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# THE BALANCING ACT ACTIVITY

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Objective: Students will balance objects in a hands-on activity.

Review the YouTube™ video and science experiment before class.

- **Balancing Act - Sick Science! #130**  
With a little knowledge of physics and geometrical shapes, you can perform this balancing act.  
<http://youtu.be/CnejrcOhj5g>
- **Balancing Act - Cylinder Strength**  
A piece of paper uses physics to balance a textbook... and much more!  
<http://www.stevespanglerscience.com/lab/experiments/balancing-act-cylinder-strength#>

## **Materials and symbols:**

Note: Any item you have available in your classroom may be used to represent the categories. Place these items on a table in the front of the classroom.

**Life** - cardstock (white or colored for better stability) marked in large letters with the word LIFE

**Circle of Life** – rubber band

**Family** – magazines such as Family Circle, Family Fun or any other magazine depicting families

**Career** – travel brochures, travel magazines, maps, travel portfolio (anything with a flat bottom)

**Time** – clocks, cell phone (be sure to follow school district guidelines)

**Energy** – batteries, light bulbs

**Leisure Activities** – book, sun glasses, ice tea glasses, small paper umbrellas, straws

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Practice this activity with the supplies you have available so that you can observe what the “balance” will look like (see examples below).

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Describe the materials and what they represent to the class.

Divide the class into subgroups of four.

Have one member of each group gather the supplies from a table and return to their group.

One person should write the word LIFE in large letters on the cardstock.

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## Script:

Balancing a career, family, time, energy and leisure activities can be a difficult task. Many times, there are events that may throw the balance “off balance.” It is up to us to focus and balance our lives once again to be happy, healthy and energized.

\* Share some examples of how you have balanced your family, career, time and energy.

## Activity:

Prioritize the events and then balance the items that represent each of the categories one on top of the other using “LIFE” as an **upright** base.

You will have 10 minutes to work as a team and solve the problem.

## Good luck!

Once the 10 minutes are up, visit each group’s balance and ask them to explain their reasoning for balancing their objects.

## Possible Scenarios:

Students may wrap the “LIFE” paper in with the family magazine and that is fine. There are no wrong answers.

Students may have a difficult time balancing the objects but as in the real world, these items do not always balance.

Some students may not be able to solve the problem of balancing the objects. The same holds true in real life.

- Life** – cardstock
- Circle of Life** – rubber band
- Family** – magazine
- Career** – map, travel magazines
- Time** – clock
- Energy** – batteries, light bulb
- Leisure activity** – book, sunglasses

