



Activity Guide

Passing the Note

Module

Neurons

Materials required

- Paper
- Pen or marker

Preparation instructions

1. Cut the paper into two pieces
2. Write the same word or phrase on each piece of paper.

Activity instructions

1. Divide the class into two, uneven groups. (E.g., 20 in the first group and 10 in the second group)
2. Ask each group to stand in a line. The class is now two separate chains. One is longer than the other.
3. Explain: The first person in each row is a Brain. The last person in each row is a Leg. Each person in between is a neuron. The neurons send signals between the Brain and the Leg.
4. Give one piece of paper (the note) to each Brain. Instruct them not to look at the note!
5. When you say "go", participants pass the note along the chain from the Brain to the Leg. Ensure the neurons don't look at the note!
6. The Leg reads the note out loud when they receive it. The Leg at the end of the shorter chain will read out the note first.
7. Ask participants: What is the difference between that line compared to the other? Answer: It's shorter.

Reinforce these learnings

- Neurons work together in a chain to deliver messages to and from the brain.
- The more neurons there are in a chain, the longer it takes for the message to reach the brain.
- Example: When you take a sip of hot chocolate, you realize right away it's too hot and you stop drinking it. But, when you walk on a beach, it takes a minute to realize how hot the sand is. That's because the message has to travel along a set of neurons all the way from your brain to your feet but, with the hot chocolate, the message only has to travel from your brain to your tongue.
- If a message is simple, like a reflex from touching a hot stove, it will be fast. If the message is more complicated, like recognizing a face, it will take longer to process.

Reinforce these injury prevention messages

- Damaged neurons can't repair themselves, so it's important to protect them!
- Wear a helmet, a seatbelt, looking both ways before crossing the street, etc. to protect your neurons.