

Two hours. One real problem. Something built.

A single-session run of the F7 design process — Empathize, Define, Ideate, Prototype, Test — sized for one sitting. Run the two-hour sprint as a taste, or the four-hour intensive when students should leave with something published and a pitch they've rehearsed.

FORMATS: 2 HOURS OR 4 HOURS

GRADES: 8–12

GROUP SIZE: 8–40 STUDENTS

COST: FREE TO USE

The F7 Innovation Workshop A ready-to-run design sprint in two hours or four

Edition Template · 2026 · f7missions.com/workshop

Two hours for the spark. Four for the proof.

Both versions run the same arc. The difference is how much real evidence students gather and how finished the build gets. Pick by the clock you actually have — not by how ambitious you feel that morning.

FORMAT A

2 HOURS

The innovation sprint

A fast, high-energy taste of the process. Students interview each other instead of outside users, ideate hard, and build one screen. Best as a club kickoff, a career day session, an assembly breakout, or educator PD where adults experience the process themselves.

STUDENTS LEAVE WITH

- A problem statement in their own words
- One chosen idea with a reason behind it
- A rough one-screen prototype
- A 60-second pitch delivered out loud

BEST FOR · CLUB KICKOFF · CAREER DAY · PD · SINGLE CLASS BLOCK (DOUBLE PERIOD)

FORMAT B

4 HOURS

The innovation intensive

The same arc with room for real evidence and a real build. Students interview people outside the room (in person, by phone, or by message), build a working page, run a feedback round, revise, and present. Best as a break-camp day, a Saturday program, or a school-wide innovation day.

STUDENTS LEAVE WITH

- Notes from at least two real interviews
- A sharpened problem statement backed by quotes
- A published, working prototype with a live link
- A rehearsed 90-second pitch and a feedback pass

BEST FOR · BREAK CAMP · SATURDAY PROGRAM · INNOVATION DAY · SUMMER INTENSIVE

Same five steps either way: Empathize · Define · Ideate · Prototype · Test.

The innovation sprint, minute by minute.

Six blocks, no slack. Set a visible timer for every block and hold it — the constraint is the teaching tool. If a block runs long, take the time out of ideation, never out of the pitch.

0:00 10 MIN **OPEN**

Welcome, framing, and teams

YOU DO

Name the day in one sentence: 'In two hours you will build something that helps a real person.' Show one example from a past F7 cohort. Form teams of two or three — pairs beat solos and beat fours.

STUDENTS DO

Sign in to the platform, meet their partner, and write down one thing in their school or neighborhood that annoys them.

On the platform · Dashboard · Get started

0:10 20 MIN **EMPATHIZE**

Interview the person next to you

YOU DO

Hand out the five-question script. Model one bad question ('Wouldn't an app be great?') and one good one ('Tell me about the last time that happened'). Time two rounds of eight minutes and call the switch yourself.

STUDENTS DO

Interview their partner about the annoyance, taking notes on exact words. Then switch roles. Circle one quote that surprised them.

On the platform · Challenge brief · Empathize notes

0:30 15 MIN **DEFINE**

Write the problem statement

YOU DO

Put the frame on the screen and keep it there. Walk the room and push every team to name a specific person, not 'students' in general. Reject the first draft once — the second is always better.

STUDENTS DO

Fill the frame: [Person] needs a way to [need] because [insight from the interview]. One sentence, out loud, to another team.

On the platform · Challenge brief · Problem statement

0:45 20 MIN **IDEATE****Twenty ideas, then one****YOU DO**

Ten minutes of quantity with no judgment allowed — count out loud at five. Then five minutes of clustering, five minutes of choosing. Say the rule: pick the idea you can show, not the idea that sounds most impressive.

STUDENTS DO

Generate twenty ideas on sticky notes or in the platform, cluster them, then pick one and write a single sentence on why.

On the platform · Sprints · Ideate

1:05 35 MIN **PROTOTYPE****Build one screen****YOU DO**

Set the scope out loud: one screen, one clear message, one button. Circulate and unblock; do not touch keyboards. Give a five-minute warning and mean it.

STUDENTS DO

Build a single page that a real person could look at and understand — headline, what it does, who it's for, one action.

On the platform · Project · Build

1:40 20 MIN **TEST & PITCH****Sixty-second pitches and close****YOU DO**

Run pitches back to back with a visible timer. After each, ask the room for one thing that worked and one question. Close by naming what they just did: research, definition, design, and a build, in two hours.

STUDENTS DO

Pitch: the person, the problem, what we built, what we'd do next. Then give feedback to two other teams.

On the platform · Project · Share link

If a block runs long, take the time out of ideation — never out of the pitch.

The innovation intensive, minute by minute.

Ten blocks with one real break. The extra two hours buy the two things the sprint can't fit: evidence from outside the room, and a second pass after feedback. That second pass is where the learning lands.

0:00 15 MIN **OPEN**

Framing, examples, and teams

YOU DO

Set the stakes: by the end of today there will be a live link with their name on it. Show two past projects — one polished, one rough but honest. Form teams of two or three.

STUDENTS DO

Sign in, meet their team, and list three problems they've personally run into this month.

On the platform · Dashboard · Get started

0:15 25 MIN **EMPATHIZE**

Choose a challenge and write questions

YOU DO

Offer the six challenge prompts as starting points; teams may bring their own. Teach the difference between asking about the past ('tell me about the last time') and asking about the future ('would you use'). Approve each team's questions before they leave the room.

STUDENTS DO

Pick a challenge area, name who is affected, and write five interview questions with no solution baked into them.

On the platform · Challenge brief · Empathize

0:40 45 MIN **EMPATHIZE**

Real interviews

YOU DO

Send teams to talk to at least two people outside the team — staff, other students, a family member by phone, a message thread with a coach. Keep a list of willing adults on hand for teams with nobody to ask.

STUDENTS DO

Run two or more interviews. Capture exact quotes, not summaries. Note what surprised them.

On the platform · Sprints · Empathize evidence

1:25 25 MIN **DEFINE****Synthesis and problem statement****YOU DO**

Have teams read their quotes aloud before writing anything. Push for a statement that a stranger could repeat. Sign off on every team's statement before they touch a build tool.

STUDENTS DO

Group the quotes, find the pattern, and write the statement: [Person] needs a way to [need] because [insight].

On the platform · Challenge brief · Problem statement

1:50 10 MIN **BREAK****Break****YOU DO**

Real break. Reset the timer visibly when you restart so the second half feels new.

STUDENTS DO

Move, eat, talk about something else.

On the platform · —

2:00 30 MIN **IDEATE****Divergent ideas, then a decision****YOU DO**

Fifteen minutes of quantity, ten of clustering, five of choosing. Use AI as a research and thinking partner out loud — show a prompt on the screen and critique its answer with the room.

STUDENTS DO

Generate at least twenty ideas, cluster, then choose one and defend it in a sentence to another team.

On the platform · Sprints · Ideate

2:30 60 MIN **PROTOTYPE****Build block****YOU DO**

Scope it: two screens maximum, one clear action. Circulate constantly, ask 'who is this for again?' and keep hands off the keyboard. Warn at fifteen, ten, and five minutes.

STUDENTS DO

Build and publish. Headline, the problem in one line, what the thing does, one working action, and their names.

On the platform · Project · Build & publish

3:30 20 MIN **TEST**

Feedback round

YOU DO

Pair teams and run structured feedback: what's clear, what's confusing, one thing to change. Keep it to four minutes per direction. No defending allowed — only questions.

STUDENTS DO

Show their live link to another team, take notes on confusion, and pick one change to make.

On the platform · Sprints · Test

3:50 20 MIN **TEST**

Revise and rehearse

YOU DO

One change only — protect them from starting over. Have every team say their pitch out loud once before the showcase, even if it's rough.

STUDENTS DO

Make the single change, then rehearse the 90-second pitch with the team.

On the platform · Project · Update

4:10 20 MIN **SHOWCASE**

Showcase and close

YOU DO

Invite anyone available — staff, families, partners. Time each pitch. Close by naming the evidence: they interviewed real people, defined a problem, built something live, and improved it after feedback. In one day.

STUDENTS DO

Present: who we talked to, what we learned, what we built, what changed after feedback, what's next.

On the platform · Project · Share link

The second pass after feedback is where the learning lands. Protect it.

Everything fits in a tote bag.

Everything below fits in a tote bag and a shared doc. Do the prep the day before, not the morning of — the only thing that reliably breaks is sign-in.

The room

Tables students can sit around in twos and threes
A screen or projector for the frame and the timer
Wall or window space for sticky notes
A visible clock or on-screen countdown

Materials

Sticky notes and thick markers (one pad per team)
Printed interview scripts, one per student
Printed problem-statement frames
Snacks for the four-hour version — non-negotiable

Tech

One device with a browser per student or per pair
Working wifi, tested from a student device
Platform accounts created and tested the day before
A backup: paper prototypes still teach the whole arc

People & roles

One lead facilitator holding the clock and the frame
One floater per ten students to unblock builds
A short list of adults willing to be interviewed
One person on photos and links for the showcase

GROUP SIZE AND STAFFING

8–12 students

One facilitator. Run it as one room, pitches to each other.

13–24 students

One lead plus one floater. Split pitches into two circles, then finals.

25–40 students

One lead plus two floaters. Pitch in three rooms, one finalist per room.

SIX CHALLENGE PROMPTS

Getting there

Transportation, buses, walking routes, and getting to work, practice, or school on time.

Money and work

First jobs, applications, pay, saving, and knowing what a paycheck actually means.

Health and rest

Sleep, stress, food access, mental health, and where students go when they need help.

School itself

Homework load, tutoring, missing information, and the gap between classes and real life.

Neighborhood

Safety, vacant spaces, parks, trash, and things that used to exist and don't anymore.

Belonging

New students, language barriers, finding your people, and things to do after 6 p.m.

Read these aloud. Nothing to download.

THE FIVE-QUESTION INTERVIEW SCRIPT

Five questions, twenty minutes, no solutions. The goal is a story you didn't expect — not agreement with an idea you already have.

Tell me about the last time this happened to you.

What did you do about it? Walk me through it step by step.

What was the most frustrating part of that?

Has anything ever made it better, even a little?

If nothing changed about this in a year, what would that mean for you?

RULES

Ask about the past, not the future — memory is evidence, prediction is not.

Never pitch. If they ask what you're building, say you don't know yet.

Write exact words in quotation marks.

Silence is fine. Count to five before filling it.

THE PROBLEM-STATEMENT FRAME

[Person] needs a way to [need] because [insight from the interview].

STRONG

A sophomore who works until 9 p.m. needs a way to get tutoring after her shift because the only help offered ends at 4.

WEAK

Students need an app for tutoring because tutoring is important.

The good one names a specific person, a specific need, and a reason that came from a real conversation. The bad one names a solution and skips the evidence.

THE PITCH FRAME

Sixty seconds in the sprint, ninety in the intensive. Same five beats either way.

The person Who we talked to, in one sentence with their words.

The problem The statement, said out loud exactly as written.

What we built Show the screen. Don't narrate the menu — show the one thing it does.

What we learned One piece of feedback and what we changed because of it.

What's next The one thing we'd do with another week.

A FOUR-CRITERIA RUBRIC

Evidence

The problem comes from a real conversation, and the team can quote it.

Clarity

A stranger can repeat the problem statement after hearing it once.

Build

Something exists that a real person could look at and understand without narration.

Response to feedback

The team can name one change they made because of what someone told them.

A workshop is an on-ramp.

A workshop is an on-ramp, not a destination. Students who finish one leave with proof they can make something — and that proof is the easiest thing in the world to build a club on.

EVERY STUDENT LEAVES WITH

- A problem statement grounded in a real conversation
- A published prototype with a link they can send to anyone
- A pitch they've delivered in front of people
- Evidence they can put in a portfolio, application, or interview

NEXT SESSION

Turn it into a club

Use the F7 Facilitation Playbook: twelve sessions across the same five steps, with the depth the workshop couldn't fit. Everyone who came to the workshop already knows the arc.

[F7MISSIONS.COM/PLAYBOOK](https://f7missions.com/playbook)

BRING US IN

Partner with F7

Want us to run the workshop with your students, or to host paid clubs and camps together? Tell us about your program and we'll design the fit.

[F7MISSIONS.COM/PARTNERS](https://f7missions.com/partners)

RUN IT THIS MONTH

Give students two hours and a real problem. They will surprise you.

The workshop template is free to use and adapt. When you are ready to run it as a club, the F7 Facilitation Playbook takes the same five steps across twelve sessions.

[F7MISSIONS.COM/PARTNERS](https://f7missions.com/partners) · TALK TO US ABOUT RUNNING F7