

Energy Economy

Students explore how their energy changes throughout the day by plotting common activities on a shared class graph and a personal Energy Tracker. By visualizing energy highs and lows across time, learners build early self-awareness about effort, rest, and how energy is spent. This activity lays the foundation for later lessons on time preference, value, and intentional decision-making.

 ACTIVITY TYPE Reflection · Sorting / classification	 DURATION 35 min	 PARTICIPATION Whole class · Individual
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OBJECTIVES

By the end of this activity, learners will:

- Recognize that energy levels change throughout the day
- Identify activities that give or use energy
- Visualize personal daily energy patterns
- Begin reflecting on how time and energy are used

MATERIALS

- Flashcards or image cards of daily activities (eating breakfast, brushing teeth, walking to school, homework, playing outside, watching TV, sleeping, etc.)
- Individual Energy Tracker handouts (See Appendix B)
- Crayons, pencils, markers
- Printed mini images for non-writers, Visual Aids (See Appendix A) (*nice to have*)
- Large whiteboard or poster for class Energy Tracker graph
- Whiteboard markers
- Tape or magnets for flashcards
- Projector or visual timer (*nice to have*)

PROCEDURE

OPENING

1. Prepare a large Energy Tracker graph on the board or poster:
2. Horizontal axis: Time of Day (Sunrise → Sunset)
3. Vertical axis: Energy Level (Low → High)
4. Lay out flashcards so they are visible and easy to access.
5. Prepare individual handouts and writing materials.
6. Ensure clear space for students to approach the board safely.

PRE-ACTIVITY

3-5 minutes

1. Introduce the idea:
2. Ask the class:
3. Make it personal:
4. Use quick show-of-hands questions:

Objective In Student's Words

- "See how my energy changes during the day and what uses or gives me energy."

ACTIVITY

30 minutes

Setup

1. If possible, use visual aids to illustrate time and energy tracking (*See Appendix A*)
2. Return to the Energy Tracker graph previously drawn.
3. Explain that the horizontal line shows the day from sunrise to sunset.
4. Explain that the vertical line shows energy from low at the bottom to high at the top.
5. Ask students to name examples of activities they do in the morning, afternoon, and evening.

Model

1. Choose one flashcard such as eating breakfast.
2. Ask: "When do you usually do this?" and "Does this give you energy or take energy?"
3. Place the card on the graph using student input.

1. Group Graphing

15 minutes

1. Show one activity card at a time.
2. Ask: "When do you usually do this?" and "Does this give energy or take energy?"
3. Use class consensus to place the card left to right based on time of day and up or down based on energy level.
4. Repeat with 8–10 activity cards.
5. Encourage discussion and disagreement by reminding students that activities can feel different for different people.
6. Step back and review the completed graph.
7. Ask: "What do you notice?" "When does energy seem highest?" "What happens later in the day?"

2. Individual Graphing

10–15 minutes

1. **Distribute** Energy Tracker handouts. (*See Appendix B*)
2. **Instruct** students to think about a typical day, choose 4–6 activities they usually do, and plot them on their own graph using words or drawings.
3. Support non-writers by providing printed images to glue or tape, allowing drawing instead of writing, and pairing with a buddy if needed.

Reflection

2 minutes

1. Ask: "What time of day do you have the most energy?" "Which activity uses the most energy?" "What helps you feel more rested?" "How could you use your energy better?"
2. For older students ask: "What happens if all your energy is used in the morning?" and "How can we save energy for things that matter?"

FOLLOW-UP

3 minutes

Content review with students

1. Review that energy changes during the day, activities affect energy differently, and people have different energy patterns.
2. Connect forward by explaining that these patterns affect how we work, rest, play, and make choices.

CLOSE

5 minutes

1. Collect handouts and materials.

2. Remove or clear the class graph if needed.
3. Thank students for participating and reinforce the message that energy is limited and how we use it matters.

NOTES

Classroom management

- Use clear turn-taking rules, limit placement decisions to a few seconds, encourage listening and respectful disagreement.

Extensions & Sponge Activities

- Compare school day vs weekend energy graphs, small-group graph comparisons, physical energy demo using crouch for low energy and stand tall for high energy.
- Use the same principles to look at energy across longer time scales (weekly, seasonally, lifespan etc)

Differentiation

- Younger students: Optional partner support for younger students, drawing and image cards.
- ELL/Accessibility: visuals, modeling, partner support.
- Safety: supervise movement near the board.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- C • [Activity Planner](https://cdn.sanity.io/files/vje9ehw2/staging/4964bcb17fa655d119127ad904b37087f8060e5a.pdf)

<https://cdn.sanity.io/files/vje9ehw2/staging/4964bcb17fa655d119127ad904b37087f8060e5a.pdf>