something new you look forward to today?*

High 5 Finale

This is for an end-of-day check-in. It's especially effective for younger students.

*What did you most enjoy about today?*

*What do you look forward to for tomorrow?*

Allow for a popcorn type response if all together. If remote learning, consider a text or quick email to each of your students individually.
WEEK 1: DAY 4

Introduction - For Teachers

Choose what method of delivery will work, given your circumstance. Options can be reviewed here.

Prompt

Blue boxes denote content to read directly to students. Read the following:

What are some ways students can help teachers know what works well for them and what doesn’t? What ideas do you have?

Allow students to take turns sharing their perspective. Encourage others to listen respectfully and wait their turn to speak.

You may want to give each student 5 seconds to share, or just ask for volunteers.

Give 2 minutes for this conversation.

Connecting

This will be a whole class discussion, whether you're in-person or virtual. It is a response to what've students have just heard.

How were our ideas similar?

Allow students to take turns sharing their perspective. Encourage others to listen respectfully and wait their turn to speak.

You may want to give each student 5 seconds to share, or just ask for volunteers.

Give 2 minutes for this conversation.

Daily Challenge

This allows you to close the discussion on a positive note.

If something is bothering you that I can help address, use one of these methods you think will work for you! Let me know what you need. I want to help in any way I can.

High 5 Finale

This is for an end-of-day check-in. It's especially effective for younger students.

If there's something I can help you with that you haven’t talked to me about yet, please reach out before you go to bed tonight.

If you’re in-person, feel free to use a popcorn type response, and take as much or as little time as you want.

If you’re distance learning, consider a text or quick email to each student.
WEEK 1: DAY 5

Introduction - For Teachers

Choose what method of delivery will work, given your circumstance. Options can be reviewed here.

Prompt

Blue boxes denote content to read directly to students. Read the following:

*What is something that has happened this week that you appreciate? It would be great if your reply could be about something that happened in our school setting, but other appreciations are fine to voice as well.*

Allow students to take turns sharing their perspective. Encourage others to listen respectfully and wait their turn to speak.

You may want to give each student 5 seconds to share, or just ask for volunteers.

Give 2 minutes for this conversation.

Connecting

This will be a whole class discussion, whether you're in-person or virtual. It is a response to what students have just heard.

*Do we have some similarities?*

Allow students to take turns sharing their perspective. Encourage others to listen respectfully and wait their turn to speak.

You may want to give each student 5 seconds to share, or just ask for volunteers.

Give 2 minutes for this conversation.

Daily Challenge

This allows you to close the discussion on a positive note.

*Today let’s be aware of things others do that we appreciate and let them know!*

High 5 Finale

This is for an end-of-day check-in. It's especially effective for younger students.

*Who let someone know they're appreciated? How did that feel for you?*
WEEK 2: DAY 1

Prompt

Blue boxes denote content to read directly to students. Read the following:

Hand out one copy of the following worksheet to each student:

Holding Feelings in My Body

On this handout, color in or make notes with arrows to illustrate where you hold stress in your body. You have one minute. Don’t worry about getting everything into your picture, just come up with at least one example of where you hold stress in your body.

Ring your bell or cymbal to denote the beginning their ONE MINUTE drawing time.

Ring your bell or cymbal at the end of ONE MINUTE to denote the end of their drawing time.

Now we’re going to either look down at your desk or close your eyes, and we’re going to see if we can tighten the muscles in that area of the body where we hold stress. We’re going to tighten it to the count of ten, and then we’re going to exhale and relax. We’ll do that three or four times.

Count out loud so students all do this together…

OK, ready? 1, 2 Tighten that part of the body, tighten 3, 4, 5, 6 keep tightening 7, 8, 9, 10 and relax.

Repeat 3-4 times.

Connecting

Because the previous part of the activity took longer than usual, this is just a personal observation time.

Tune into the part of your body that was holding stress and see if you feel just a little more relaxed.

Daily Challenge

This allows you to close the discussion on a positive note.

At some point when we have a vaccine for Covid-19 and we don’t have to worry so much about physical distancing. Lots of our current stresses will be easier.

But always there are stresses in life, so the sooner we learn how to help our bodies relax, the better we’ll feel and the healthier we’ll be.

Today, pay attention to the areas of your body that feel stress and practice releasing that stress like we learned today.
High Five Finale

This is for an end-of-day check-in. It's especially effective for younger students.

Were you able to pay attention to your body a little more today? How did that go for you?

Allow for a popcorn type response if all together. If remote learning, consider a text or quick email to each of your students individually.
WEEK 2: DAY 2

Introduction - For Teachers

Have fun with today’s activity. Some students may be a little uncomfortable with this, and laughter takes the edge off those feelings of reluctance. As students learn how to do some of these de-stressing activities, they’ll begin to use them on their own. That’s the goal. It is that over time they’ll gain insight and comfort with these activities.

Prompt

Blue boxes denote content to read directly to students. Read the following:

This week we’re going to focus on how to help ourselves relieve stress. Yesterday you identified one place you hold stress and we worked at relaxing that one place.

Today we’re going to scan our whole body, starting at the feet and working up, and we’re going to use that same technique as we go, tightening and relaxing the muscles in a given area. The most important part of this is the big exhale at the end! You’ll hold your breath while tightening, and when you exhale, you really, really relax.

We’re going to start with our feet. You can either look down at your desk or close your eyes, but this is a time to focus on yourself!

Start with your feet… Tighten all the muscles in your feet. Tighten, 2, 3, 4, keep them tight, 6, 7, 8, almost there, 10 and relax and exhale.

Don’t forget to emphasize the exhale!

Now your ankles and calves – everything between your knees and ankles.

Count with them.

Continue with the following:

- Between the knees and hips
- Hips and bottom and lower tummy up to their tummy button
- Tummy button up through their chest, and remember their back side as well.
- Shoulders and neck.
- Going down their arms, they can do their whole arm and hands together. You might have them curl their hands into a fist with this.

Finally we’re going to scrunch our faces up so all the muscles are tight… tight… include all the muscles in your head.
Connecting

This will be a whole class discussion, whether you're in-person or virtual.

Teachers, you might acknowledge that there was laughter and that you’re fine with that – how it is great to laugh together.

What are some times it would be helpful to be able to relax?

Ring your bell or cymbal to denote the beginning of this sharing time.

Allow students to take turns sharing their perspective. Encourage others to listen respectfully and wait their turn to speak.

We've designed these first couple of weeks with the program to give teachers insights that will be helpful in lowering student anxiety about being back at school.

Generally, this Connecting time is 2 minutes long. For these first few days of school, it may pay off to give kids more time to reply. (This could also lead to more discussion times throughout the day as time or need arises.)

If you’d like to keep this activity to five minutes, consider coaching students on how to respond quickly yet thoughtfully.

Ring your bell or cymbal to denote the end of this sharing time.

Daily Challenge

This allows you to close the discussion on a positive note.

Notice times today when you feel stress. You can do this activity any time!

High Five Finale

This allows you to close the discussion on a positive note.

Who was able to help relieve their stress today by using our new activity?

Allow for a popcorn type response if all together. If remote learning, consider a text or quick email to each of your students individually.
WEEK 2:  DAY 3

Prompt

Blue boxes denote content to read directly to students. Read the following:

We’re going to continue with stress reduction. Instead of focusing on our bodies, though, we’re going to talk about the ways talking can relieve stress. We’re going to imagine two different scenarios. While you’re doing your imagining, you could look down at your desk or you can close your eyes.

Ring your bell or cymbal to denote the beginning of this sharing time.

Imagine that you had a disagreement with someone. Not a big huge ugly fight. Just a disagreement. And imagine that you had the courage at that moment to talk about it with this other person. The other person listened, and then you had a conversation, and when it was over, you both felt better. Take a deep breath and relax your body. Let yourself feel how it helped to talk about it instead of holding it in.

Now we’re going to do the opposite. Imagine that something happens with someone and you don’t feel like you can bring it up. You decide not to tell them you’re upset. Really let yourself imagine this, and scan your body to see how it feels different than a few moments ago. Where do you hold the stress of being unhappy about something but not feeling like you can bring it up? Take a moment and breathe into that place to help it relax. Each time you exhale, let yourself relax.

OK let’s go back again and remember the first example, and re-imagine your conversation with someone, and it ends well. Breathe in deeply again and as you exhale, really relax.

Feel free to allow a few moments of silence following this imagination time.

Ring your bell or cymbal to denote the end of this sharing time.

Connecting

This will be a whole class discussion, whether you're in-person or virtual.

We always have had to use our judgement. There are times when it may not be safe to bring up a problem. The other person might be so mad or upset that you know it won’t turn out well. It might be that it has to do with someone that you don’t know so you can’t gauge whether it is worth bringing up or how they’ll react. Let’s talk for a moment about what happens when we can’t bring something up… what happens to us? What can we do about it?

Ring your bell or cymbal to denote the beginning of this sharing time.

Allow students to take turns sharing their perspective. Encourage others to listen respectfully and wait their turn to speak.

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Generally, this Connecting time is 2 minutes long. For these first few days of school, it may pay off to give kids more time to reply. (This could also lead to more discussion times throughout the day as time or need arises.)
If you’d like to keep this activity to five minutes, consider coaching students on how to respond quickly yet thoughtfully.

Ring your bell or cymbal to denote the end of this sharing time.

**Daily Challenge**

This allows you to close the discussion on a positive note.

*Today notice times when something bothers you and see if you can reflect on it a bit in the moment and see whether there is a conversation you could have, or whether you have stress you could release.*

**High Five Finale**

This allows you to close the discussion on a positive note.

*Who was able to work through stress today, even if it was just inside and didn’t involve talking to someone about a problem?*

Allow for a popcorn type response if all together. If remote learning, consider a text or quick email to each of your students individually.
WEEK 2: DAY 4

Prompt

Blue boxes denote content to read directly to students. Read the following:

Sometimes it is fun to think about what it was like when we were younger.

Share a favorite hiding place you had when you were younger. Did you share it with others? Was it a secret from everyone? Did you find it by accident or did you decide to create a place?

Usually our favorite hiding places are places we feel safe. What is it that helped you feel safe?

Ring your bell or cymbal to denote the beginning of this sharing time.

Allow students to take turns sharing their perspective. Encourage others to listen respectfully and wait their turn to speak.

We've designed these first couple of weeks with the program to give teachers insights that will be helpful in lowering student anxiety about being back at school.

Generally, this prompt response time is 2 minutes long. For these first few days of school, it may pay off to give kids more time to reply. (This could also lead to more discussion times throughout the day as time or need arises.)

If you’d like to keep this activity to five minutes, consider coaching students on how to respond quickly yet thoughtfully.

Ring your bell or cymbal to denote the end of this sharing time.

Connecting

This will be a whole class discussion, whether you're in-person or virtual.

What did you have in common about your hiding places? What did you learn about what helps you feel safe?

Ring your bell or cymbal to denote the beginning of this sharing time.

Allow students to take turns sharing their perspective. Encourage others to listen respectfully and wait their turn to speak.

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Generally, this Connecting time is 2 minutes long. For these first few days of school, it may pay off to give kids more time to reply. (This could also lead to more discussion times throughout the day as time or need arises.)
If you’d like to keep this activity to five minutes, consider coaching students on how to respond quickly yet thoughtfully.

Ring your bell or cymbal to denote the end of this sharing time.

**Daily Challenge**

This allows you to close the discussion on a positive note.

*Be aware today of the times you feel safe and the times you feel like you want to go to your favorite hiding place. Any time you don’t feel safe, give it a second thought. Is there anything you can do in the moment that would help you feel safer?*

**High Five Finale**

This allows you to close the discussion on a positive note.

*Would anyone like to share a time they felt safe today?*

Allow for a popcorn type response if all together. If remote learning, consider a text or quick email to each of your students individually.
**WEEK 2: DAY 5**

**Prompt**

Blue boxes denote content to read directly to students. Read the following:

*Today is just for fun.*

Introduce a fun day. Watch a short, fun video together or learn the Macarena on YouTube. If you’re stuck or short on time, choose from the three videos below:

- [Baby Goat Compilation](#)
- [Goats Balancing on a Steel Ribbon](#)
- [A 4-Day Old Goat Meets 4-Month Old Puppy](#)

**Daily Challenge**

This allows you to close the discussion on a positive note.

*Laughter is a great way for people to bond. Today, let’s explore ways we can put more good clean fun into our friendships. Today, laugh with your friends!*

**High Five Finale**

This is for an end-of-day check-in. It’s especially effective for younger students.

*Who got to laugh with their friends today? How did it make your day better?*

Allow for a popcorn type response if all together. If remote learning, consider a text or quick email to each of your students individually.