

Out-of-School Time Welcome Letter & Guide (Upper Grades)



Welcome to Out-of-School Time

Dear Out-of-School Time Staff:

Thank you for your interest in Harmony Out-of-School Time (OST). Harmony OST provides you with a set of games, activities, routines, and conversation prompts that amplify youth voice. OST staff can use Harmony OST to support healthy relationships and help youth develop important life skills, like taking personal responsibility, communication, collaboration, and problem-solving.

Harmony Academy, powered by National University, developed Harmony OST based on the in-school program, [Harmony Curriculum](#), and helps amplify OST staff use of the digital resources to create meaningful and engaging experiences for youth.

Why Harmony OST?

Through Harmony OST, you and the youth you work with can connect, express feelings, and solve problems together. You can use the Harmony OST routines of Meet Up and Buddy Up with youth of any age. Routines are important for youth because they:

- Offer needed structure to explore the world around them
- Provide predictability for them
- Offer a space to discuss what is going well and concerns to bring up

The Harmony OST lessons, activities, and games for upper elementary (ages 8–11) invite youth to explore various skills. These skills are important throughout their lives—at school, at home, and at work. For instance, through the activities, you can help youth learn how:

- To change unhelpful self-talk to more helpful and purposeful self-talk
- To develop empathy and compassion for others
- To support effective communication to listen and learn
- To collaboratively problem-solve

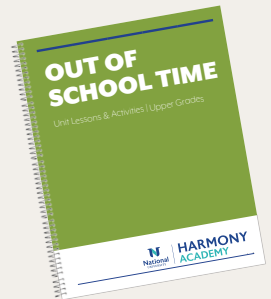


What's Included in the Out-of-School Time Kit?

1

Lessons and Activities Guide

- Contains 30 flexible and adaptable lessons and activities for the out-of-school time setting.
- Focuses on supporting social and emotional development through building healthy relationships with peers, adults, and the community.
- Amplifies the no-cost digital OST curriculum by providing a handbook of all the lessons and activities and printables for the activities.



2

Z Plushy

- Meet Z – the main character in our Storybooks.
- Amplifies the no-cost digital curriculum by using Z for story time and discussions.



3

Storybooks

- Read 22 Storybooks that follow Z and the Clubhouse Friends in their adventures.
- Help the Clubhouse Friends teach Z how to be a friend.
- Use the questions at the end of the story to discuss important life skills.
- Storybooks accompany each unit to reinforce the unit's theme.



4

Quick Connection Cards (QCC)

- Use the questions and activities for you to share, think, work, and have fun together.
- Are suitable for various settings.
- Includes three types of cards:
 - (1) Conversations for discussions
 - (2) Collaborations for paired activities
 - (3) Community Builders for group activities
- Amplifies the no-cost digital curriculum by allowing youth to choose cards, and easily sort cards that have been previously used or are popular.



Everyday Practices Guide

The Harmony Curriculum Everyday Practices provide youth with ongoing, supported opportunities to interact with peers and participate in dialogue and decision-making about issues related to the learning community. Take a moment to learn about Harmony Goals, Meet Up, and Buddy Up, and use these suggestions for implementing these Everyday Practices:



Harmony Goals

Youth will set and monitor progress toward both Group Harmony Goals and Personal Harmony Goals. Youth will establish both types of goals during your first ten lessons of the Building Community Unit, after which youth will reflect on their progress daily through Meet Up. During the Checking In step of Meet Up, you can ask youth to focus on either Group Harmony Goals or Personal Harmony Goals, with a goal of balancing the check-ins with each.

Group Harmony Goal Steps:

- Step 1:** Set the stage for creating Group Harmony Goals.
- Step 2:** Think about and discuss ideas for how the youths want to interact with and treat one another.
- Step 3:** Synthesize the ideas into three to five Group Harmony Goals focused on what the youth can do.
- Step 4:** Record, Sign, Display, and Share the Group Harmony Goals.
- Step 5:** Monitor, Discuss, and Revise Group Harmony Goals.

Personal Harmony Goal Steps:

- Step 1:** Set the stage for creating Personal Harmony Goals.
- Step 2:** Consider personal strengths and weaknesses in setting Personal Harmony Goals.
- Step 3:** Synthesize the ideas into three Personal Harmony Goals focused on what the individual youth has chosen to focus on.
- Step 4:** Record and sign the Personal Harmony Goals.
- Step 5:** Monitor, Discuss, and Revise Personal Harmony Goals as needed.



Meet Up

Meet Up provides a space for the youth to come together to establish and maintain expectations for how to treat one another, share experiences, solve problems, and strengthen relationships. Ideally, Meet Up will happen at a regular time each day, and last around 5 to 10 minutes. Within the lessons, you will find callouts to the Meet Up steps described below.

Meet Up Steps:

- Step 1:** **Greeting:** Greeting one another allows for youth to feel heard and seen, increasing their sense of belonging.
- Step 2:** **Sharing and Responding:** Sharing and responding allows for youth to build strong relationships with one another and provides an opportunity for youth to share their opinions.

Step 3:

Checking In: Checking in allows for the youth to reflect on how they are working together, including how they are supporting and encouraging one another. It is important to focus on both the whole group and the individual contributions. Alternate between having youth check in with each other or themselves.

- **With Each Other:** Review your Group Harmony Goals, then invite one or two youth to share a positive experience. Discuss the relevance of the experience to one of your Group Harmony Goals. Next, invite a youth to share a “low” experience and its alignment with a Group Harmony Goal. Engage in problem solving to address any issues or celebrate your achievements!
- **With Ourselves:** Have youth review their Personal Harmony Goals, reminding them of the importance of reflecting on their contributions to the learning environment. Have youth rate their progress in meeting their Personal Harmony Goals. Invite youth to share their experience or a strategy that they are finding helpful!

Step 4:

Connecting: Connecting as a group helps set the tone for your learning environment, providing opportunities to connect with each other through activities or mindful moments.

- **With Each Other:** Engage youth in a fun community-building activity; see the Community Builder Quick Connection Cards for ideas.
- **With Ourselves:** Engage youth in a quiet, centering activity in their own minds. You can use our Mindful Minute Prompts or the Relaxation Station in the Harmony Game Room App for ideas.



Buddy Up

Buddy Up is a peer buddy system that intentionally creates opportunities for the youth to connect with one another, foster relationships, communicate effectively, and work together. Buddy Up activities are provided so that youth can share what they are learning with buddy friends. Quick Connection Cards or the Harmony Game Room App provide opportunities for youth to converse, collaborate and strengthen their connections.

Buddy Up Steps:

Step 1:

Set the Stage: Share your excitement around using Buddy Up! Explain that youth will have the opportunity to work with a new buddy each week to complete fun activities and strengthen concepts they are learning throughout the lessons.

Step 2:

Assign Weekly Buddies: Youth will work with a new buddy each week. You can assign buddy pairs through a Buddy Board that you display somewhere in your learning space.

Step 3:

Facilitate Buddy Activities: Engage in a Buddy Up activity—at least one each day; consistency is key here! You can use the activities provided in the lesson, activities on the Quick Connection “Collaborations” and “Conversations” cards, or come up with additional activities of your own!



The Lessons and Activities Guide is divided into five units. Each unit has five lessons (except the first unit, which has 10 lessons), for a total of 30 lessons. Each lesson has a set of quick activities, as well as a longer activity that you can use with youth to develop social and emotional skills. Each lesson has a lesson goal that all activities center on. The focus of each unit includes:

Getting Started

Building Community

- Establish Group Harmony Goals and develop routines
- Learn more about each other

Storybooks:

- Meet Z • Meet the Clubhouse Friends
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Unit 1

Being My Best Self

- Understand one's own emotions and the emotions of others
- Find strategies to get calm when feeling big emotions

Storybooks:

- Morgan's Shells • The Pogo Stick • Farmer's Market
 - Picture Perfect? • Tricks and Jokes
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Unit 2

Valuing Each Other

- Help youth learn to recognize and appreciate each other's perspectives and contributions
- Find ways to include others

Storybooks:

- The Obstacle Course • Quinn's Shoes
 - Fun for Some, Fun for All? • Goal!!! • Knock, Knock!
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Unit 3

Communicating with Each Other

- Learn communication strategies
- Work together collaboratively

Storybooks:

- Getting the Recipe Just Right • A New Class Pet
 - The Rainforest • Build It • Try It!
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Unit 4

Learning From Each Other

- Learn the problem-solving process
- Know that solving problems is a natural and beneficial part of groups

Storybooks:

- The Fundraiser • Jeremy's New Train • Space Dragons
 - Bouncing Back • Guess Who?
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What Is Included in Each Lesson?

Start with a Quick Connection. Through using one of the Quick Connection Prompts provided, you will begin your lesson with a fun, warm-up activity that provides youth with an opportunity to converse, collaborate, and build community. We suggest you only choose one of the prompts to start off the activity.

Lesson Overview. The OST lessons are broken into four parts:

1. **Get Ready:** Allows you to prepare for the lesson. This includes the materials youth need to engage in this lesson and any other preparation needed.
2. **Get Set:** Helps you introduce the lesson concepts. For example, you may share a personal anecdote, provide a scenario, or ask reflective questions to help youth think about what the life skill is and how it applies to their lives.
3. **Go:** Supports you as you lead and provide guidance and assistance as needed, and helps youth as they engage in the activity.
4. **Stop and Reflect:** Use this as a guide to conclude the lesson, providing youth with an opportunity to pause and reflect before closing out the activity.

Together, we can make the world a better place by helping youth develop important skills and knowledge that they will need for school, work, and life.

If you need additional support in using Harmony, please reach out to us at harmony@nu.edu or visit <https://harmony-academy.org/>.



HARMONY
ACADEMY



At Harmony Academy, powered by National University, we're redefining education by fostering a holistic approach that resonates with the unique needs of educators, families, and students. Our comprehensive resources and customized programs are designed to support emotional well-being, promote healthy relationships, and achieve unparalleled academic success. Through these educational pathways, we're shaping the future of education where each learner's potential is unlocked and every educator's passion is celebrated.



Harmony Curriculum™