



Dear Educator,

No matter how connected we are virtually, it can never replace the value of face-to-face conversations, real hangouts with friends, and family traditions that create lasting memories.

This cross-curricular program from *got milk?* and the curriculum specialists at Young Minds Inspired is designed to engage students in talking with each other and building real connections. It also includes ideas to engage families in the fun and a digital quiz focused on foods that connect us.

We hope that you enjoy this program and will share it with other teachers.

TELL US what you think. Visit ymiclassroom.com/feedback-realconnections to share your thoughts on this program. We look forward to receiving your comments.

Sincerely,

Dr. Dominic Kinsley
Editor in Chief
Young Minds Inspired



Questions? Contact YMI toll-free at 1-800-859-8005 or email feedback@ymiclassroom.com.



REAL CONNECTIONS ARE BACK

TARGET AUDIENCE

Grades 2-5

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

- This teacher's guide
- Four reproducible student activities
- A classroom poster
- A reply card for your comments

Additional resources available at ymiclassroom.com/realconnections:

- Bonus activities for grades 2-5
- Program for grades 6-12
- Family take-home letter in English and Spanish
- Digital quiz
- Education standards chart
- Feedback form

CONCEPTS AND SKILLS

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making connections • Self-awareness • Creative thinking • Social awareness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication • Speaking and listening • Narrative writing |
|---|--|

HOW TO USE THE PROGRAM

Before displaying the poster, make photocopies of the activity sheets for each student. In class, help younger students by reading each activity aloud. For bonus activities and a family letter to send home or email to parents and caregivers, go to ymiclassroom.com/realconnections.

ACTIVITY 1: THE REAL ME

To introduce this activity, explain to students that letting someone get to know the "real you" is a great way to connect with people. Provide an example: Choose a character from a book the class is reading and ask students for words that describe the character's likes and interests, how they act, and who they are. Or ask students for words and phrases they would use to introduce themselves to the character so that the character could get to know them.



Next, distribute the activity sheet and review the instructions with the class. For younger students, brainstorm words as a class and write them on the board so that students can refer to them to complete Part 1.

When students have completed Parts 1 and 2, divide the class into pairs to complete Part 3. If time allows, have several student volunteers introduce “the real me” to the class.

ACTIVITY 2: REAL FRIENDS

To introduce this activity, ask students to share ways their friends make their lives better. To get them started, ask questions such as: *How does spending time with your friends make you feel? What activities do you enjoy doing with your friends, and why? What have you learned from a friend? How do your friends support you if you're feeling sad or nervous?*

Distribute the activity sheet and review the instructions with students. For younger students, discuss the meanings of unknown terms in Part 1. Provide time for students to share their tips from Part 2 with the class.

ACTIVITY 3: REAL FUN SCAVENGER HUNT

Begin by explaining that in this activity, students will get to know each other better by participating in an informational or fact-finding scavenger hunt. Distribute the activity sheet and review the instructions with students. After students mingle and complete the page, ask them to share what they learned about each other that they didn't know before the activity. Ask how getting to know people better can help us connect with each other.

Note: Depending on your class size and dynamics, this activity can also be done as a group activity. Have a student read each statement and invite the other students to raise their hands, make a thumbs-up sign, or move to a designated side of the room if the statement applies to them.

ACTIVITY 4: REAL CHATS

To get students ready for this activity, start with a class discussion and a fun topic, such as “the best cartoon character.” Give students time to consider the topic and discuss their ideas.

Next, distribute the activity sheet and review the instructions with students. For Part 1, have half of the students sit at their desks and pair each seated student with a “rotating” partner who should stand or sit across from them. At your signal, each student pair picks a topic from the sheet to discuss. After a minute, signal the rotating students to move one chair to the right and repeat the activity with a different partner. Continue in this manner as time allows. You might also assign and change the topics as you go so that students can discuss all topics. Then have all students return to their seats to complete Part 2. Collect students' responses to Part 2 for future use.

This activity can be done over a few days to cycle through the topics and allow students to introduce the topics they brainstormed for Part 2. Alternatively, you can use the activity to take a five-minute break at the end of class to let students talk and move around. Invite other classes to expand the conversation and the fun!

THERE'S MORE ONLINE

Visit [ymiclassroom.com/realconnections](https://www.ymiclassroom.com/realconnections) for a family letter and “Tasty Connections” interactive digital quiz that you can do as a class or students can play with their families.

RESOURCES

[gotmilk.com](https://www.gotmilk.com)

[ymiclassroom.com/realconnections](https://www.ymiclassroom.com/realconnections)





THE REAL ME

A glass of milk is good for you, and so is letting people get to know the real you!

PART 1 Circle the words in the glass of milk that describe the real you. Then add your own.

Add your own words:

PART 2 Now think about things you like, your goals, and your talents.

My favorite...

- book: _____
- game: _____
- color: _____
- food: _____
- sports team: _____
- place I have visited: _____

Things I like to do:

Something I would like to do:

My talents:



PART 3 Pair up with a classmate. Pretend that you do not know each other well. Use the words and phrases above to introduce yourself to your partner.

Families, what words and phrases describe your family?
Talk about it. Have each family member tell you about themselves.



REAL FRIENDS

Friends make a real difference in our lives. What makes your friends special to you?

PART 1 Read the words below. They are words that describe people or character traits. Check five traits that you think are most important in a good friend.

- | | | | |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> likes the same things as me | <input type="checkbox"/> has different interests than me | <input type="checkbox"/> honest | <input type="checkbox"/> fun |
| <input type="checkbox"/> kind | <input type="checkbox"/> good listener | <input type="checkbox"/> welcoming | <input type="checkbox"/> sharing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> sticks up for me | <input type="checkbox"/> keeps promises | <input type="checkbox"/> apologizes | <input type="checkbox"/> helpful |
| <input type="checkbox"/> forgiving | <input type="checkbox"/> respects others | <input type="checkbox"/> encouraging | <input type="checkbox"/> understanding |

PART 2 Pretend someone has asked you for advice on making friends. Write a tip in each speech bubble and include some of the traits you selected above.



Families, with your child, make a poster illustrating what being a real friend means. Display it in your home.

REAL FUN SCAVENGER HUNT

Have fun with your classmates by completing this scavenger hunt. You'll chat and get to know each other along the way!

PART 1 Walk around the classroom and find someone who matches each description. Write their name next to the statement. Can't find a match? What about a family member?

| Find someone who ... | | It's a match! (Person's name) |
|----------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| 1. | is wearing your favorite color | |
| 2. | has a pet that is not a cat or dog | |
| 3. | shares your birthday month | |
| 4. | is wearing colorful socks | |
| 5. | has traveled outside of California | |
| 6. | has an autograph from a famous person | |
| 7. | has milk with their school lunch | |
| 8. | shares a bedroom with a sibling | |
| 9. | can speak more than one language | |
| 10. | has a first name that includes the letter A | |
| 11. | likes to read | |
| 12. | has seen a live elephant | |
| 13. | has slept in a tent | |
| 14. | likes riding roller coasters | |
| 15. | likes strawberry ice cream | |

PART 2 Now add to your list. Think up another item like the ones above. See if you can find a classmate who fits the description and write their name below.

Find someone who _____

Name: _____

REAL CHATS

Friends connect when they have a good conversation together. So, let's get chatting!

PART 1 Think about the topics below. What would you say about them? With your partner, choose a topic below and talk about it. Or follow your teacher's instructions for playing a round of chats.

1. The best ice cream flavor
2. Something you like about our school
3. The best present you've ever received
4. What you want to do when you grow up
5. Where you would go if you could fly
6. Animals that make the best pets
7. What to do with \$100
8. The best thing to eat with a glass of milk
9. Which goes in the bowl first – the cereal or the milk?
10. The best place in California
11. If you could travel and live in space
12. Your favorite game or book



PART 2 Write another topic that would be a good conversation starter. Use it for another chat.

REAL CONNECTIONS ARE BACK

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

It's easy to send a quick text or catch up with people over social media these days, but a virtual connection is no replacement for face-to-face conversations, catching up with friends, or celebrating a tradition with family.

Your child has been participating in a classroom program from *got milk?* and the curriculum specialists at Young Minds Inspired with activities that help students connect with their classmates by talking about fun topics, family traditions, friendships, and things that make them happy.

Building Real Connections

We encourage you to ask your child what they have learned and to share their completed activity sheets with you. Continue the fun at home with these activities:

- **Share a story:** Talk about a fun or meaningful time you spent with someone. Where did you go and what did you do? What made the moment memorable? Sharing stories about your childhood can help your child make sense of their experiences. It's also a great way for them to learn about family history and the role real connections played in making it.
- **Talk about tech:** Decide as a family what steps everyone can take to limit screen time and increase family time. Ask your child how they might also put down tech to interact more with their friends. What can they do for fun that does not include tech?
- **Let's chat:** Choose a fun topic (find suggestions on the "Real Chats" activity sheet). Then set a timer for two to five minutes and talk about the topic as a family. Or have each family member write down five topics, place them in a bowl or paper bag, and select a new topic to chat about each day.
- **Real traditions:** Engage your child in brainstorming new family traditions you might try that will spark connections and conversation with immediate and distant family members and friends. Try a potluck dinner or milk-and-cookies catch up on a day that has special meaning to your family. Start a neighborhood walk group or a multi-generation book club. (Movie clubs work, too!) Or arrange to have your child chat with older family members to learn about their childhoods and to share family memories.
- **Cooking connections:** Explore recipes that can become your new family favorites. For ideas on bringing family and friends together, check out real recipes at gotmilk.com/realisback.



**YOU
ARE AMAZING.
I MAY JUST BE A
GLASS OF MILK,
BUT I SEE YOU
GROWING BY
SHARING AND
CARING. BE KIND
AND SHINE!**

