

# Keep It Positive. Keep It Simple. Keep It Real.

## Un-Challenge Day Six

### Critical Key #7: Gather Data



**Gathering data involves using your senses to explore the world around you. The skill of detailed observation supports thinking in writing, science, mathematics, and the arts.**

**Children who make connections between their observations have a better chance of transferring information into long-term memory and long-term learning.**

## 20 MINUTE ACTIVITY

### Freeze Frame

Freeze Frame is an observation game in which kids observe the world around them through their senses. There are a couple different ways to capture the observations. If you want to also start developing journaling skills, this might be a great time to make an observation journal. See the extensions for ideas around this.

**You Need:** paper and writing materials or a digital way to capture ideas. When using paper, I divide it into 5 sections for each of the senses.

#### Steps:

- go to a location - this can be inside or outside
- choose a place to sit - you can't switch positions or views for 3 minutes, so make a comfortable choice
- record everything that you see, hear, smell, feel, and taste (or what something might taste like). Younger kids can draw or dictate ideas.
- after 3 minutes come back together - Who has the most ideas? Who has the most unique idea? What was something you might not have noticed if you hadn't taken this time? Was there anything you couldn't name?

**Parent Tip:** This activity is great for vacations, camping, hiking or evening strolls. Connect with Key #5 Develop a Passion for Words to really expand descriptive language!



*Observation Journal  
Camping is a great time to observe!*



## DAILY DOINGS

### Look Up!

Kids are in the habit of looking straight ahead or even more often, down at the ground or their phones.

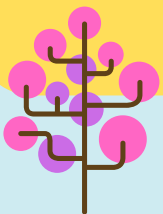
Every once in awhile, stop and ask your child to look up. What do you see that you might not have noticed before? Describe what you see using your five senses to take in interesting data!

**My kids won't pick up their rooms!**

While this may seem a strange connection to gathering data through observation, you can make clean up time an observation game.

"Look around your room for all of the things that are red. Pick those up first. How many were there? Hmm, I wonder how many purple things are out there? What conclusions can you make?" Kids might say "My favorite color is red or I have 5 red trucks, maybe I should give one away."

With older kids, you can gather data around what takes up the most space on the floor and devise a way to organize that. For us it was dirty clothes, and we discovered that a new laundry system was necessary.





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# Un-Challenge Kick Start Critical Key #1: Get Curious

## PRE K - 2 ACADEMIC CONNECTIONS & MODIFICATIONS

**Academic Standard:** Ask questions, make observations, and gather information about a situation.

**Home Connection:** After playing freeze frame or doing the daily doing of looking up, ask your child what they *cannot* observe about a situation that they might like to know. Encourage them to state it in a question. For example, if I observed a car with Hawaiian license plates, I might ask "How did that car get to Wyoming?"

## 3RD - 5TH ACADEMIC CONNECTIONS & MODIFICATIONS

**Academic Standard:** Ask questions and make observations to predict outcomes about situations.

**Home Connection:** This is as simple as asking "What do you think will happen next in this situation? What evidence do you have that backs up your prediction? As kids get better at observing, they will be able to deduce better predictions. Observation was the key to Sherlock Holmes success!

## 6TH - 8TH ACADEMIC CONNECTIONS & MODIFICATIONS

**Academic Standard:** Ask questions to clarify evidence of the factors of an outcome.

**Home Connection:** Encourage the use of "I wonder" to promote this academic standard. "I can see a giant boulder in the field. I wonder if it got there from glacial movement or did it fall from the mountain?" Ask them "why?" they had those wonderings to see if their evidence backs up the question they've asked.

## Activity Extensions & Alternatives:

One of my favorite books to read with kids is *The Last of the Really Great Whangdoodles*. It is written by Julie Andrews, the original Mary Poppins, and it is a little bit tough to find.

But, what a find it is! As an independent read, it is most appropriate for 3rd - 6th grade students. Pre-K through 2nd would love it read aloud. In one of the first chapters, the children in the book are asked to "look up". It is from here that their adventures begin.

Creating a journal can be a great entry point into journaling. Journaling doesn't have to be about writing.

It can be drawing, lists, photos, collections (leaves, flowers, insects), and so much more. The goal is to get kids observing the world around them and capturing their thoughts and observations. Here is a link to an [easy set of instructions](#) for making a journal. Of course, I encourage you to get creative and use whatever materials you have to make it your own!

