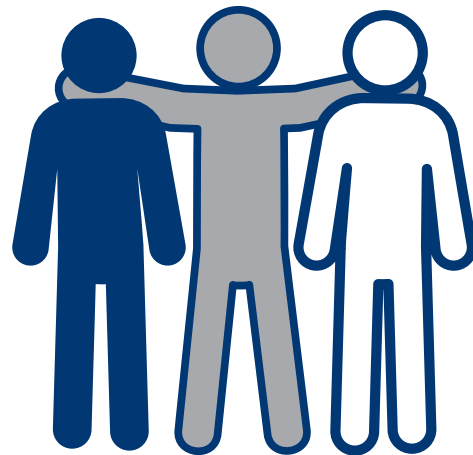


HOW TO BUILD MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS

Turn your training sessions into exciting, engaging and productive experiences. Made for facilitators, this is an all-in-one idea book and activity guide — full of simple, effective activities and strategies that encourage teamwork and spark new ideas.



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TIPS

- Have a countdown timer visible to keep the activity on track. YouTube is a great resource for this. You can even embed a countdown timer video into a PowerPoint slide.
- When possible, paste the provided directions slides into your training PowerPoint. Some slides may have example images of the activities to help your group visualize the end product.
- To print any handouts or directions for participants, download and print one-sided.

BUILDING CONNECTIONS

These activities encourage connection. Choose one to kick off your training session. Use more if your training spans multiple days.



ACTIVITY

Kiwanis memory

Help members connect at the start of training by sharing who they are, where they're from and what inspires them about Kiwanis.



STEPS

1. Say your name

"Hi, I'm [your name]!"

2. Share your club or division

"I'm a proud member of the [club name] in the [division name] Division."

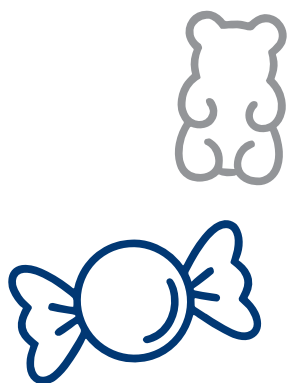
3. Share one of your favorite Kiwanis memories — a meaningful service project, a fun club moment or a time when something unexpected (and maybe a little funny) happened."

"One of my favorite Kiwanis memories was organizing a back-to-school supply drive for local students. Seeing their smiles made it unforgettable!"

ACTIVITY

Sweet introductions

Start your Kiwanis training with this fun and meaningful icebreaker. Each member picks a few colorful candies. Each color matches a different question about their Kiwanis journey. (See below.) It's a playful way to learn more about each other and celebrate what makes Kiwanis special.



Print the SWEET INTRODUCTIONS handout on the following page and cut in half. One per group.

STEPS

1. Distribute the handout with question prompts to each table.
2. Pass the candy:

Pass around a bowl of candies and ask each person to take 1 to 3 pieces — but not to eat them yet! Each color matches a different question or prompt about their Kiwanis experience. You can ask everyone to share their answers with the whole group or have them share at their tables.

3. Share 1-3 things:

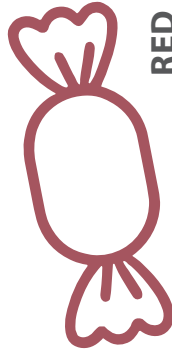
- **Red:** Share your favorite Kiwanis memory.
- **Blue:** Talk about a service project you loved being part of.
- **Green:** Say what you love most about your club or division.
- **Yellow:** Share how you got involved with Kiwanis.
- **Orange:** Describe a Kiwanis moment that made you smile.
- **Brown:** Give a shoutout to a Kiwanian who inspires you.

4. Enjoy the treats: Once everyone has shared, they can enjoy their candies!

Sweet introductions

Each person should take 1 to 3 pieces of candy — but don't eat them yet! Each color matches a different question or prompt that helps you share something about your Kiwanis experience.

SHARE 1-3 THINGS FOR EACH:



RED

Share your favorite
Kiwanis memory.



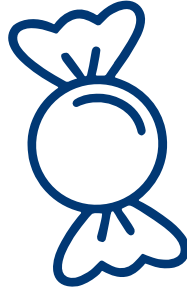
YELLOW

Share how you
got involved
with Kiwanis.



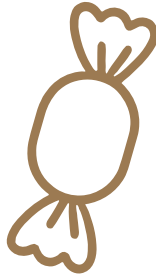
GREEN

Say what you love
most about your
club or division.



BLUE

Talk about a service project
you loved being part of.



BROWN

Give a shoutout to a
Kiwanian who inspires you.



ORANGE

Describe a Kiwanis
moment that made
you smile.

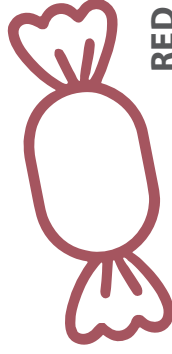


Kiwanis®

Sweet introductions

Each person should take 1 to 3 pieces of candy — but don't eat them yet! Each color matches a different question or prompt that helps you share something about your Kiwanis experience.

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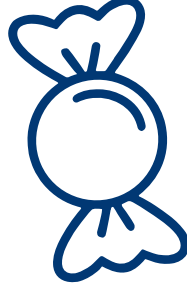
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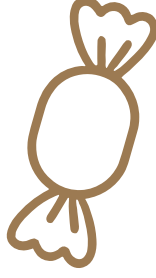
GREEN

Say what you love
most about your
club or division.



BLUE

Talk about a service project
you loved being part of.



BROWN

Give a shoutout to a
Kiwanian who inspires you.



ORANGE

Describe a Kiwanis
moment that made
you smile.



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ACTIVITY

Anchor your purpose

Start by helping everyone feel connected — and clear about the purpose. Each person will introduce themselves, say where they are from and share what they hope to learn or gain from the training. These shared goals will help guide the experience and make sure everyone's needs are considered.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Poster
- Tape
- Marker(s)

STEPS

1. Ask each attendee to share this introduction (5 minutes):

- **Say your name**
"Hi, I'm [Your Name]!"
- **Share your club or division**
"I'm from the [club name] in the [division name] Division."
- **State what you want to learn or gain**
"During this training, I'd love to learn more about [topic/skill/area of interest]."

2. Use the poster (5-10 minutes):

- As the moderator, create a list of all the learning goals as they are shared.
- Refer to the list as each topic is addressed and place a checkmark next to each one.
- At the end of each day, review the list:
 - Celebrate what's been covered.
 - Identify any unchecked items and plan to address them.

3. Post-training follow-up:

- If any goals remain unchecked by the end of the training:
 - Send a follow-up email to the group outlining how and when those topics will be addressed.
 - Consider scheduling Zoom sessions or sharing additional resources to ensure every participant's needs are met.



ACTIVITY

Hands for service

Help participants find shared experiences, interests and values that go beyond the obvious. By working together to discover five things they have in common, team members build understanding, strengthen their relationships and find surprising connections that help the group feel more united. At the end of the activity, hang the papers around the room to remind attendees of what they have in common.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Colored paper
- Colored markers

STEPS

1. Form small groups (3-5 people)

- Mix participants to encourage new connections and perspectives.

2. Set the challenge (1-2 minutes)

Explain the goal:

- *"Find five things your group has in common — but nothing obvious like 'We're all in Kiwanis' or 'We're all at this training.' Dig deeper!"*
- *"Each group should have one person trace their hand. For each thing your group has in common, write it inside one of the fingers on the traced hand."*

3. Brainstorm and share (10 minutes)

- Groups discuss and list their five commonalities.
- Encourage creativity — shared hobbies, values, childhood memories, favorite foods, travel experiences, etc.

4. Group share (optional, 5–10 minutes)

- Invite each group to share one or two of their most surprising or meaningful commonalities with the larger group.

5. Debrief session (5 minutes)

Use these questions to guide reflection and discussion:

- *What was easy or hard about finding things you all had in common?*
- *Did anything surprise you about what your group shared?*
- *Did this activity change how you see your teammates?*
- *Why is it important to find common ground in leadership and service?*
- *How can we use this way of thinking to make our Kiwanis clubs and community relationships stronger?*



TEAMWORK ACTIVITIES

Strengthen collaboration among participants through shared challenges and problem-solving.



ACTIVITY

Build a model club

Participants imagine and design their ideal Kiwanis club! Working in small groups, they will think about what makes a club strong, welcoming and effective. Using simple materials, each group will create a model of their vision and share it with everyone. This activity encourages meaningful conversations about leadership, club culture and new ideas.

MATERIALS NEEDED (per group):

- Large sheets of paper or poster boards
- Markers, pens, sticky notes
- (Optional) Building toy pieces such as LEGO bricks, pipe cleaners or other creative building materials and tape
- Directions handout
- Timer or clock
- Space for small group work and presentations

STEPS

1. Introduce the activity (1-2 minutes)

"In this activity, you'll work together to design your ideal Kiwanis club. Think about what makes a club thrive — its values, leadership style, service focus, meeting format, member engagement and more."

2. Form small groups (2–6 people per group)

Encourage a mix of clubs, districts or roles to promote diverse perspectives.

3. Design your club (15 minutes)

Each group creates a visual representation of their ideal club. They can draw it, map it out or build it using creative materials. Encourage them to include:

- Club values and mission
- Types of service projects
- Meeting style and frequency
- Member engagement strategies
- Leadership structure and culture
- Community impact goals

4. Present to the group (3 minutes per group)

Each group shares their creation and explains the key elements of their "better club."

***Suggestion:** Cap presentations at 3 minutes or pair groups to share with each other if time is tight.*

5. Group reflection (5 minutes)

Facilitate a discussion:

- "What ideas or themes came up in different groups?"
- "What can we take back and use in our own clubs?"
- "How can we help lead the way toward this shared vision?"

Print the BUILD
A MODEL CLUB
handout on the
following page
and cut in half.
One per group.

Build a model club

Work together to design your ideal Kiwanis club. Think about what makes a club thrive — its values, leadership style, service focus, meeting format, member engagement and more.

Each group will create a visual representation of their ideal club. You can draw it, map it out or build it using the creative materials given to you. You are encouraged to include:

- Club values and mission
- Types of service projects
- Meeting style and frequency
- Member engagement strategies
- Leadership structure and culture
- Community impact goals

Be prepared to share your creation and explain key elements of your “better club” with the training group!



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Build a model club

Work together to design your ideal Kiwanis club. Think about what makes a club thrive — its values, leadership style, service focus, meeting format, member engagement and more.

Each group will create a visual representation of their ideal club. You can draw it, map it out or build it using the creative materials given to you. You are encouraged to include:

- Club values and mission
- Types of service projects
- Meeting style and frequency
- Member engagement strategies
- Leadership structure and culture
- Community impact goals

Be prepared to share your creation and explain key elements of your “better club” with the training group!



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ACTIVITY

Spaghetti marshmallow challenge

Participants have 10 minutes to build the tallest structure they can, using the materials provided. The structure must stand on its own and hold a marshmallow on top. The tallest standing structure wins!

MATERIALS NEEDED (per team):

- Directions handout
- 20 sticks of dry spaghetti
- 10 marshmallows
- 1 pair of scissors
- 1 measuring tape or ruler (for judging)
- Prize for winning team (optional)

STEPS

1. Set up teams:

- Form teams of 3–5 people.
- Assign roles if desired (e.g., builder, cutter, timekeeper, tester).

2. Share the rules (2 minutes)

- The structure must be freestanding (not taped to the table, floor or any other surface).
- An entire marshmallow must be on top.
- You may break spaghetti and use marshmallows however you like.
- You have 10 minutes to build. A countdown will be provided.
- At the end, step away from your structure. It must stand on its own to be measured.

3. Preview the “debrief questions” with them.

Think about these questions, which will be prompts for discussion after the activity:

General questions:

- *Did your plan change as you started building? Why or why not?*
- *Which natural roles came out as a part of your team’s building process?*

Kiwanis club connection:

- What parallels can you draw between this challenge and planning a Kiwanis service project or event?
- What lessons from this activity can you take back to your club to improve teamwork or project outcomes?

4. Let the teams build (10 minutes)

- Walk around the room and offer encouragement and observe their teamwork.

5. Debrief and reflection (5 minutes)

- Use the questions from step three to guide a group discussion. Depending on your timing, you can do this as a full group or in small teams first, and then share highlights.

**Print the
SPAGHETTI
MARSHMALLOW
CHALLENGE
handout on the
following page
and cut in half.
One per group.**

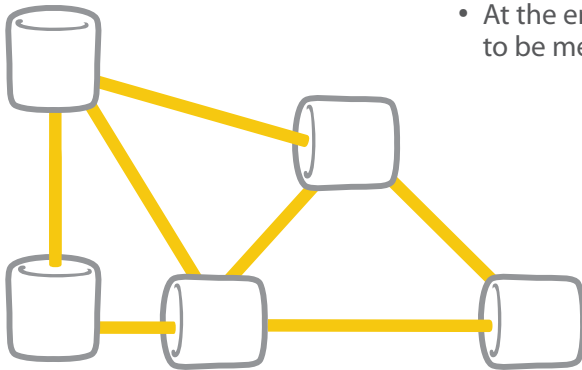
Spaghetti marshmallow challenge

SET UP YOUR TEAM:

Assign roles if desired (e.g., builder, cutter, timekeeper, tester).

THE RULES:

- The structure must be freestanding.
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- You have 10 minutes to build. A countdown will be provided.
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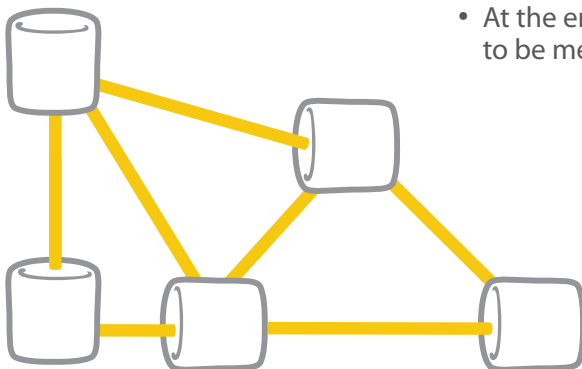
Spaghetti marshmallow challenge

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- An entire marshmallow must be on top.
- You may break spaghetti and use marshmallows however you like.
- You have 10 minutes to build. A countdown will be provided.
- At the end, step away from your structure. It must stand on its own to be measured.



Kiwanis[®]

ACTIVITY

Human bingo

Each person gets a bingo card with various prompts. The goal is to find someone in the room who matches each prompt and then write their name in the matching square. This game gets people talking, builds energy in the room and helps everyone discover what they have in common.

MATERIALS NEEDED (per person):

- Printed human bingo cards
- Pens or markers
- Small prizes (optional)

STEPS

1. Prepare the bingo cards

- Print the bingo cards.

2. Distribute materials (1 minute)

- Hand out one bingo card and a pen to each participant.

3. Explain the rules (2 minutes)

- Participants must walk around and talk to others to find someone who matches each prompt.
- When they find a match, they write that person's name in the square.
- A person's name can only be used once per card.
- The first person to complete a row (horizontal, vertical or diagonal) shouts "Bingo!" and wins. (A prize is optional.)

4. Let them meet each other and play (10 minutes)

- If someone wins quickly, continue the activity for a set time (10–15 minutes) to allow more people to complete their cards.

5. Debrief (optional; 5 minutes)

- Ask a few participants to share interesting things they learned about others.
- Highlight how much shared experience and diversity exists within the group.



Print the HUMAN BINGO handout on the following page. One per person.

Human BINGO

Walk around and talk to others to find someone who matches each prompt. When you find a match, write that person's name in the square. A person's name can only be used once per card.

Has attended a Kiwanis International convention	Was a member of an SLP club	Has been a Kiwanis member for over 10 years	Is in their first year of Kiwanis	Has organized a fundraiser
Has visited another country	Wears glasses or contact lenses	Speaks more than one language	Has a pet	Plays a musical instrument
Has served in a club leadership position	Has attended a district convention	FREE SPACE	Has read more than 5 books in the past year	Has lived in more than 3 houses
Has run a race	Loves to cook or bake	Has met someone famous	Has attended an interclub meeting	Has flipped pancakes at a breakfast fundraiser
Has recruited a new member to a club	Knows the name of their club president	Has received a Kiwanis award or recognition	Has brought a guest to a Kiwanis meeting	Has served on a Kiwanis committee



Kiwanis®

ACTIVITY

“Stack it up” cup stack challenge

This hands-on team challenge builds communication, patience and problem-solving skills. Using only a rubber-band-and-string tool — no hands allowed — teams must work together to stack a pyramid of plastic cups as quickly as possible.

MATERIALS NEEDED

(per team):

- 6 plastic Solo cups
- 1 rubber band
- 4–6 pieces of string (about 2 feet each), tied to the rubber band
- Table space for each team

STEPS

1. Set up the game:

- Teams of 3 to 6 people
- Tie each string to the rubber band, spacing them evenly around the band.
- Place the 6 cups in a single stack or scattered on the table.
- Each team gets one rubber-band tool and a set of cups.

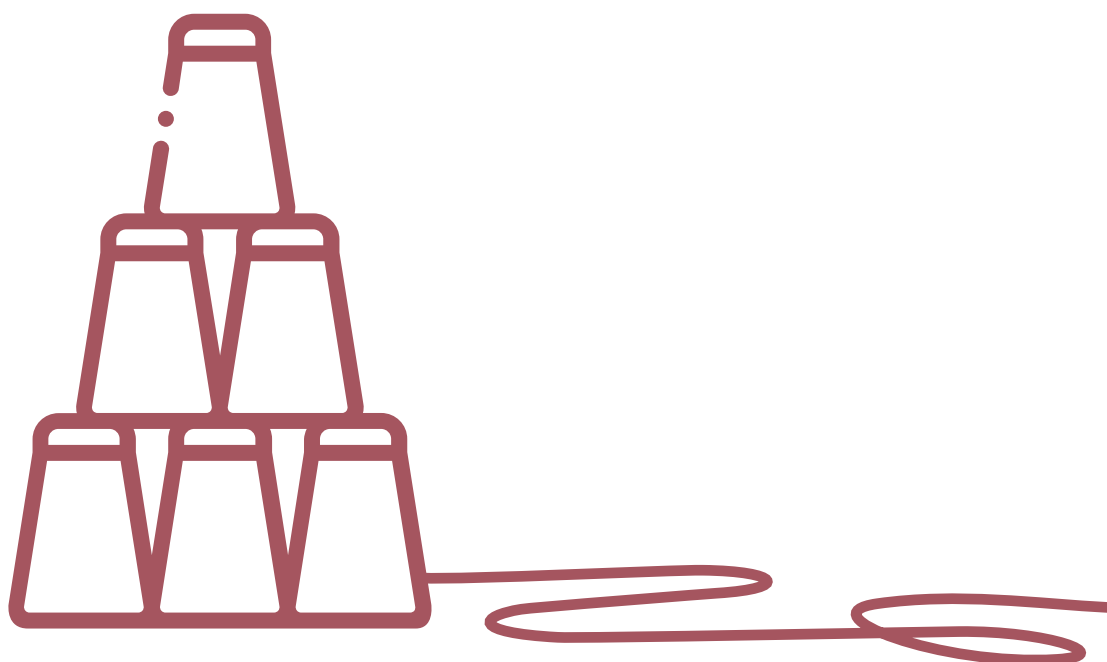
2. Explain the rules (2 minutes):

- Each team member holds one string — no touching the rubber band or cups with hands.
- Work together to stretch and release the rubber band around each cup to move and stack them.
- The goal is to build a 3-2-1 pyramid (3 cups on the bottom, 2 in the middle, 1 on top).
- If the pyramid falls, rebuild from where it collapsed.
- Fastest team to complete the pyramid wins!

3. Start the game (10 minutes max)

- On your signal (“Ready, set, stack!”), teams begin.
- Encourage cheering and teamwork!

Optional: Run multiple rounds or add a time limit for extra challenge.



DEEP DISCUSSIONS

Get members talking with these interactive prompts designed to spark meaningful conversations.



ACTIVITY

Wow, now, how: envisioning a club's future

Toward the end of training, help Kiwanis leaders reflect on a current club's reality, dream about what a club could become and identify the steps and support needed to make that vision a reality. It's a powerful tool for sparking honest conversations while helping participants reflect on and synthesize what they've learned during the training.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- 3 large posters: one labeled WOW, one NOW and one HOW
- Sticky notes
- Markers or pens
- Timer
- Wow, Now, How handout

STEPS

1. Introduce the activity (5 minutes)

"We're going to take a close look at where our clubs are now, dream about what they could become and figure out how to get there. This is about being honest, hopeful and strategic. You can pick your home club or a club within your division. We are going to use sticky notes to add to our posters up here. You also have a handout where you can brainstorm and collect great ideas from fellow participants."

WOW

What could this club look like? What does it need to reach the "Wow" level? (5 minutes)

Invite participants to imagine bold, exciting changes. Prompt questions:

- *"What would make your club amazing?"*
- *"What would energize members and attract new ones?"*
- *"What would make you proud to invite someone to a meeting?"*

Place your sticky note on the "Wow" poster.

NOW

Where is the club today? (5 minutes)

Ask participants:

- *"As you think about your big, inspiring 'Wow' goal, where does your club currently stand in the journey toward achieving it?"*
- *"Maybe think of it this way: What does your club's current reality look like?"*

Write each thought on a sticky note and place it on the "Now" poster.

HOW

What will help you get there? (5 minutes)

Let's brainstorm the resources, people, partnerships or actions needed to move from "Now" to "Wow." Prompt questions:

- *"What support do we need?"*
- *"Who can help us?"*
- *"What's one small step we can take this month?"*

Place these ideas on the "How" poster.

2. Group discussion (10 minutes)

Review the posters together. Encourage them to write ideas on their handouts:

- *"Which "Wow" ideas feel most exciting and achievable?"*
- *"What "How" steps can we commit to right away?"*

Encourage attendees to look at the "Club vision" Achieving Club Excellence (ACE) tool for additional support for their club.

3. Capture and commit

Take photos or notes of the matrix. Encourage clubs to take their ideas home and turn them into action plans.

Print the WOW,
NOW, HOW
handout on the
following page.
One per person.

Wow, now, how

We're going to take a close look at where our clubs are now, dream about what they could become and figure out how to get there. This is about being honest, hopeful and strategic. You can choose to focus on your home club or any club within your division.

WOW

What could this club look like? Imagine bold, exciting changes. Think big!

- What would make your club amazing?
- What would energize members and attract new ones?
- What would make you proud to invite someone to a meeting?

WOW

NOW

Where is the club today? Reflect on your club's current reality.

- As you think about your big, inspiring "Wow" goal, where does your club currently stand?
- What does your club's current reality look like?

NOW

HOW

What will help you get there? Bridge the gap between Now and Wow.

- What support do we need?
- Who can help us?
- What's one small step we can take this month?

HOW



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ACTIVITY

Ripple effect

Help participants see the bigger impact of Kiwanis service projects or fundraisers. By showing both the direct and indirect results of project, members can better understand and explain the long-term value of their work. It's a powerful way to connect everyday service to lasting change in the community — and to improve how we share that impact with others.

MATERIALS NEEDED (per group):

- Posters
- Markers

STEPS

1. Set the stage (2 minutes)

- Introduce the concept of a “ripple effect” — how one action can lead to many outcomes over time.
- Share a quick example (e.g., a school supply drive, better classroom engagement, improved academic performance, higher graduation rates).

2. Form small groups (3–5 people per group)

- Each group brainstorms a Kiwanis service project (e.g., literacy program, food drive, playground build).

3. Map the ripple (10 minutes)

Encourage creativity and discussion — there are no wrong answers! There can be more than one outcome in each circle. Prompt them to move on to the next ring every 2-3 minutes to help groups stay on track.

On a large poster, draw a ripple diagram:

- Center: Write the name of the project.
- First ring: List direct outcomes (e.g., 100 books donated).
- Second ring: List indirect outcomes (e.g., improved reading skills).
- Third ring: Long-term or community-wide impacts (e.g., higher graduation rates, stronger families).

4. Gallery walk or group share (10 minutes)

- Groups briefly present their ripple maps.
- Another option: a “gallery walk” where participants rotate and view each other’s work.

5. Debrief session (10 minutes)

Use some of the questions below to guide a reflective discussion:

- “What surprised you about the ripple effects of your project?”
- “Which outcomes do we often overlook when talking about our service?”
- “How can we better communicate these ripple effects to:
 - Potential members?
 - Community partners?
 - Donors or sponsors?”
- “How might this exercise influence the way we plan or promote future projects?”



- *“What is an outcome someone listed that you would not have thought of? How does this make you think about your club’s project outcomes?”*

Encourage attendees to use the “Evaluate your impact” Achieving Club Excellence (ACE) tool with their club to continue this conversation with their current service projects and efforts.

ACTIVITY

“What if?” scenarios

Participants use what they’ve learned by solving creative, real-life service or leadership challenges. In small teams, each group receives a “What if?” scenario. They work together to come up with practical and creative solutions. Each group then shares their ideas with everyone. This activity builds teamwork and critical thinking, and it helps connect training lessons to real-world situations.

MATERIALS NEEDED

(per group):

- Scenario card handout
- Worksheet

STEPS

1. Introduce the activity (2 minutes)

- Explain: *Each group will receive a “What if?” scenario related to service, leadership or community challenges.*
- Their task is to discuss the scenario, come up with a solution or plan, and prepare to share it with the larger group.

2. Distribute scenarios (10 minutes)

Give each group a different scenario. Examples:

- *“What if your club had only a small fund to run a service project?”*
- *“What if your community faced a sudden crisis — how would your club respond?”*
- *“What if no one under 30 was joining your club — how would you change that?”*
- *“What if your project failed halfway through — how would you recover and learn from it?”*

Encourage them to:

- Identify the core problem.
- Brainstorm possible solutions.
- Choose one solution and outline how they would implement it.
- Consider roles, resources and obstacles.

3. Group presentations (10–15 minutes)

Each group presents:

- A summary of their scenario.
- Their proposed solution or plan.
- One key insight or lesson they learned from the discussion.

4. Debrief and synthesis (5 minutes)

Facilitate a whole-group reflection:

- *“What surprised you about another group’s solution?”*
- *“How can we apply these ideas to real-life projects?”*
- *“Who can we reach out to for help in our organization and in our communities?”*



Print the WHAT IF scenario handouts on the following pages.

"What if?" scenario discussion

Work together to tackle a real-world Kiwanis club scenario. Your task is to discuss, develop a solution or plan and present your ideas to the larger group.

SCENARIO: *What if your club had only a small fund to run a service project?*

Your group's task:

- Identify the core problem in your scenario.
- Brainstorm possible solutions — think creatively and practically.
- Choose one solution and outline how you'd implement it.

Consider key factors:

- Roles: Who would do what?
- Resources: What would you need?
- Obstacles: What challenges might you face?

Present the following to the larger group:

- A brief summary of your scenario
- Your proposed solution or plan
- One key insight or lesson your group learned during the discussion

Tips for success:

- Be creative and collaborative!
- Think like a leader and a problem-solver.
- Keep your presentation short, clear and impactful.

CORE PROBLEM

KEY FACTORS

PROPOSED SOLUTION OR PLAN

KEY INSIGHT OR LESSON LEARNED



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"What if?" scenario discussion

Work together to tackle a real-world Kiwanis club scenario. Your task is to discuss, develop a solution or plan and present your ideas to the larger group.

SCENARIO: *What if your community faced a sudden crisis — how would your club respond?*

Your group's task:

- Identify the core problem in your scenario.
- Brainstorm possible solutions — think creatively and practically.
- Choose one solution and outline how you'd implement it.

Consider key factors:

- Roles: Who would do what?
- Resources: What would you need?
- Obstacles: What challenges might you face?

Present the following to the larger group:

- A brief summary of your scenario
- Your proposed solution or plan
- One key insight or lesson your group learned during the discussion

Tips for success:

- Be creative and collaborative!
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CORE PROBLEM

KEY FACTORS

PROPOSED SOLUTION OR PLAN

KEY INSIGHT OR LESSON LEARNED



Kiwanis®

"What if?" scenario discussion

Work together to tackle a real-world Kiwanis club scenario. Your task is to discuss, develop a solution or plan and present your ideas to the larger group.

SCENARIO: *What if no one under 30 was joining your club — how would you change that?*

Your group's task:

- Identify the core problem in your scenario.
- Brainstorm possible solutions — think creatively and practically.
- Choose one solution and outline how you'd implement it.

Consider key factors:

- Roles: Who would do what?
- Resources: What would you need?
- Obstacles: What challenges might you face?

Present the following to the larger group:

- A brief summary of your scenario
- Your proposed solution or plan
- One key insight or lesson your group learned during the discussion

Tips for success:

- Be creative and collaborative!
- Think like a leader and a problem-solver.
- Keep your presentation short, clear and impactful.

CORE PROBLEM

KEY FACTORS

PROPOSED SOLUTION OR PLAN

KEY INSIGHT OR LESSON LEARNED



Kiwanis®

"What if?" scenario discussion

Work together to tackle a real-world Kiwanis club scenario. Your task is to discuss, develop a solution or plan and present your ideas to the larger group.

SCENARIO: *What if your project failed halfway through — how would you recover and learn from it?*

Your group's task:

- Identify the core problem in your scenario.
- Brainstorm possible solutions — think creatively and practically.
- Choose one solution and outline how you'd implement it.

Consider key factors:

- Roles: Who would do what?
- Resources: What would you need?
- Obstacles: What challenges might you face?

Present the following to the larger group:

- A brief summary of your scenario
- Your proposed solution or plan
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CORE PROBLEM

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KEY INSIGHT OR LESSON LEARNED



Kiwanis®

MAKE AN IMPACT

These activities give participants a chance to recharge in a meaningful way through a service project.



ACTIVITY

Welcome cards for new students

Looking for a thoughtful way to pause between sessions? This simple service activity gives participants a chance to reflect and support students who may feel nervous or alone at a new school. It's a meaningful way to live out Kiwanis values by helping others feel seen, supported and included.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Blank cards and colorful paper
- Markers, pens, stickers and more
- Sample welcome messages for inspiration
- A space to relax, connect and create

STEPS

1. Describe the purpose (3 minutes):

"We're making handwritten welcome cards for new students at a local school. These cards will help students feel seen, supported and excited as they start their journey in a new environment. Starting at a new school can be overwhelming. A simple, kind message can go a long way in helping a student feel welcomed and valued. This is a small act of kindness with a big impact — and a perfect example of what Kiwanis is all about."

Each card should include a warm message like:

- "We're so glad you're here!"
- "You belong here — welcome!"
- "Wishing you a great start and lots of new friends!"

2. Create 1 or 2 cards (30 minutes)

- Sign it with "Your friends at the local Kiwanis Club of _____"

3. Deliver them to a local area school after training.



ACTIVITY

Trauma dolls

Kiwanis members can bring comfort and emotional support to children in crisis by making trauma dolls. These soft, handmade dolls are carefully sewn, stuffed and decorated. Then they can be donated to hospitals, foster care agencies and police departments. For children who are going through difficult times, the dolls offer a sense of safety and a way to express their feelings.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Fabric (cotton or flannel, colorful or various skin-tones)
- Poly-Fil stuffing
- Thread
- Needles (or sewing machines)
- Fabric markers or paint

STEPS

1. Planning and preparation

- Gather materials.
- Print trauma doll pattern and cut out.
- Coordinate with partners: Contact local hospitals, foster care agencies and police departments to confirm interest and delivery logistics.

2. Training and setup (5-7 minutes)

- Demonstrate how to cut, sew, stuff and decorate the dolls. Emphasize safety and quality.
- Organize workstations for cutting, sewing, stuffing and decorating to streamline the process.

3. Doll creation (20 minutes)

- Cut out fabric using the pattern.
- Put the fabric right sides together and pin.
- Stitch 1/4 inch in from the edge all the way around, leaving a gap of about 2.5 inches in one leg for stuffing. If using a sewing machine, use the width of your presser foot as the seam allowance.
- Sew in a Kiwanis label (optional) on the opposite leg.
- Snip into the corners where indicated.
- Turn the doll inside out.
- Push stuffing through the gap in the leg. Chopsticks are helpful to get stuffing into all parts. Start with the head, then arms then legs and last the chest.
- The dolls should be firm but not hard. If legs or arms flop, more stuffing is needed.
- Decorate using fabric markers and accessories to personalize each doll with faces, clothes and unique touches (avoid using items that could be choking hazards).

4. Quality check and packaging (5 minutes)

- Inspect dolls: Ensure all dolls are securely sewn and safe for children.
- Package thoughtfully: Place dolls in clean bags or boxes, optionally including a note of encouragement or a Kiwanis tag.

5. Delivery

- Distribute dolls to partner organizations with a brief explanation of the project.



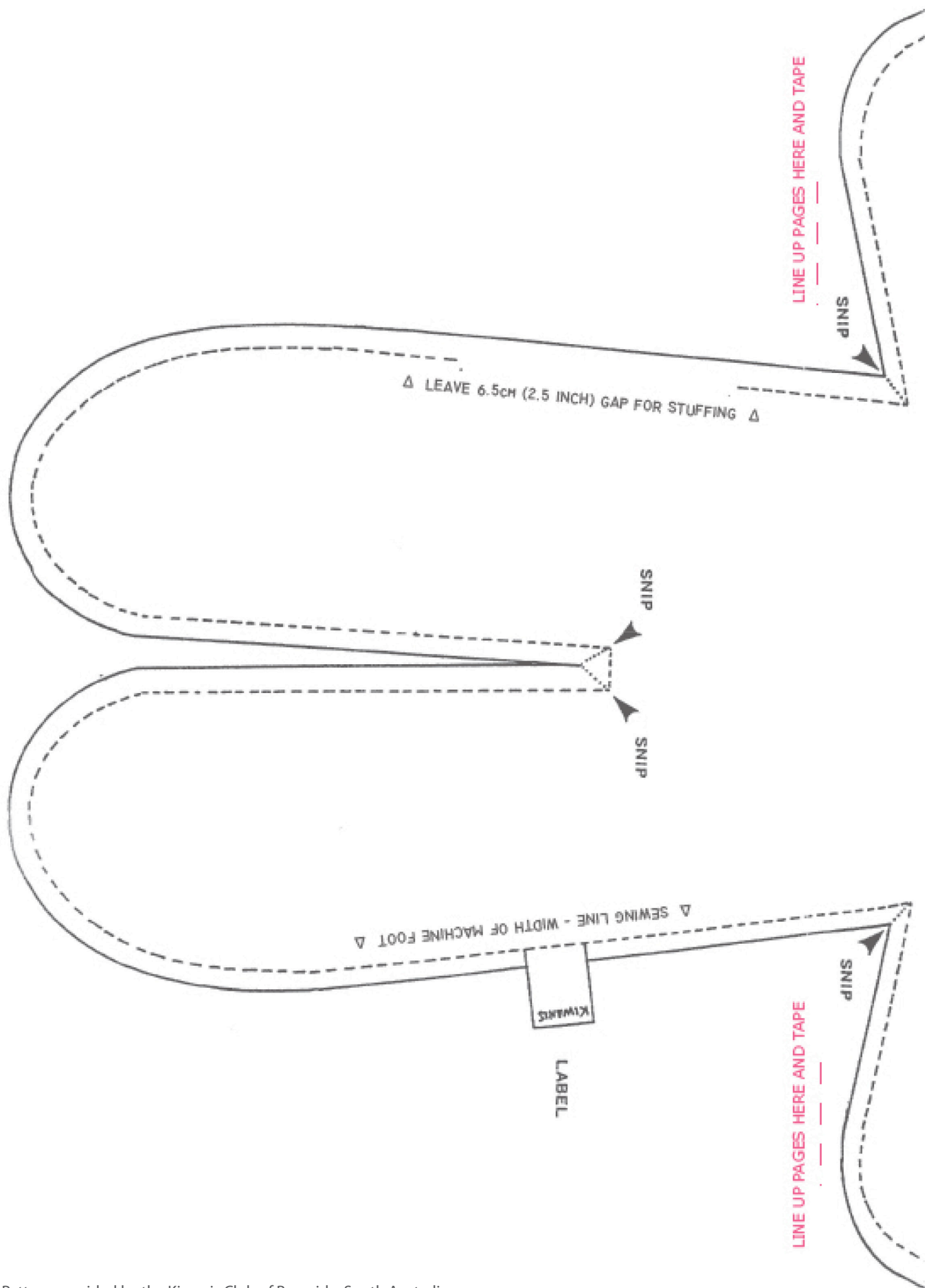
SEWING INSTRUCTIONS

1. Cut out fabric using the pattern.
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9. Decorate using fabric markers and accessories to personalize each doll with faces, clothes and unique touches (avoid using items that could be choking hazards).



LINE UP PAGES HERE AND TAPE

LINE UP PAGES HERE AND TAPE



ACTIVITY

Birthday in a box

"Birthday in a box" brings joy to children in need by providing all the essentials for a birthday celebration, which are then neatly packed in a disposable cake pan. These boxes are donated to shelters, foster care programs and food pantries to ensure that every child can feel celebrated on their special day. Each box includes cake mix, frosting, candles, party hats and a birthday card, offering a simple yet meaningful way to spread happiness and hope.

MATERIALS NEEDED (per cake kit):

- Disposable cake pan with lid
- Boxed cake mix
- Can of frosting
- Can of Sprite
- Printed recipe card
- Birthday candles
- Party hats or blowers
- Birthday card (handmade or store-bought)
- Optional: sprinkles, balloons, small toys or utensils

STEPS

1. Set a goal: Decide how many boxes to assemble and identify recipient organizations.

2. Partner outreach

- Contact local organizations: Coordinate with shelters, foster care agencies, food banks or schools to determine needs and delivery logistics.
- Confirm guidelines: Ensure all items are acceptable and safe for distribution.

3. Assembly event (20 minutes)

- Organize the packing party: Set up an assembly line with stations for each item.
- Decorate cards: Allow time for members to write cheerful messages in the birthday cards.
- Pack thoughtfully: Place all items in the cake pan, secure the lid and label the box with age range or gender if needed.

4. Delivery

- Drop off completed birthday boxes to partner organizations.



Print and cut the BIRTHDAY IN A BOX recipe cards on the following page to include in the kits.

Birthday cake in a box recipe

INGREDIENTS

1 box of cake mix
1 12 ounce can of Sprite
1 tub of frosting



DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat the oven according to the directions on the box.
2. Grease the 9x13 pan and set aside.
3. Empty the box of cake mix into a bowl and slowly pour the can of Sprite on top.
4. Whisk or mix until the batter is well combined, but do not overmix. The mixture will be foamy at first but will settle.
5. Pour the batter into the 9x13 pan and bake according to the cake box directions, or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean.
6. Allow cake to cool completely before frosting.



Kiwanis

Birthday cake in a box recipe

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DIRECTIONS

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Kiwanis

ACTIVITY

Book donation

Volunteers donate new or gently used books, bringing the magic of reading to children in hospitals and foster care. They enhance the experience by adding cheerful stickers and, where permitted, wrapping books as gifts. This thoughtful touch helps children feel seen, valued and celebrated. The project promotes literacy, emotional well-being and the joy of discovery through stories.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Books in age ranges of 1-3, 4-6 and 7-10
- Wrapping paper
- Stickers

STEPS

1. Planning & policy check

- Contact recipient organizations. Reach out to children's hospitals and foster care facilities to:
 - Confirm they accept book donations.
 - Ask about policies on wrapping. (Some may prefer unwrapped books for safety or hygiene reasons.)
- Set a collection goal: Decide how many books to collect and distribute.

2. Book collection (5 minutes)

- Gather books: Collect new or gently used children's books appropriate for various age groups.
- Sort by age group: Organize books by reading level or age range for easier distribution.

3. Decoration and wrapping (10 minutes)

- Sticker station: Add a Kiwanis sticker to the inside covers or front pages.
- Birthday or encouragement cards: Include a small note or card with a positive message.
- Wrapping station (if allowed): Wrap books in colorful paper or gift bags. Label with age range or reading level.

4. Assembly and quality check (5 minutes)

- Inspect books: Ensure all books are clean, in good condition and appropriate.
- Pack for delivery: Organize books in boxes or totes, grouped by recipient organization and age group.

5. Delivery

- Drop off books according to the organization's guidelines.



WRAP UP YOUR TRAINING

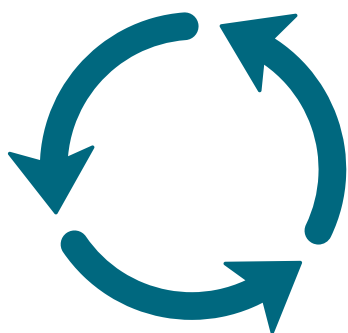
These activities bring your training to a close and guide participants to reflect on what they've learned. Choose one to close your training session. Use more if your training spans multiple days.



ACTIVITY

One-word wrap-up

Invite each participant to share one word that captures their experience from the training or weekend. It's a fast, meaningful way to reflect — and to close the session with shared insight.



STEPS

1. Set the tone (1–2 minutes)

- Explain: *"We're going to go around the room and each share one word that sums up your experience this weekend — how you feel, what you learned or what you're taking with you."*

2. Go around the room (5 minutes)

- Each person shares their word. No explanation is required, but brief elaboration is welcome if time allows.

3. Optional visual element

- Write the words on a poster or whiteboard to create a visual "word cloud" of the group's experience. Alternatively, explore various free word-cloud websites, such as simplewordcloud.com, to quickly see common words as respondents share them.

ACTIVITY

Letter to future self

Each participant writes a short letter to themselves, reflecting on what they've learned and how they plan to apply it. This encourages long-term thinking and personal accountability.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Paper
- Pens
- Envelopes



STEPS

1. Distribute materials

2. Write the letter (10–15 minutes)

- Explain: *"Write a letter to your future self. What did you learn this weekend? What do you want to remember or commit to? What advice would you give yourself 3–6 months from now?"*

3. Seal and collect (optional)

- Participants seal their letters in envelopes with their name and mailing address. You can mail them 3–6 months after the session as a surprise reminder.

ACTIVITY

Leadership commitment wall

Participants write one leadership takeaway or commitment on a sticky note and place it on a shared wall or board. This creates a visual representation of the group's collective growth and intentions.

MATERIAL NEEDED:

- Sticky notes
- Markers



STEPS

1. Distribute sticky notes and markers (2 minutes)

2. Write a commitment (5 minutes)

- Prompt: "Write one leadership commitment, insight or action you're taking away from this weekend."

3. Post on the wall (5 minutes)

- Participants place their notes on a designated wall or board.

4. Gallery walk (optional)

- Invite participants to walk by and read others' commitments for inspiration.

ACTIVITY

Pass the torch

In a closing circle, each person shares one thing they learned and one person they want to thank or recognize. It's a powerful way to end with gratitude, connection and reflection.

MATERIAL NEEDED:

- A small object (like a flashlight or symbolic item) to represent a torch.



STEPS

1. Form a circle

- Gather everyone in a circle to create a sense of unity and closure.

2. Explain the prompt

- "As we close, each of you will 'pass the torch' by sharing one thing you learned and one person you'd like to thank or recognize from this weekend."

3. Go around the circle

- Each person shares their reflection and recognition, then symbolically "passes the torch" to the next person.

Thank you for using this resource!

We hope it supported your work and inspired meaningful engagement. If you have any questions, suggestions or feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Please reach out to us at education@kiwanis.org — your input helps us continue to grow and improve.



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GIED-825-179