

# Brain Battle

**Grade Level:** 4-6

**Skills:** Following directions, working on a variety of classroom subjects and a light warm-up.

**Objective:** **Standard 6.MEH.4** List warning signs of depression, anxiety, and suicide and identify how, why, and when talking with a trusted adult (for example, parent, guardian, relative, teacher, counselor, clergy) is needed.

**Equipment:** 3x5 cards with symptoms/warning signs of depression, anxiety, suicide, and other diseases/illnesses listed on them. If using the variation, 3x5 cards with a variety of questions/statements/numbers from a variety of other subjects listed on them.

Examples of warning signs/symptoms of depression: irritability, anger, persistent feeling of sadness, persistent feeling of hopelessness, changes in appetite, changes in sleep, difficulty concentrating and focusing, loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities, withdrawal from friends/family

Examples of symptoms of other diseases/illnesses: stomach aches, bruising, sweating, shortness of breath, vomiting, increased heart rate, increased blood pressure, runny nose, coughing, sneezing, itchy eyes, cramping

**Definitions:** Depression – a mood disorder that causes a persistent feeling of sadness and loss of interest

Anxiety – your body’s natural response to stress. It’s a feeling of fear or apprehension about what’s to come

**Organization:** Students are in squad formation and the cards are placed in the middle of the room.

**Activity:** When the music starts or when you say “go” one student from each group walks, jogs, skips etc. to the middle of the room and picks up a card. Students run back to their group and determine if their card is a symptom of depression, anxiety, and suicide or if they are a symptom of another disease/illness. The first team to determine their symptom correctly wins the rest of the groups’ cards. The next person in line then repeats the same process. When everyone has gone two, three or more times or when all of the cards are gone, determine which group has the most cards.

**Variations:** Have the students rank their numbers from least to greatest or vice versa. Have the students separate odd numbers from even numbers. Language arts could have the students determine alphabetical order and the first word in a dictionary takes the pile or the word in the middle, etc. Science could have the students determine the most weight or volume, etc.; e.g. 2 ounces, 4 pounds, 100 kilograms or 1,000 tons which one weighs the most? Geography could have the students determine which land mass is the biggest, has the most people or which area is colder, hotter or closer to the equator; e.g. Which is more populated? Salt Lake City, Utah, California, or China.

**Closure:** Why is it important to know the warning signs and symptoms of depression, anxiety, and suicide? What is depression? What is anxiety?

If you or someone you know is showing some of these symptoms/signs, when should you tell a trusted adult? Who are some trusted adults in your life?

Was it easier to determine the symptom/warning sign in the group? How can you support each other if someone is dealing with depression and anxiety?