I AM WORTHY Facilitator's Guide

Middle School

#4 | I Am Worthy of Others' Time & Attention

Lesson Overview

In this lesson (35–45 minutes), students learn what it means to give and receive undivided attention and why focusing on one person or activity at a time matters. Through discussion, interactive examples, and a hands-on activity, students discover how distractions affect learning, listening, and relationships. The lesson reinforces a core truth: every child is worthy of others' time and attention, even when people around them are distracted.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- Understand that the brain has limits when trying to focus on multiple things at once.
- Define undivided attention in age-appropriate language.
- Identify the body parts used to give attention (eyes, ears, body, mind).
- Recognize common distractions that make focus difficult.
- Practice giving undivided attention to others.

Supplies Needed

- Paper (one sheet per student in the Left Group)
- Pens or pencils
- Small prizes or candy (optional, for activity winner)
- Prepared short story (2–3 minutes) for the Lead Teacher to tell
- Optional: Journal, whiteboard, or paper for listing distractions

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Review & Connection (5 minutes)

Lead Teacher

Say: "Turn to your table leader and share one thing you remember from one of our previous lessons."

Group Affirmation

Have students repeat aloud:

- *I am worthy and priceless.*
- *I am meant to be and worthy of love.*
- *I take responsibility for my actions and learn from my mistakes.*
- *I am a determined problem solver.*
- *I can make wise choices.*

Understanding Focus and Attention (5 minutes)

Lead Teacher

Ask: “Which of these can you do at the same time?” (Allow students to respond)

- Brush your teeth and listen to music?
- Do math homework and talk on the phone?
- Make your bed and sleep in it?
- Eat dinner and jog?
- Watch TV and eat ice cream?

Talk It Out (2–3 minutes)

Table Leaders

Ask: “Why is it hard to focus on more than one thing at a time?”

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Teaching Truth #1: What Is Undivided Attention? (5 minutes)

Lead Teacher

Say: “Undivided attention means we give ALL of our focus and attention to ONE person or activity.”

We focus with our:

- Eyes—explain eye contact
- Ears—listening vs merely hearing
- Face and Body—attention focused on one activity or person
- Mind—concentrating on one activity or person

Talk It Out (2–3 minutes)

Table Leaders

Ask: “What or who do you like giving your undivided attention to?”

Say: “You are worthy of others’ time and attention.”

Affirmation:

Students repeat three times:

"I am worthy of others' time and attention!"

Large Group Activity: Focus vs. Distraction (10–12 minutes)

Lead Teacher

Ask: “What are some things that distract us—that make it hard for us to focus on what someone is saying or a task?”

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Allow students to respond.

Optional: Have student list distractions in their journal, on the board, or on paper.

Explain: “Distractions make it really hard for us to:”

- Learn
- Listen
- Build relationships

Activity:

- Divide the class down the middle into 2 groups: Left Group and Right Group (they can remain seated where they are but should be on opposite sides of the room)
- Give Left Group a piece of paper and pen or pencil.
- Tell Left Group: “When I say ‘go,’ start at number 2 and write numbers by 2’s as fast as you can–2, 4, 6, 8, etc. The one who gets to the largest number will win a prize! And try to listen to my story as you work.”
- Tell Right Group: “When I say ‘go,’ give me your undivided attention as I tell my story.”
- Say: “Go!” then tell a two or three-minute story. Perhaps it’s your last family vacation or an exciting experience you once had. Use details like locations, colors, and numbers.
- When you’re done, tell Left Group to put their pens/pencils down, and determine who in their group got to the largest number. Give the winner a small prize or candy.
- Now say to all: “Raise your hand if you remember . . .” and ask multiple questions from your story. (Ex: “What state did my family travel to on our vacation?”) As you call on students to answer . . .
- Draw attention to how the Right Group, that gave their undivided attention, is better able to recall details from your story.

Say:

> “Sadly, there are lots of distractions around us every day that make it hard for us to give our undivided attention.”

What Did You Notice? (2–3 minutes)

Lead Teacher

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Ask: “How can phones, notifications, group chats, or social media make it harder to give someone your full attention?”

Teaching Truth #2: It’s Not Our Fault (5 minutes)

Lead Teacher

Say: “When we’re talking or desiring attention and people are distracted, it can make us feel:”

- Sad
- Invisible
- Lonely

Say:

> “When you’re talking or desiring attention and the people in your life, including adults or other students, aren’t giving you their undivided attention, it’s not because you don’t deserve it. It’s because they are busy or distracted.”
>
> “It’s not your fault if someone is too busy or distracted to listen or pay attention to you.”

Students repeat:

> **“I’m worthy of others’ time and attention!”**

Have them point and tell their peers:

> **“YOU are worthy of others’ time and attention!”**

Small Group Activity: Practice Giving Undivided Attention (5–7 minutes)

Table Leaders

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Invite each student to share something they care about, something they are working toward, or something they enjoy doing. Have the other students practice giving their undivided attention.

Closing Affirmation and Challenge (1–2 minutes)

Lead Teacher

Say: "This week, look for opportunities to give someone your full attention."

Close by repeating together:

- *I am worthy and priceless.*
- *I am meant to be and worthy of love.*
- *I take responsibility for my actions and learn from my mistakes.*
- *I am a determined problem solver.*
- *I can make wise choices.*
- *I am worthy of others' time and attention.*

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