



**Instructor Manual**

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## What is V.I.B.E.?

V.I.B.E. is a step-based initiative that aims to mitigate the stigma of mental health and increase mental health literacy by empowering students to confidently manage and discuss their emotions, solve problems, and create close relationships / support networks within their community.

## Goals of the program:

Our initiative was developed with three goals in mind.

The first goal is **resource awareness**. We anticipate that upon completion of the V.I.B.E. curriculum, students will be able to locate and identify resources to help guide them through their struggles.

The second goal is for students to learn how to **engage in conversation** with others about difficult topics with candor and with consistency. By the end of this program, students will have interacted with a wide variety of people, some of whom they may not have frequently talked with before.

The third goal is for students to **develop critical thinking and problem solving skills**. By asking people to collaborate and do difficult tasks in groups, they are practicing proper communication and collaboration. In doing these exercises, students will know how to approach even the most complex situations with confidence.

## Activities:

### Bison Blanks:

#### Structure:

In this activity, you will go around and fill in the blanks for each sentence based on four symbols:

Square - Positive Action      "X" - Negative Action  
Triangle - Positive Feeling      Circle - Negative Feeling

The teacher should cut out the notecards from the Bison Blanks worksheet and project potential options for students to write on the back of the cards.

Each sentence will have a corresponding symbol. A student will find somebody else holding that symbol to receive options to complete their sentence. Students will choose responses they feel suits them best.

#### Timing:

- Students will have 10 minutes to finish the activity
- Students discuss what they wrote for 5-10 minutes.
- 5 minute Q&A

### Who Is In Your Herd?

#### Structure:

- Write about who makes up your herd
- Draw arrows from the bison to the people/animals who make your herd
- Underneath each arrow, make a note of "How does this person fit into your herd" or "What do they mean to you"

#### Timing:

- Give class 10 minutes to fill out who is in their herd
- 5 minute Q&A + have classroom talk about whos in their herd

#### Goals of Activity:

- Build a visual representation of your support network

## **Bridge the Gap:**

### Structure:

- Groups of 4 students - have teacher count off students to make groups
- Trusted resource will have the extra materials (tape, cups, marshmallows)
- The bridge must span ~30cm between two pillars (this could be two tables, chairs, etc. as long as the surfaces are flat as well as the same height) and then will be tested with materials decided by instructor

1. Students will start with just spaghetti as their available tools.
2. The first time they ask for help, they will receive marshmallows, something that we believe will increase the perception of feasibility.
3. The second time that help is requested, students will be provided with cups and tape, items that will make the process easier and likely get them to a solution much sooner.

### Timing:

#### 25 min Bridge Activity

- 5 minutes to hand out materials, instructions, etc
- 3 minutes working with just spaghetti (then give marshmallows)
- 7 minutes working with marshmallows (can ask for help)
- 5 minutes for judging and testing bridges
- 5 minutes for wrap-up

#### 5 min Q&A

### Goals of Activity:

- Realizing the importance to ask for help when you don't have all the resources you need, and that asking for help can make a task easier
- Knowing that there are times you may want to take a harder path, but if so, to be conscious of that decision and why you've selected that path instead of other alternatives
- Understanding that you may need help from others to facilitate success, and that it's okay to ask for help.

- Comprehending that success isn't immediate. By persistently trying and making corrective adjustments, success is more likely.

### **V.I.B.E Check:**

#### Structure:

- Students will follow along with this activity in their notebooks.
- The curriculum leader will go through and provide an example of their problem and steps for finding a solution by providing their response to each letter.

#### Timing:

10 minute walk through

- 5 minutes to go through leader example
- 2 minutes for clarification and questions
- 3 minutes to engage in activity on their own to briefly jot down some of their thoughts for each letter of the method

#### Goals:

- Students will understand how to utilize their notebooks to breakdown problems and create plans towards potential solutions
- Learning the importance of, and ability to stop and think about what is going on
- As students go through each step (letter) of the deliberation process, they are learning how to make difficult decisions more digestible to deal with

### **Class implementation break down:**

The preferred implementation schedule will depend on time available in class and at the discretion of the teacher or professor in charge.

For a curriculum spread over **2 classes**, we recommend making time for the Mad-Libs activity as well as the “Who’s In Your Herd” activity the first day. Doing so will emphasize the nature of the first two letters, “V” for Venture and “I” for identify. On day 2, the emphasis will shift to the “Bridge The Gap” activity as well as some participation revolving around the “V.I.B.E.

Check”. Students will be encouraged but not required to share their responses for their first problem assessment; the first page of their notebooks. Focusing on “B” for Build and “E” for Engage will promote the community building aspect of our program as well as giving a hands-on opportunity to apply skills learned in the previous session.

Alternatively, this curriculum works over **4 class periods** as a portion of each class session. Leaders can highlight a letter per day as well as interact with students in activities most closely related to each letter.

1. The first day will involve an introduction to the program, primarily the history and goals we have set out to accomplish. A focus on venture will include the “Bison Blanks” Activity as students learn about different scenarios and potential reactions both positive or negative.
2. The second day will turn attention to the “Who’s In Your Herd” activity allowing students to identify those people around them in the community that they trust the most.
3. The third day is all about the thinking behind tools required to effectively manage a game plan meant to deal with a variety of different scenarios. Students will think about their answers to their “V.I.B.E. Check” and share should they feel comfortable.
4. The fourth and final day is geared towards engaging in hands-on learning. “Bridging The Gap” will involve working in groups on a complex task that incentivizes groups to seek out their resources. The more they ask, the more they will benefit in the building process.

## Sample Questions:

Would anyone like to share one of their V.I.B.E. check responses?

Do you think this will change how you try to solve problems in the future when they arise? If so, how?

While reflecting on your V.I.B.E check, were there any insights you gained about yourself or the situation you reflected on?

-If so, would anyone like to share the insights they gained?

Would anyone like to share who they have representing their herd?

-What makes them a part of your herd?

Were there any challenges you faced when building the bridge with your peers?

-How did your group overcome these challenges?

When building your bridge as a team, what made this task easier to accomplish after asking your trusted resources for help?

What did you enjoy most about this activity?

Did you learn anything new about yourself or your peers during this activity?

After completing the Bison Blanks activity is there anything new you learned about your peers or anything you found that you have in common with them that you didn't know prior to the activity?