



Master of  
Educational  
Technology  
Program



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Ten Alphabet Soups - Inclusive Provocation

Thinking About Mental Health & Trauma

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Inclusive Makerspace Provocations

## A Quick Note...

Trauma impacts all of us, and some of us may not be ready to think or discuss this topic. If at any point you feel uncomfortable or overwhelmed, reach out to someone who you can trust and ask for help. The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health Canada offers some resources, and can help you understand what trauma is and why it impacts us. You can access their services by scanning this qr code:



<https://www.camh.ca/en/health-info/mental-illness-and-addiction-index/trauma>

Remember, always take care of yourself first. **You matter.**

## Overview of the Provocation

This activity will challenge learners to test their memory and concentration while also learning how they are affected by stress or trauma. By performing three simple tasks in a row, individuals will be able to observe how their performance changes when different instructions are given. This activity will also allow learners to compare their performance with their partner and see how stress or trauma affects different people in different ways. This activity can help learners understand the impact of stress or trauma on their minds and empathize with others who are going through similar experiences.

## Materials and Resources Required

- Stopwatch (or a stopwatch on phone/tablet/computer)
- Pen/Pencil and Paper (or a digital way to record the time)

## Inclusive Maker Provocation Instructions

**Step 1:** Find a partner to complete this activity with. Decide who will complete the three tasks first as the performer and who will be the timer first.

**Step 2:** The performer will recite the alphabet from A to J out loud and clearly. The timer will start when the performer starts reciting and will end when they say J. If the performer makes an error, they must start again from A. The timer will record the time.

**Step 3:** The performer will count from 1 to 10 out loud and clearly. The timer will start when the performer starts reciting and will end when they say 10. If the performer makes an error, they must start again from 1. The timer will record the time.

**Step 4:** The performer will recite the alphabet from A to J and count from 1 to 10 by alternating between letters and numbers (A, 1, B, 2, etc). This must also be done out loud and clearly. The timer will start when the performer starts reciting and will end when they say 10. If the performer makes an error, they must start again from A. The timer will record the time.

**Step 5:** The performer and timer will switch roles and complete steps 2-4.

**Step 6:** Compare your times with a partner and discuss your thoughts on the activity. After your discussion, write a reflection on the activity while considering the critical questions below.



## Critical Questions for Consideration

1. How did your performance change from the first task to the third task? Did you get faster, slower, or stayed the same? Why do you think that happened?
2. What did you learn from this provocation about how stress or trauma affects your brain and your ability to do simple tasks?
3. How can you apply what you learned from this activity to your own life and to others who are experiencing stress or trauma? How can you support yourself and others in these situations?
4. How can we use the information learned from this provocation to create a safe and supportive environment for ourselves and others who are impacted by trauma?

5. How can trauma influence the way that we learn and teach? How can we design and implement learning experiences that are respectful and responsive to the needs of **all** learners?

## Background/ Additional Information

For additional information to understand what trauma is, please see the resources and information below.

	<p>GovernmentofBC. (2019, July 24). <i>Understanding - What is trauma or adverse childhood experiences</i> [Video]. <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRxiue4Ms3s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRxiue4Ms3s</a></p> <p><i>This video does an excellent job discussing childhood trauma and also includes an Indigenous perspective.</i></p>
	<p>American Psychological Association. (n.d.). <i>Trauma</i>. <a href="https://www.apa.org/topics/trauma">https://www.apa.org/topics/trauma</a></p> <p><i>A quick definition of trauma and some causes. The site also contains some podcasts discussing trauma and more resources.</i></p>
	<p>Dexter, Geralyn. (2022). <i>How to Let Go of the Past</i>. Very Well Health. <a href="https://www.verywellhealth.com/how-to-let-go-of-past-trauma-5212227">https://www.verywellhealth.com/how-to-let-go-of-past-trauma-5212227</a></p> <p><i>This article explains traumatic responses and some ways that we can try to cope and “let go” of trauma. It also contains some resources for seeking help with traumatic experiences.</i></p>

## Inclusivity Focus

This activity can be modified to include multiple languages in its design. It can further be modified to not involve reciting the letters of the alphabet or numbers, but instead can be made to recite groups of words (fruits, sports, etc). It can also be modified to not include speech, and instead use sign language.

## No Tech, Low Tech, High Tech Options

**No Tech** - The timer can count in their head to get a rough time it takes for the performer to complete each task. They can then use paper and pencil to record.

**Tech** - The timer can use a digital device to time and then to also record the times. The performer can also be recorded using a digital device to then analyze their facial expression and body language while completing the tasks, while also getting a more accurate time.

## Extension

- This provocation can be extended to delve deeper into trauma and the other impacts it can have on us, not just in our minds.
- This provocation can be used as a launchpad for a mental health & trauma awareness day or week since it provides a good starting point to understand trauma.
- This provocation can be used to delve deeper into trauma experienced by different races, ethnicities, and genders through the lens of the EDIDA Framework.
- This provocation can be used as a starting point in understanding the trauma which Indigenous Peoples face due to the residential school system, and can be tied into lessons on generational trauma.