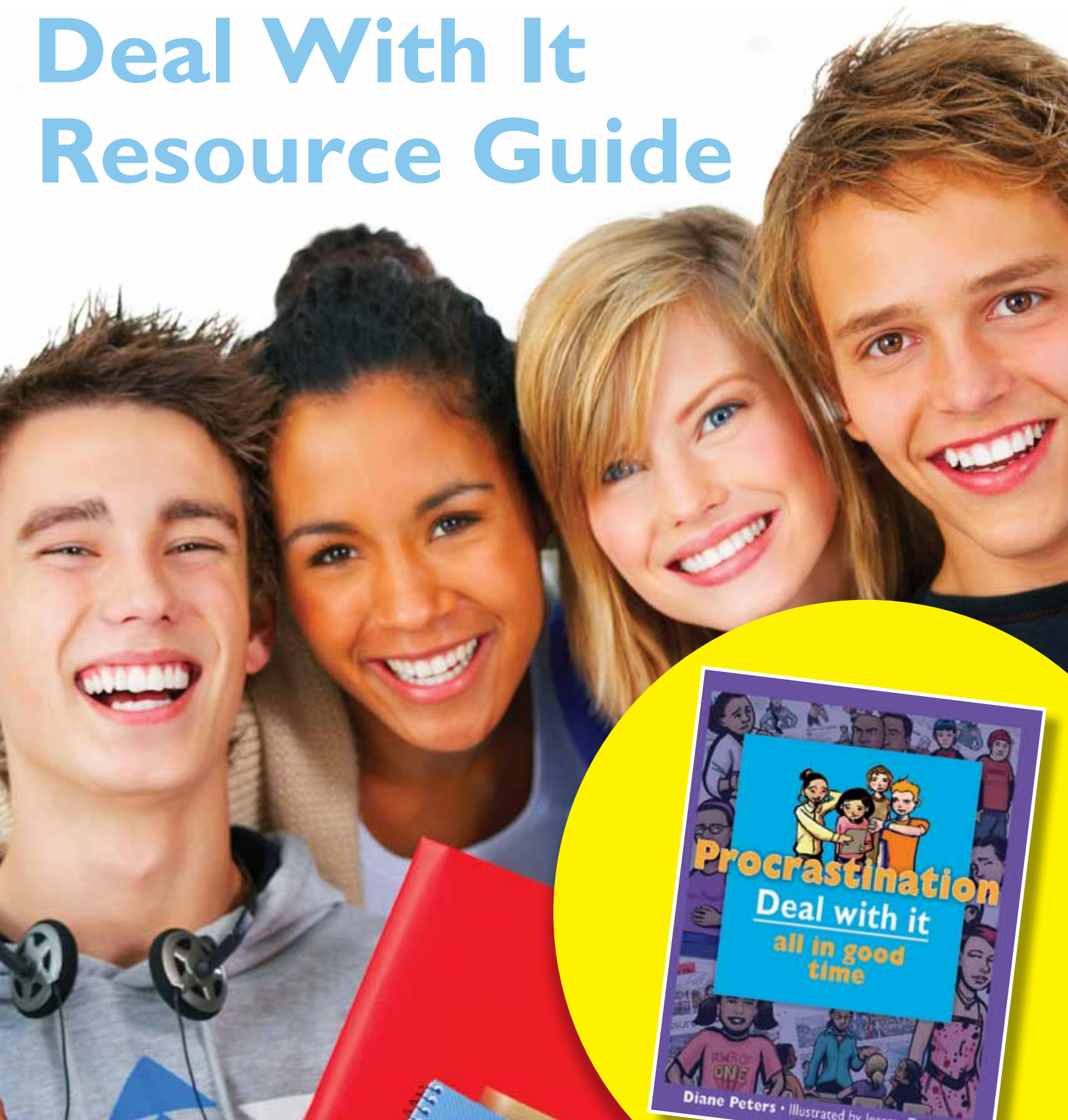


Procrastination: Deal With It Resource Guide



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How to Use this Guide

This guide offers a number of informative and enjoyable discussion questions and teaching activities that allow for in-depth coverage of the causes of conflict from several angles.

Guide Map

This guide begins on page 3 with an introduction to the issue covered in the Deal With It book. Please be sure to read the **Before You Begin** section, which provides suggestions to help you consider the specific needs and interests of your class. It also outlines any particular scenarios presented in the Deal With It book that may be sensitive to some students.

The pages that follow correspond with the sections of the Deal With It book.

These sections are:

- A **101** section that introduces readers to a subject (See page 4 of this guide)
- An **Instigator** section that focuses on the person who instigates the conflict (See page 6 of this guide)
- A **Target** section that focuses on the person who feels victimized in the conflict (See page 8 of this guide)
- A **Witness** section with tips for those caught in between (See page 10 of this guide)

For each of these sections, you will find:

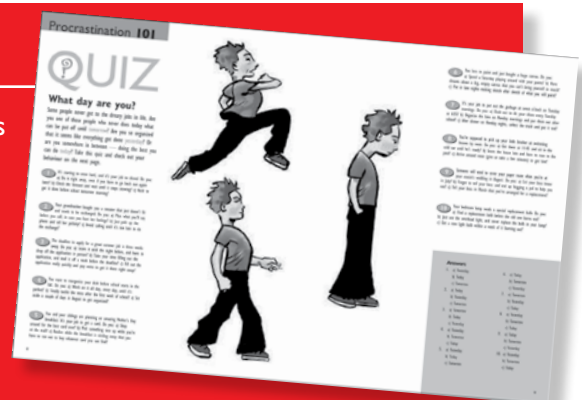
Highlights that briefly capture the main points from the Deal With It book, which you will want to review with students.

Discussion Questions that are designed to introduce students to the topics and encourage them to think critically about the topics at hand.

Teaching Activities that correspond to page numbers in the Deal With It book, and are designated as activities for Individuals (I), Pairs (P), or Groups (G).

About the Series

The **Deal With It** series is a set of 32-page books that empower **kids ages 9–12** to resolve conflict in their lives. Information is presented in an interactive and graphic style to engage readers and help spark discussion of issues. The information in this **Resource Guide** is intended to help educators plan lessons around conflict resolution using the **Deal With It** books.



Procrastination: Deal with it all in good time

All of us put off doing tasks from time to time. Most of us want to get the job done, but might not want to face the time and effort that we need to exert to complete it. Conflicts can arise when we don't do what we promised or complete jobs that we started. ***Procrastination: Deal with it all in good time*** was created to give students suggestions on how to accept responsibility for jobs they need to do and use their time well.

Procrastination is an important topic for adolescents. As they begin to take on more responsibility, students need to learn how to manage their time and balance competing priorities. School work, part-time jobs, and social activities all vie for their time and attention. This resource offers teachers discussion topics and activities to help students see patterns in their own behaviour and learn strategies to help them combat the temptation to procrastinate (or the drive to be a perfectionist). Learning to manage their time productively and positively will help them in their school work, in their social lives, and when they enter the workforce.

Before You Begin

Here are some tips and suggestions to help you plan your procrastination unit.

- Gather as much material as you can about procrastination, including ***Procrastination: Deal with it all in good time***. (See More Help on page 32 of ***Procrastination*** for a listing of materials.)
- Decide on the scope of your study, depending on the grade level you teach and the needs of your students.
- Display books for children on this topic. In addition, prepare a bulletin board for posters, pictures, and, as the theme develops, your students' work.
- In the week before beginning the unit, have students keep journals in which they record how often they avoid something they should be doing. At the beginning of the unit, ask volunteers to share some examples and encourage a light-hearted discussion about things they tend to put off.
- Decide on the amount of time that you plan to spend on this theme.



Procrastination 101

Highlights

- Procrastination occurs when you put off doing something.
- You might procrastinate in order to avoid dealing with something that is emotional, challenging, boring, or for someone else.
- Procrastination can take many forms, including:
 - ☛ ignoring the needs of others
 - ☛ avoiding challenging assignments and hoping a rushed job will suffice
 - ☛ delaying your contribution to group work
 - ☛ not doing something that you promised to do
- Different forms of procrastination include:
 - ☛ criticizing the job, not yourself
 - ☛ hoping someone else will do it
 - ☛ worrying that you will fail even before you start
 - ☛ choosing to do something else that you enjoy more
 - ☛ claiming that you work better under pressure
 - ☛ announcing that you have too much to do

Discussion Questions

- Have you ever put off or avoided doing something? What was it? Why did you avoid doing it? What were the consequences of procrastinating?
- Have you seen anyone close to you procrastinate? How does their procrastinating affect you? How does it make you feel when someone doesn't do what he or she promised they would?
- What does a deadline mean to you? Do you think that it is set in stone, or are there ways to get around them? Do you wait until the last minute, or use the time to do an assignment and then check to see if it can be improved?
- When you find new tasks daunting, what do you do? Who could you go to for help if you don't understand how to do something new?
- How do you get organized before you start a project? Do you need to read and talk it through before you begin an assignment? Do you think about how long it will take you to get organized and then budget your time to complete your assignments?
- How do you feel when you have procrastinated? Do you feel pressure and stress when deadlines approach? Have you argued with your teachers or family members about getting your work done? What did arguing accomplish?
- Think about a time when you procrastinated and your teacher or parents were unhappy with you. How might you handle a similar situation in a more positive way?
- How do you feel when you do a job and finish it on time? What are the rewards for organizing your time and meeting deadlines?

Teaching Activities

I = Individual P = Pair G = Group

Section	Subject Area	Activities
pp. 2–5	Guidance and Career Education/ Language Arts (I)	Ask the students to think about their work habits. Encourage them to think about the last time they had an assignment due or promised to do something for someone else. Have them write a journal entry about their work habits, including three things they do very well and three things they think need improvement.
pp. 2–5	The Arts (drama) (G)	Have students work in groups of three or four to brainstorm reasons why they might procrastinate. Have them create a skit based on their list. Encourage half the class to explore the negative consequences of procrastinating and the other half to demonstrate the rewards of managing their time. Discuss as a class.
pp. 6–7	Language Arts/ The Arts (visual)/ Health and Physical Education (I)	Have students choose the scenario that they can relate to the most. Ask them to brainstorm a list of emotions that they associate with the scenario. For each emotion, ask them to come up with a suggestion for how they might deal with the situation to help resolve that feeling in a positive way. Have students present their suggestions as posters or journal entries.
pp. 6–7	Language Arts/ Guidance and Career Education (I)	Ask students to write a letter to their future selves. Have students think about their goals and what kind of person they want to be. Their letters should state at least three good habits that they should follow to achieve their goals. Encourage students to keep their letters and refer to them on a regular basis to see if they have adapted the good habits they suggested.
pp. 8–9	Language Arts/ Guidance and Career Education (I)	Have students complete the quiz on their own. When they are finished, ask them to look at the results and write a journal entry about how their characteristics can help them succeed.
pp. 8–9	The Arts (drama) (G)	Have students work in groups of three or four, to mimic a machine (e.g., an assembly line) working efficiently. Then have them demonstrate what might happen if one group member gets lazy or stops working altogether. Ask students to demonstrate their machines to the class and discuss.
pp. 10–11	Media Literacy/ Social Responsibility (I/G)	Have students create a class blog for younger students to post their comments or questions about procrastination and perfectionism. Encourage students to respond to the postings with helpful suggestions. (Note: You should monitor the blog for content. Alternatively, you can have students post questions and suggestions on a school bulletin board.)
pp. 12–13	Mathematics/ Social Studies (G)	Have students create a survey to find out if people believe the myths listed. Encourage them to use the myths and the explanations to create their survey questions. Ask them to survey their classmates, friends, and family members, and then display their results in a graph. Have students report their findings to the class and discuss.

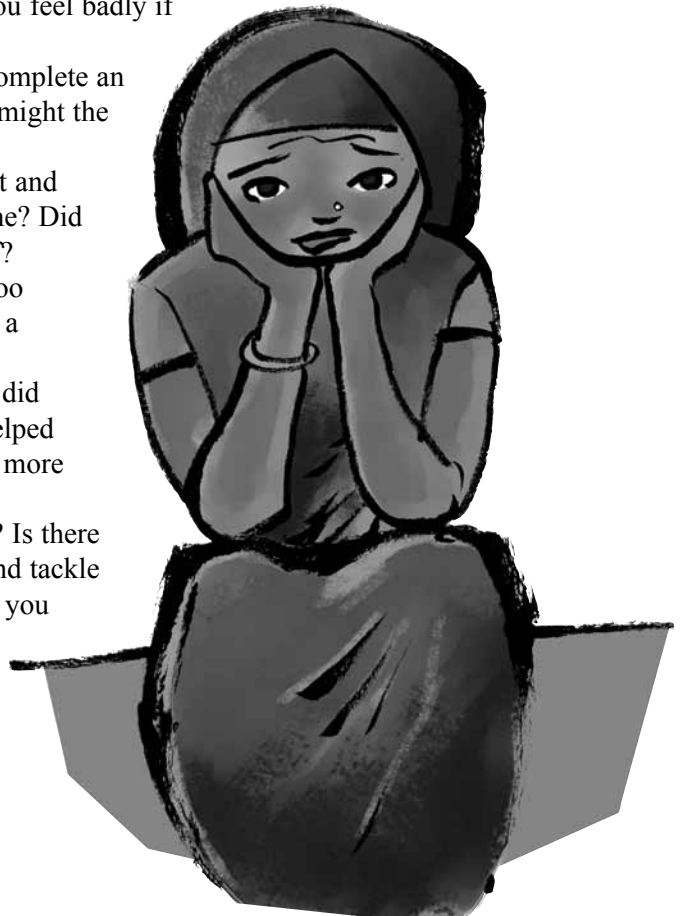
The Procrastinator

Highlights

- The Procrastinator is the person who puts things off.
- The Procrastinator might put something off because he or she:
 - ☛ hopes that someone else will do it
 - ☛ thinks that a last minute effort will suffice
 - ☛ is afraid of failing
- Procrastination can lead to more stress and anxiety and might cause conflict in your relationships.
- You can avoid procrastinating by:
 - ☛ keeping track of your assignments and work you need to do
 - ☛ thinking about the assignment and getting organized to get the work done
 - ☛ getting help if you need it
 - ☛ using your time wisely — get your work done early and check to see if it needs improvement
 - ☛ rewarding yourself after your work is done
 - ☛ not worrying that your work will not be perfect
 - ☛ giving yourself a chance to learn new things

Discussion Questions

- Do you consider yourself to be organized? How do you keep track of your assignments and other responsibilities? Can you think of any other ways you can get organized?
- Do people rely on you to get jobs done? What types of problems might occur if you didn't do what you have promised? Do you feel badly if someone else does a job you were expected to do?
- Imagine being in a situation where someone doesn't complete an important job that they were expected to finish. What might the consequences be?
- Think about a time when you planned your assignment and finished it early. How did you feel when you were done? Did you celebrate by using the rest of the time for yourself?
- Do you ever find yourself complaining about having too much work? How might you deal with the situation in a more positive way than complaining?
- Have you ever felt embarrassed asking for help? Why did you feel this way? How would asking for help have helped you? How might you deal with a similar situation in a more positive way?
- How do you handle large or complicated assignments? Is there any way you could break the task down into chunks and tackle them one at a time? How do you think this might help you avoid procrastinating?
- Do you have a friend who always finishes his or her work on time? What tips do you think he or she might give you?



Teaching Activities

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P = Pair

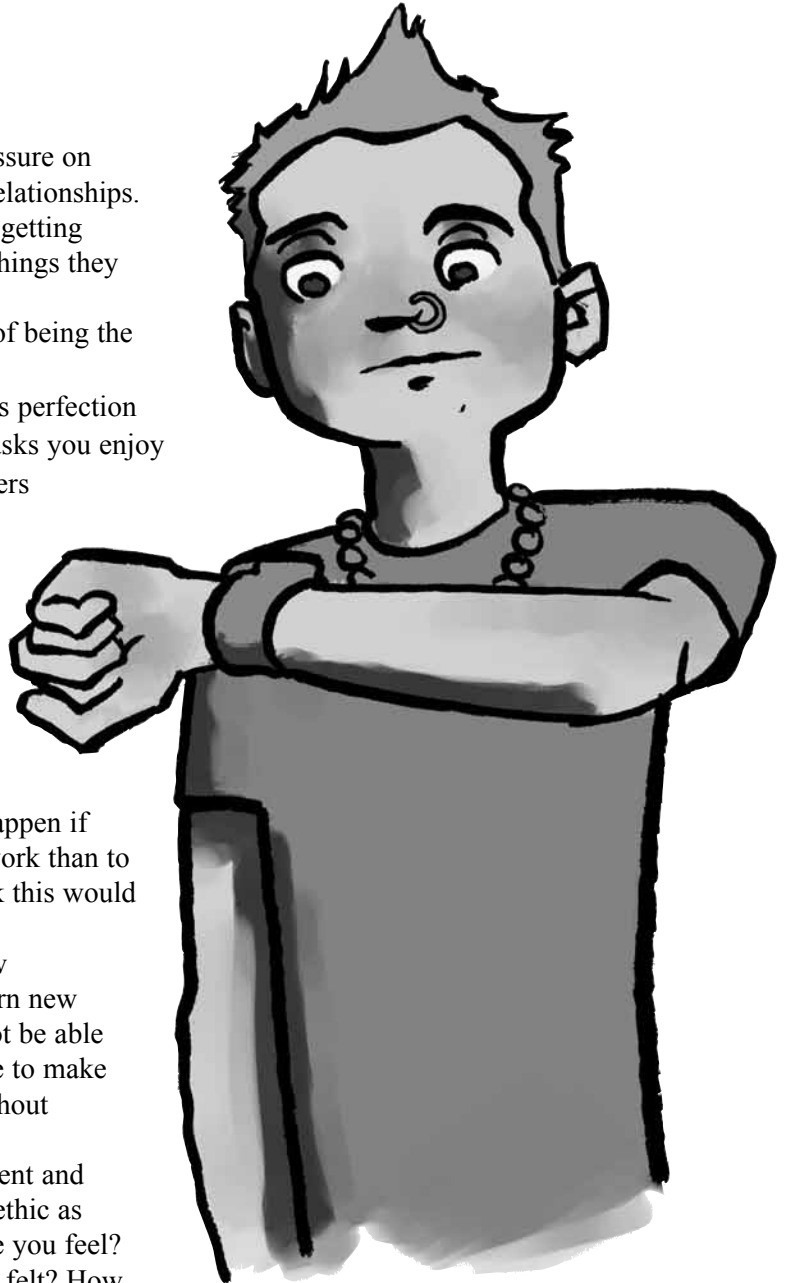
G = Group

Section	Subject Area	Activities
pp. 14–15	Language Arts/ Health and Physical Education (I/G)	Have students read the letter from Secretly Stressed on p. 15. Ask them to imagine that Secretly followed Dr. Shrink-Wrapped’s advice and has asked them to brainstorm ways to help her solve her procrastination problem. Have students write Dr. Shrink-Wrapped a follow-up letter telling him about the ideas they came up with and how breaking her secret cycle made Secretly feel.
pp. 14–15	Media Literacy/ Guidance and Career Education (P/G)	Have students work in pairs to interview each other on the merits of procrastination. Encourage them to use humour to put a positive spin on not doing work on time. Students can record their interviews and play them for the class, or act them out. When they are finished, discuss why their arguments for procrastination might not work in the real world.
pp. 16–17	Guidance and Career Education/ Language Arts (I/G)	Have students take the quiz and choose three statements that were true. Ask them to write a journal entry for each of the statements, describing a situation in which they felt this way and how they could deal with it in a positive way.
pp. 16–17	Social Sciences/ Canada and World Studies (I/G)	Ask students to think about what might happen if politicians and governments procrastinated. Encourage them to think about examples from Canada and around the world, such as pollution, climate change, and human rights violations. Have them think about the possible consequences and costs of not taking action. Encourage them to choose an issue and write a letter to their MP or MPP persuading them to take action.
pp. 18–19	The Arts (drama)/ Media Literacy (I)	Divide students into seven groups and assign each group one of the suggestions on pp. 18–19. Have each group develop the script for a how-to video telling people how to follow their assigned suggestion, including demonstrations of how these strategies could work. Encourage students to make their videos and present them to the class.
pp. 18–19	Media Literacy (G)	Ask students to think about video games they enjoy playing. Have work in small groups to design their own video games based on the strategies given on pp. 18–19 so that the players accumulate points by overcoming procrastination and getting their work done. Have them design a storyboard for their game and present it to the class.

The Perfectionist

Highlights

- Perfectionists can't stand to do anything wrong. They put a lot of pressure on themselves to meet or beat deadlines.
- Sometimes, Perfectionists put so much pressure on themselves that it affects their health and relationships. They need to figure out a balance between getting everything done and spending time doing things they enjoy.
- You can avoid the negative consequences of being the Perfectionist by:
 - realizing that there is no such thing as perfection
 - allowing yourself to spend time on tasks you enjoy
 - listening to and cooperating with others
 - finding balance in your life



Discussion Questions

- What are some examples of perfectionism? Can you think of any situations in which perfectionism might be negative or positive?
- Why do you think people become Perfectionists? What do you think might happen if Perfectionists pay more attention to their work than to their friends and family? How do you think this would make them feel?
- How do you feel when you are given a new assignment? Are you excited to try and learn new things? Do you ever worry that you will not be able to complete it? What strategies can you use to make sure you can get your assignment done without getting stressed out?
- Have you ever worked on a group assignment and found that you didn't have the same work ethic as another group member? How did this make you feel? How do you think the other group member felt? How did you resolve the situation?
- Do you ever feel guilty for taking time off from school, work, or social activities because you are sick? Do you worry about what you are missing and what people might be thinking about instead of relaxing and getting better?
- Have you ever been dissatisfied with a finished assignment even though you got a good mark? Why do you think you felt this way? What might make you feel better about your work?
- Do you have a friend or trusted adult you could turn to for advice on how to deal with your concerns about not being perfect? How might talking to someone help you feel better?

Teaching Activities

I = Individual P = Pair G = Group

Section	Subject Area	Activities
pp. 20–21	Mathematics/ Social Studies (G)	<p>Ask students to survey their classmates to find out whether they consider themselves Procrastinators or Perfectionists. Encourage them to use the information in the text to create a series of questions that explore the reasons behind their procrastination or perfectionism, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you avoid assignments because you don't like a subject? • Are you afraid to admit you need help? • Do you resent working in groups when others don't work as hard as you do? <p>Have students display their results in a graph or chart and discuss their findings with the class.</p>
pp. 22–23	Guidance and Career Education (G)	<p>Have students review the schedule on p. 23. Ask them to think about the various entries and all they have to do in a month. Have students create their own calendar that will help them stay organized and balance their school, work, and social activities. Encourage them to include rewards and time for themselves. Ask students to try to follow their schedule for a month to see if it helps them get organized. Encourage them to report on the results.</p>
pp. 22–23	The Arts (drama)/ Social Studies (G)	<p>Have students work in groups of three or four to develop short skits about problems a Perfectionist might cause for a group project. Encourage them to use humour to emphasize their ideas. Have them present their skits and discuss them as a class.</p>
pp. 24–25	Language Arts (I/G)	<p>Have students write an opinion piece about perfectionism. Encourage them to look at the issue from all sides and think about what might be positive or negative about being a Perfectionist. Ask them to conduct research and provide at least three examples to support their argument.</p>
pp. 24–25	Science/Health and Physical Education (I)	<p>Ask students to review the “Did You Know?” section. Have them research to find out more about the connections between stress and health. Have students use their findings to prepare a brochure that provides their peers with tips on balancing their priorities and workloads. Ask students to present their brochures to the class and display them around your school.</p>

The Witness

Highlights

- The Witness is the person who sees that someone he or she cares for is procrastinating.
- When the Witness sees someone procrastinating, he or she might feel like they have to pitch in to pick up the slack or cover up for the Procrastinator.
- If you feel that someone's procrastination is harmful, you can:
 - ☛ let him know that you are there to be his friend and not to judge him
 - ☛ talk to her about the issue and let her know that she has choices
 - ☛ encourage him to talk to a trusted adult

Discussion Questions

- Have you ever witnessed someone falling behind in schoolwork because he or she procrastinates? How did it make you feel? Did you ask your friend why he or she wasn't getting the work done? Were you able to help?
- Have you ever offered to help someone who is slacking off? What was the response? What was the outcome?
- Have you ever found out that someone you thought was procrastinating actually fell behind in school because something happened in the family or with other friends? Did you notice other changes in his or her behaviour? Were you able to help, even if it was by just listening? Did you tell your friend who else might help them resolve the problem?
- Have you ever been negatively affected by someone else's procrastination? How did it make you feel? What could you do to help resolve the situation? What might happen to a Procrastinator if his or her behaviour continued to affect other people in a negative way?
- How might you help someone who is procrastinating because he or she is afraid of failing? How could you help your friend overcome this fear?
- Have you ever procrastinated? Did someone help you figure out how to overcome your procrastination to get the job done? How did it make you feel? What happened?



Teaching Activities

I = Individual

P = Pair

G = Group

Section	Subject Area	Activities
pp. 26–27	The Arts (drama)/ Social Responsibility (I/G)	Have students write a skit about how a group of friends might help someone who is procrastinating and falling behind in school. Encourage them to review the “Do’s and Don’ts” lists on pp. 19, 25, and 27 to help them come up with ideas. Have students present their skits to the class and discuss.
pp. 26–27	Language Arts (G)	Have students write a poem or rap song about how procrastination can hurt other people. Encourage students to share their poems or rap songs with the class.
pp. 28–31	Language Arts/ Guidance and Career Education (G)	Divide the class into two groups and have students debate the statement: It is better to be a Perfectionist than a Procrastinator. Encourage them to research their arguments to support their position. After the debate, discuss the results (ensuring that students understand the need for balance between meeting deadlines and fulfilling their responsibilities and taking time to reward and enjoy themselves).
pp. 28–31	Social Studies/ Guidance and Career Education (G)	As a class, brainstorm ideas about how students can make positive decisions about schoolwork. Have them conduct a survey to find out if students work harder on subjects they enjoy and if this is reflected by good marks in those subjects. Based on their findings, have students discuss how they could change their approach to subjects they don’t enjoy as much. Challenge students to list several actions that they could take to improve their work in these subjects. Encourage them to follow through on these ideas and to keep a diary to see if their efforts result in better marks and a better attitude.
pp. 28–31	Language Arts (G)	Have students write journal entries or essays on how procrastination might lead to cheating. For example, they might look at how someone puts off studying and then feels they have to cheat to pass a test, or someone who relies on someone else to do the work they have put off. Encourage them to look at whom procrastination and cheating might affect and how they feel about this topic.

Additional Resources

- <http://sas.calpoly.edu/asc/ssl/procrastination.html>: California Polytechnic State University's Student Academic Services website provides a document that discusses procrastination.
- Benway, Robin. *Audrey, Wait!* New York, NY: Penguin, 2008.
- Dessen, Sarah. *Lock and Key*. New York, NY: Viking Children's Books, 2008.
- Espeland, Pamela, and Elizabeth Verdick. *See You Later, Procrastinator! (Get It Done)*. Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit Publishing, 2007.
- Friesen, Gayle. *Janey's Girl*. Toronto, ON: KidsCan Press, 1998.

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