

# Rocks, Pebbles, and Sand

Managing life and stress requires that we learn about how we use our time. Prioritizing life and time often means asking big questions. Who, what, and how should I prioritize for healthy living? What habits or objects can I do without? How do I tell the difference between big, medium, and small importance? The following activity demonstrates a simple and adaptable approach to exploring priorities and managing time.

## Social Emotional Learning Competency:

- Self-Awareness/Self Management

## Connection Key:

- Keep it Simple

## Purpose:

- Define the concept of resilience.
- Create a physical example of resilience.
- Discover ways participants are resilient and explore how to increase resilience.

## Materials:

- Pen or Pencil
- Paper
- Rocks
- Pebbles
- Sand or Dry soil
- Open transparent container

## Success Indicators:

- Participants can:
  1. Define priority.
  2. Differentiate between big, medium, and small priorities.
  3. Identify specific priorities that cause or help with stress.

## Preparation

- Watch the [Rocks, Pebbles, and Sand video](#) to review the activity procedure and decide how to modify the activity for your audience and purpose.
- **Option 1:** Gather materials and adapt your space to share your screen and present the activity via Zoom.
- **Option 2:** Create and distribute kits of materials, or direct participants to find materials at home or in nature to complete the activity alongside you via Zoom.

## Activity

- Use this sample reflection in agreement with the activity option you choose:
  1. Add the rocks, pebbles, and sand to the container in succession (as was demonstrated in the video), asking "*Is the container full?*" after each addition.
- When the container is filled with all materials, discuss that the rocks, pebbles, and sand represent big, medium, and small priorities. Next, define what priority means. Finally, reflect and share together:
  1. *What are your rock (big), pebble (medium), and sand (small) priorities? Write them down.*
  2. *Tell us about what would happen if I added the sand first?*
  3. *Adding our important things (rocks and pebbles) first helps us stress less about how many small important things (sand) we have. Tell one way you can add your important things into your day or life first.*
  4. *Think about your life right now. What are some important priorities that make you feel stressed? What size are they? When should they be added into the jar (your day or life) so that you feel less stressed?*

For more information and activity resources visit <https://u.osu.edu/4hjournal/>

Created by Tyler Kessler, 4-H Educator, for Ohio 4-H Conference, 02/20/2021



**THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY**  
COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,  
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES



**ohio4h.org**

CFAES provides research and related educational programs to clientele on a nondiscriminatory basis. For more information, visit [cfaesdiversity.osu.edu](http://cfaesdiversity.osu.edu). For an accessible format of this publication, visit [cfaes.osu.edu/accessibility](http://cfaes.osu.edu/accessibility).