

PERSONAL TIME LINE¹

Time: 15-30 min. **Age:** 2-5 grade²

WHAT IS IT?

Students will look back on their lives and identify important public events. They investigate how events shape their beliefs

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

In order to understand what motivates you for public action, it is important to consider what events made you the way you are.

WHEN IS THIS USEFUL? In the early stages of PA

MATERIALS: Optional—time line worksheet

CORE CONCEPTS: self-interests, public

SKILLS: sharing stories, being imaginative and creative

BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

- It may be a good idea to have a discussion with your group about the difference between public and private.

ACTIVITIES / STEPS:

- A. Students will draw a line on paper that that represents their life so far (can be straight, curved, etc), place numbers representing years of
- B. Have students mark important events (start anywhere you like), using their own rules to decide what kind of things to include.
- C. Have students place star by the most important events that made them who they are.
- D. Have students complete question sheet (10 minutes)
Optional: Students can write short paragraph about why each event is important.
- E. Discuss as group the kinds of different events people included

EVALUATION:

- A. Students can take time-line home and ask parents, grand-parents, other relatives and family friends for details about your past.
- B. Have students come back and report how their time-lines have changed.

¹ Adapted from Melissa Bass, *Making the Rules*.

² Can be good exercise for advanced grades before doing Storytelling from Your Personal Time Line exercise

Name: _____

Date: _____

QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR TIME LINE

Instructions:

Look at your time line and write down answers to the questions below.

1. How far back did you go in your time line? How would your time line change depending on how much time it covers?
2. Do you have brothers and sisters who showed up on your time line? Where do you come in your family (oldest, youngest girl, etc)? Do you think that made a difference in whether you showed your brothers or sisters?
3. Are there more events at certain ages, why?
4. Which events did you put stars as “the most important events that made you who you are”? Why did you put stars next to these? How did they make you who you are?
5. Are the important events you put stars by public or private experiences? Why?
6. Are there other places on your time-line when private events cross into public experience?
7. Was doing the time line useful? Did it show you anything new?

If students took time-line home

8. What new items did you put on your time line after talking to your family?
9. In what ways does knowing your families history help you know yourself?