



Access English Centre
Immigrant Centre Manitoba
Multi-level: Work-out Activity
Who Gets the Last Brownie?
60 minutes



Objective/Goal:

Gives participants the opportunity to express themselves freely and share stories with each other.

*Suggestion: This activity is to be done with a whole group that has been together for awhile *not done on the first day of classes.*

Materials:

Participants need:

- Attachments 1, 2, or 3 depending on the English level; pre-cut into strips

Facilitator needs:

- whiteboard
- whiteboard markers
- timer
- brownie cake (enough for the whole group)
- Optional: For Extension Activity D-
 - computer (with internet access)
 - projector
 - screen

Before the activity:

PART A: (20 minutes)

1) **Write:** "Who Gets the Last Brownie?" on the whiteboard.

Activity Instructions:

- 2) **Use** the timer to keep track of time.
- 3) **Gather** the participants together.
- 4) **Ask** the participants if they had heard the expression, before.
- 5) **Explain** the expression which means the last brownie is awarded to the person whose story of the worst day "takes the cake"- his /her story tops or beats everyone else's in terms of frustration or sadness level.
- 6) **Instruct** participants that they will first do a practice run together.
- 7) **Distribute** Attachment #1 strips, one per participant.
- 8) Each person **reads** aloud his/her strip.



Access English Centre
Immigrant Centre Manitoba
Multi-level: Work-out Activity
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60 minutes



9) **Instruct** the participants to listen carefully.

10) After everyone has shared their stories, they vote on who gets the brownie.

PART B: (20 minutes)

11) In this round, participants will only share stories **that they are willing to share** or think of.

12) The facilitator can start the activity-**demonstrate** .:

Ex. One time, my alarm clock did not go off, I woke up 20 minutes later. I missed my regular bus and I was late for school. I got off the bus and waited to cross the street. Next, along came a car which was near the curb and splashed water onto me. I jumped back and nearly tripped. I got to school an hour later and missed the test. I had to stay an extra hour to do my test. I missed my basketball practice.

13) **Inform** the participants that they will take turns talking about their "stories".

14) **Instruct** the participants to listen carefully, again.

15) After everyone has shared their stories, they **vote** on who gets the brownie.

16) **Ask** the participants to raise their hands to show whose story was the saddest.

17) The person with the most votes **receives** the biggest piece of brownie. The rest of the participants **receive** a brownie slice, as well.

PART C: (20 minutes)

Discussion Circle:

18) Each participant will **share** why they chose a particular peer's story over another person's story.

19) What was their criteria?

Beginner Level:

Examples are: -sounds very sad
-happened to me



Access English Centre
Immigrant Centre Manitoba
Multi-level: Work-out Activity
Who Gets the Last Brownie?
60 minutes



High Beginner Level:

Examples are:

- It happened to them-easy to relate to?
- Sadness intensity was very high
- Sounded most plausible(could happen to them)
- Knew someone who had the same sob story.

Ex. I voted for Maria because it happened to me.

Ex. I voted for Mario's story because it was the saddest story.

Ex. I voted for Gino's story because it could happen to me.

Ex. I voted for Ahmed's story because it happened to my cousin, too.

Intermediate/Advanced Level:

Examples are:

- relatable
- sadness intensity was very high
- sounded most plausible(could happen to them)
- knew someone who had the same sob story
- great empathy
- great sympathy

Ex. I voted for Lin because the same situation happened to me.

Ex. I voted for Hang's story because it was the saddest story I have ever heard.

Ex. I voted for Greta's story because it could possibly happen to me.

Ex. I voted for Andre's story because it happened to my cousin, too.

Ex. I feel for Ibrahim, he had a real difficult time. I hope that does not happen to him, again.

Ex. I felt real terrible for Hilda. I really felt sorry for her.

Extension Activities:

- **Extension Activities are alternative or extra activities that can be done to supplement the main activity when there is extra time. It can also be done in the next class as a review of previous vocabulary or conversation.**

A. For beginner level, you can have them discuss how was their day instead of "sob stories" . Change brainstorming activity to activities that they did that day.

The facilitator can model:



**Access English Centre
Immigrant Centre Manitoba
Multi-level: Work-out Activity
Who Gets the Last Brownie?
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Ex. "I went to school. I went to work. I work at McDonald's. Later, I came here." –same procedure

The criteria could be who did the most activities in a day. The person who did the most activities is awarded the brownie-first. ("biggest piece") . The remaining brownie is served to the participants.

For high beginners level,

Use Attachment #2, first as practice then. Go over any unknown vocabulary if needed. (highlighted words: ex.: "**burst**") have the participants talk freely or they can talk about their worst day or their best day in Canada, best/worst weekend, etc.-same procedure.

For intermediate and advanced level, use Attachment #3, first, they can add more to story starters. They will continue the story on their own. Then for the latter exercise, they will identify and share their own experiences which may be true or not. Can they use more descriptive words or give more details. The participants can vote whether a sob story was true or not? The person with the saddest/best sob story- "WINS-the best brownie!"

- B.** The activity could also been done as a **Warm-up or Cool –Down activity**, as well, using just the attachment material or participants own stories only.
- C.** Instead of the worst day shared, the stories of the best day that they had.
- D.** Please see the following website, if there is time, you can show a clip from the movie, "Notting Hill" featuring Julia Roberts(www.youtube.com/watch?v=PTjIRQU_HdM)
 - **showcases** the dinner scene where each guest tries to win the last brownie by telling a sob story about his or her life



Access English Centre
Immigrant Centre Manitoba
Multi-level: Work-out Activity
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60 minutes



ATTACHMENT #1: "WHO GETS THE BROWNIE?"
Brownie Scenarios: For Beginners

1) My alarm clock did not ring. I woke up late.

2) I did not have a loonie for the grocery cart.

3) I tripped on the sidewalk.

4) I had a piece of food stuck in my teeth.

5) I went to the hair salon and my hair came out green.

6) I burnt my toast.

7) My cat died.



Access English Centre
Immigrant Centre Manitoba
Multi-level: Work-out Activity
Who Gets the Last Brownie?
60 minutes



8) My dog died.

9) My goldfish died.

10) My mother-in-law moved in.

11) I got lost in IKEA.

12) I lost my cell phone.

13) I lost my keys.

14) I forgot to bring my lunch.

15) I got a parking ticket.



Access English Centre
Immigrant Centre Manitoba
Multi-level: Work-out Activity
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ATTACHMENT #2:"WHO GETS THE BROWNIE?"
Brownie Scenarios: For High Beginner Level

1) The alarm clock did not ring. I woke up late. My dog took my shoes. I had to find another pair of shoes. I missed my bus. My brother had to drive me to school. He drove too fast and he got a **speeding ticket**. My brother was very angry with me and **blamed** me for the ticket. He wants me to pay for half the ticket.

2) I went to the movie theatre and I was waiting in line with my friends. Along came a **trio** of **teenagers** who **ignored** us. They **cut in front** of us in line. They ended up buying the last tickets to the 3D movie –“The Hobbit”.

3) I saw an old friend from school and she/he was with my **ex**. (my former boyfriend/my former girlfriend).

4) I **shoveled** my sidewalk and 10 minutes later more snow began to fall. My **snow blower** is broken so I have to use a shovel, instead.

5) I have a large garden of vegetables and flowers. My **neighbour's** cat keeps coming into my garden . The cat makes a mess.

6) I do not have a garage. I park my car in my **driveway**. Birds keep leaving **droppings** on my car's **windshield**.

7) I went out with my friends. We went to **Applebee's** and later went to the movies. I did not study for my test and I failed it.



Access English Centre
Immigrant Centre Manitoba
Multi-level: Work-out Activity



Who Gets the Last Brownie?

60 minutes

8) I went to move the garbage cans from the garage to outside. I left my keys in the **ignition** of the car and **locked** myself out. My purse is inside my car. I had to go the **neighbour's** house to call my husband/wife.

9) I went to the grocery store and bought a lot of groceries. As I left the store, one of the bags **burst** open. My groceries fell out. The head of lettuce started rolling away.

10) My friend and I planned a shopping a trip. I was to meet my friend by the doors. I asked him/her to meet me there in an hour. After an hour, my friend was not there. A half an hour later, I found my friend **wandering** around in the shoe department.

11) I stepped off the bus and landed in a **puddle**.

12) My **mother-in-law** moved into our home.

13) My car **stalled** at the stop sign. My brother had to push the car to the garage for 10 blocks.

14) I left the house without an **umbrella**. It **poured buckets** of rain on the way to school.

15) I forgot to wash my **uniform**. I went to work **unprepared**. My **supervisor** was not happy with me. I had to **borrow** an uniform.



Access English Centre
Immigrant Centre Manitoba
Multi-level: Work-out Activity
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60 minutes



ATTACHMENT #3: "WHO GETS THE BROWNIE?"

Brownie Scenarios: For Intermediate or Advanced Level

1) The alarm clock did not ring. I woke up late....
2) I dropped my cell phone on the bus....
3) I was too lazy to tie up my shoes so when I ran to catch the bus....
4) I forgot to add more windshield washer fluid in my car....
5) I slept in and forgot to put out the garbage and recycling bins outside in the morning....
6) My kids left their toys all over the floor and paint was everywhere. All of the sudden, the doorbell rings....
7) I went on vacation and the airline lost my suitcases....
8) I forgot to change my clock 1 hour ahead for Daylight Savings time.....
9) I did not enough money to pay the electricity bill.....
10) I went to my cousin's wedding and I saw my former boyfriend/girlfriend there....
11) My friends and I went to a dance club, we left our purses on the table.....



**Access English Centre
Immigrant Centre Manitoba
Multi-level: Work-out Activity
Who Gets the Last Brownie?
60 minutes**



12) My in-laws came for a visit but are still here....

13) My dog died....

14) My goldfish died....

15) I work as a server at a local restaurant. I received no tips for the evening....