

# **Sanford Harmony**

## **1<sup>st</sup> Grade Lessons**







# Diversity and Inclusion

Unit 1





## OVERVIEW

Unit 1 focuses on engaging children with one another in order to discover shared interests and characteristics, to explore how each person is unique, to build a sense of community within the classroom, and to recognize how each child contributes to and is valued by their community.

## GOALS

This unit is designed to help children:

- ▶ Get to know one another
- ▶ Discover and appreciate commonalities
- ▶ Appreciate and learn from diversity
- ▶ Develop an attitude of inclusion
- ▶ Embrace a common classroom identity
- ▶ Feel valued as an individual and as a member of the group

## ACTIVITIES

### 1.1 Getting to Know Each Other

*Children discuss the value of getting to know all of their classmates and play a game in which they share about themselves with their peers.*

### 1.2 Discovering Commonalities

*Children discuss how talking and spending time with their peers can help them find things in common with one another and then have an opportunity to find things that they have in common with a buddy.*

### 1.3 Learning from Diversity

*Children discuss how everyone is different and unique and how diversity allows everyone to learn with and from one another and then have an opportunity to share things about themselves with their peers.*

### 1.4 Building Community

*Children discuss what it means to belong to a community, and then work together to create a representation of their classroom community.*



### 1.1 Getting to Know Each Other

*Suggested information to share with families in the classroom newsletter:*

Our class is talking about what it is like to start something new and meet new people and the different feelings you might have about that. We are discussing why it is important to get to know all of our classmates, and we are doing some activities that give everyone a chance to share about themselves and learn about each other.

*You may want to ask your child:*

- ▶ How they felt when they got to school, how they felt at the end of the day, and/or what they are looking forward to at school tomorrow
- ▶ If they talked to anyone new or learned something that they didn't know about a classmate

### 1.2 Discovering Commonalities

*Suggested information to share with families in the classroom newsletter:*

Our class is talking about the many things that we might have *in common* with one another and how some things on the outside are easy to see; however, we have to get to know each other better so we can discover some of the ways that we are the same on the inside.

*You may wish to:*

Have a conversation with your child regarding how family members are similar or different. For example, compare whether (and how much) each of you do or don't like the following activities, and why.

*Cleaning your room  
Taking a walk  
Going to bed*

*Eating (choose a food)  
Reading a book  
Riding a bike*

### 1.3 Learning from Diversity

*Suggested information to share with families in the classroom newsletter:*

Our class is talking about the many ways that each person in our class has unique characteristics and strengths and how we can learn from and try many new things with one another.

*You may wish to:*

- ▶ Ask your child what *diversity* means
- ▶ Ask your child what they are good at doing or makes them proud
- ▶ Ask your child something new they learned or tried at school this week and if they did it with someone else

### 1.4 Building Community

*Suggested information to share with families in the classroom newsletter:*

Our class is talking about what it means to belong to a community and how community members treat and work with one another.

*You may wish to:*

- ▶ Ask your child what it means to *belong*.
- ▶ Ask your child what it means to be a *community*.
- ▶ Talk with your child about some of the communities or groups to which your family belongs.



## OVERVIEW

**Read and Discuss:** *The First Day of School*

**Explore and Practice:** Pair and Share

## GOALS

**This set of activities is designed to:**

- ▶ Emphasize the value of peer relationships
- ▶ Promote the importance of getting to know one another
- ▶ Motivate children to engage with *all* of their peers

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

**Children will be able to:**

- ▶ Share information about themselves with classmates
- ▶ Recall information they have learned about their peers

## KEY CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

Friends are important!

Getting to know one another helps us understand each other and get along.

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### MATERIALS

- ▶ *The First Day of School* storybook
  - ▶ Masking tape
  - ▶ Music player
  - ▶ *Get to Know Me* cards
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## RESEARCH AND RELEVANCE

Beginnings are important. The start of a new school year is a time for children to rekindle prior friendships, meet new people, and become familiar with the everyday activities and routines of the classroom. Taking time at the beginning of the year to make sure that children are introduced (and introduce themselves) to each and every one of their classmates can help them become engaged and gain comfort with all of their peers. This establishes a norm that *all* children in the class are important to one another, which can lay the foundation for relationships and learning to grow.

### Think About This...

Do unfamiliar social situations make you feel excited, comfortable, or anxious?

How do you typically approach new people?

Are there certain kinds of children in your classroom that are easier or more challenging for you to get to know?

### Try This Today...

Today (and every day), try to make a personal connection with as many children in your classroom as possible: Greet each child individually and ask them how they are feeling or what they are looking forward to that day, notice what a child is doing and ask them a specific question about it, or remember and follow up on something shared earlier.

## READ AND DISCUSS: *THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL*

*Children listen to the story and discuss what it is like to start new things, get to know new friends, and then practice greeting one another.*

### Before Reading

How did you feel about starting this new school year?

There may be times when you are in a new situation, such as a new class, joining a new team, or moving to a new neighborhood. You may have to try things you have never done or spend time with people you don't very well. It's okay to have a lot of different ideas and feelings about doing or starting something new.

In this story, a group of children are beginning their first day of school, and they each have different feelings about seeing each other again and starting a new grade. As you listen to the story, pay attention to the different feelings that the characters experience and express.

### During Reading

**Why do you think Gabriel felt nervous about seeing his friends after the summer?** *(He was feeling shy; he thought his friends might have changed; he didn't know what they would say to each other)*

**Why do you think Kayla and Kenny were worried that their friends may not want to hang out with them?** *(They had been gone for a long time; their friends might have made new friends)*

**How was Annie feeling about the first day of school?** *(Excited; eager; happy)*

**In what ways did Gabriel think that school would be different because they were older?** *(Schoolwork could be harder; they would have different routines and be in new places, they might not be with the same friends)*

### After Reading

**How do you think school will be different this year compared to last year?** *(New classroom/playground; different books and materials; get to do more things because they are older; new classmates)*

Annie thought that it was going to be fun to meet new kids at school. How might you feel when you first spend time with new people? (*Nervous; shy; excited*)

What is something you can do today to get to know a new classmate or someone whom you may not know very well? (*Say hello; tell them your name; ask them to play*)

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**Extension:** Have children turn to their buddy and practice saying a greeting (e.g., *hi; hello; good morning*) in a friendly voice.

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## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: PAIR AND SHARE

*Children share information about themselves with classmates.*

### Set the Stage

Challenge the children to guess something interesting that they might not know about you (e.g., favorite dessert, number of siblings, whether you speak more than one language) and share your response after several guesses. Allow the class to ask one to two questions and then ask if they learned something new about you. Discuss why it is important for everyone in the class to learn more about one another.

**We want everyone in our class to feel welcomed and to feel good about being together. Getting to know one another is important because it helps us understand each other better and get along. Many times we know people at school really well, but there are others whom we don't know as well. We will be doing a lot of things together so that we can get to know each and every person in our class.**

### Facilitate the Activity

Explain that in this activity, everyone will have a chance to get to know one another better by sharing something about themselves with classmates and then listening to what their classmates say. Create a long line on the floor with tape and have the children march in a circle around the line as music plays (or sing, count, etc.). When the music ends, they should sit down facing either side of the line so that they are directly across from a classmate. Announce a question from the *Get to Know Me* cards (e.g., *What is your favorite movie?*) and have them share their answers with the person sitting across from them. Repeat with additional rounds as time allows.

After several rounds, gather them together to discuss the experience.

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**Variation:** Place the *Get to Know Me* cards upside-down on the line. When the children take a seat, they can discuss the card in front of them with the child across from them.

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## Wrap It Up

How did you feel when your classmates listened to you share about yourself? (*Happy; important; good*)

Why do you think it is helpful to get to know your classmates and for them to get to know you? (*To understand one another; to make new friends; to find things in common*)

What is something new that you learned about a classmate today?

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## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

**Ask Me a Question:** Gather the children in a circle. Announce a question that they will be invited to answer about themselves. Roll a ball to a child and ask the question (e.g., *Jaden, what is your favorite television show?*). After the child answers, instruct them to pass the ball, addressing the peer by name, and asking the same question. Continue this process with several children, and then announce a new question before continuing again.

**Getting to Know Someone New:** Ask the children to think of someone new they would like to talk to or play with that week and have them journal about what they would say or what they could do together. Encourage them to put their plans into action.

**Greetings Brainstorm:** As a class, create a mind map of different ways to greet someone, including cultural variations.

**Personal Treasure Days:** Ahead of time, ask families to help their child choose a small item that has special meaning to them—a personal “treasure,” such as a photo, drawing, or a short description—and have them bring it to share with the class. With the entire group (perhaps across several days), invite them to share their treasures one at a time and allow time for a few questions from classmates. Extend the idea by holding “Personal Treasure Days” at different times throughout the year, suggesting particular types of items at various times (e.g., *Bring a favorite item from your bedroom ~ Wear your favorite t-shirt ~ Bring a special item from a family holiday celebration ~ Bring your favorite book*).



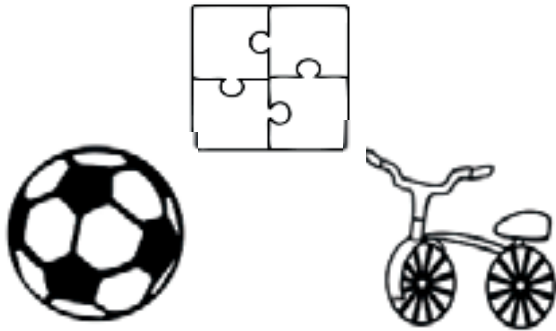
My favorite animal



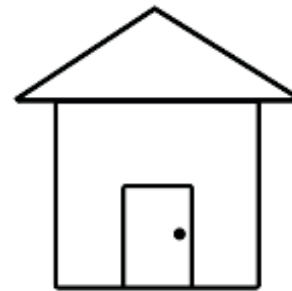
My birthday month



My favorite belonging



My favorite place to be



My favorite after-school activity



My favorite book



My favorite food



My favorite color







## OVERVIEW

**Read and Discuss:** *The Other Path to School*

**Explore and Practice:** Commonalities Challenge

## GOALS

**This set of activities is designed to:**

- ▶ Promote an awareness of commonalities with others
- ▶ Encourage comfort in sharing about oneself
- ▶ Foster openness toward learning about others

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Children will be able to:

- ▶ Identify things they have in common with peers

## KEY CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

*Commonality* means that there are things that are the same about you and me.

Getting to know one another helps us discover what we have in common.

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## MATERIALS

- ▶ *The Other Path to School*/storybook
  - ▶ *Commonalities Questioncards*
  - ▶ *In Common* cards (one per buddy card pair)
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## RESEARCH AND RELEVANCE

Spending time with someone new or less familiar is not always easy. It feels good to have things in common with friends, and children are often more motivated to play with and befriend others who seem to be “like them”—and may feel less comfortable interacting with those who seem “different” from them. Sometimes decisions about whether another child is similar to oneself are based on simple—and often visual—cues of similarity, such as gender or race. Helping children discover what they may have in common with each of their classmates can help them feel a sense of connection and provide new, shared foundations for conversations and play. This can encourage children to talk and play with a wider range of their peers, broadening their social and learning experiences.

### Think About This...

In thinking about your own close relationships, what qualities do you feel are important or are you attracted to in others? Are these similar, different, and/or complementary to your own characteristics?

What are some benefits of having friends with whom you share things in common?

What kinds of similarities or differences do you think are most important or most prevalent in children’s close friendships—interests, temperaments, gender, social skills; other qualities?

### Try this today...

Find opportunities to draw the children’s attention to what they may have in common with their classmates. When they discuss interests, feelings, or experiences, take a moment to ask if others share that preference, have felt that way, or have been in a similar situation. Occasionally, ask the whole class and graph the responses (emphasizing that all responses are valued, not just the most frequent or popular response).

## READ AND DISCUSS: *THE OTHER PATH TO SCHOOL*

*Children listen to the story and discuss how talking and getting to know others can help them discover commonalities—even with those who may seem very different.*

### Before Reading

What does it mean to have something *in common* with someone else? What do you have *in common* with someone here?

Sometimes when you don't know someone or you don't know them very well, it can be hard to imagine what you might have in common. Talking and spending time together can help you get to know one another and discover the ways in which you are similar.

In this story, two friends are reluctant to talk to some new kids from school, but when they do they discover that they have some things in common. As you listen to the story, pay attention to what the characters figure out that they have in common.

### During Reading

**What are some things that Jordan and Mia have in common?** (*They went to the same school; they walked to school together from the same direction; they both loved the monkey bars; they were in the same class*)

**How did Mia and Jordan feel about talking to the new kids, Max and Maddie?** (*Nervous; shy; uncomfortable; thought it would be weird*) **Why?** (*They didn't know the kids very well; they didn't know what to say to them or talk about*)

**What happened after Jordan, Mia, Max, and Maddie spent some time talking to each other?** (*They found things to talk about; they discovered things they had in common; they had fun spending time together*) **How did they feel?** (*Happy, comfortable; glad to have someone to talk to*)

**What were some of the things that the group of kids discovered that they had in common?** (*Jordan, Max, and Maddie had noisy pets; Mia, Jordan, and Max liked to climb; they all liked the bird nest; they all liked to explore in the park*)

### After Reading

**Do you think the kids in the story will keep talking to each other after this day? Why?** (*They got to know each other; they feel comfortable around each other, they found things in common*)

**If you wanted to get to know someone new, what could you say to start talking to them?** (*Say hello; ask them what they like to do; tell them what I like*)

## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: COMMONALITIES CHALLENGE

*Children talk with their buddy and to find what they have in common.*

### Set the Stage

Review what it means to have something *in common* (there are things that are the same or similar about you both). Ask the children to look around at their classmates and notice one thing that they have in common with another person, and invite them to share what they observed.

Next, have the children look around again at their classmates while you ask some questions that they may not be able to answer (e.g., *Do you know who really likes dinosaurs? Do you know who doesn't like to be tickled?*). Discuss the importance of getting to know others.

Sometimes it's easy to see that you are the same on the outside, but you don't always know what you might have in common with another person on the inside. You can get to know more about each other by talking and spending time together. This can help you discover things you both have in common, or ways in which you are the same.

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**Extension:** Have the children turn to their buddy and practice asking what they like to play (e.g., *What do you like to play at recess?*); listen to determine if their answers are the same or different.

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### Facilitate the Activity

Have the children sit with their buddies and give an *In Common* card to each pair. Explain that they will be playing a game that challenges them to figure out what they have in common.

Read a *Commonalities Question* to the class. Challenge buddies to talk with one another and find an answer that they share in common. Have buddies hold up the *In Common* card when they have found something in common, noting that not all buddy pairs may be able to do this for every question. Invite a few buddy pairs to share their similar (or different) answers, and then repeat with additional questions.

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**Tip:** Remind the children that they do not have to have a lot in common to be friends with someone, and that people can be similar and different in many ways.

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### Wrap It Up

What are some things that you learned about your buddy? Did you learn anything that you didn't know?

Why is it important to get to know more about each person in our class? (*To find things in common; to understand each other; to show that you care*)

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**Extension:** Have children draw/write to complete the prompt: *"My buddy and I both \_\_\_\_\_. I think that's \_\_\_\_\_."*

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## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

**Commonalities Graphing:** Ask a get-to-know-you question and have the children sort themselves physically in the room according to their answers. Point out which share something in common, noting that all answers are equally valued. Or, post characteristics (e.g., *I have siblings.*) around the room and have them place a sticky note with their name under the answers that apply to them.



What do you like to do after school?

What dessert do you like to eat?

Where would you like to visit?

What movie do you like?

What is something you are good at?

What game do you like to play?

What book do you like to read?

What is something new you would like to learn how to do?





**In Common**

**In Common**

**In Common**

**In Common**



## OVERVIEW

**Read and Discuss:** *The Telescope*

**Explore and Practice:** My Awesome Buddy

## GOALS

**This set of activities is designed to:**

- ▶ Encourage an appreciation for diversity
- ▶ Foster openness toward learning about and from others
- ▶ Promote respect for others
- ▶ Foster a sense of being valued as an individual

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

**Children will be able to:**

- ▶ Name benefits of diversity
- ▶ Share something unique about themselves
- ▶ Describe something unique about a peer

## KEY CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

*Diversity* means that everyone is a little bit different, and no one is exactly the same.

*Diversity* makes everyone unique and interesting.

You can learn new things from each other.

Having *respect* for someone means that you think good things and treat them kindly.

## MATERIALS

- ▶ *The Telescope* storybook
- ▶ *My Awesome Buddy* activity sheet

## RESEARCH AND RELEVANCE

Each person brings to their interactions and relationships a unique set of experiences, interests, abilities, heritage, and temperamental qualities. Sometimes children can find these differences interesting, but sometimes they may view these differences as *very different* from their own. Respecting and appreciating what makes each person unique can foster understanding, empathy, and positive attitudes toward others. These skills will support children's ability to live in a diverse world and to have friendships and relationships with all kinds of people. They will also learn that it's okay to be different in some ways, and that those differences (in themselves and others) are accepted and valued. Everyone can learn from diversity!

### Think About This...

What kinds of people do you tend to befriend first at your workplace, in your neighborhood, or at social gatherings?

In your classroom, do you find yourself drawn more to children with certain kinds of characteristics than to others? Are these similar, different, and/or complementary to your own characteristics?

What are some benefits of having friends with whom you differ (e.g., ability, age, race, gender, life history, etc.)?

### Try This Today...

Take advantage of opportunities when you can direct children toward a peer who can provide information or assistance, emphasizing their particular knowledge, experiences, or skills.

*That's a good question that you have about how crops are harvested. Sarah has said that she visits her grandparents' farm a lot—why don't we ask her what her family has told her about harvesting?*

## READ AND DISCUSS: *THE TELESCOPE*

*Children listen to the story and discuss the value of diversity and the importance of respecting and learning from those who are different in some ways.*

### Before Reading

Why is it nice to have friends who have things in common with you? Why is it also nice to have friends who are different in some ways?

People can be the same or different in many ways—how they look, feel, or what they like to do. Being a little bit different than one another—or having *diversity*—is what makes everyone unique and interesting! You can learn a lot from people who are different than you.

In this story, one child doesn't understand why his classmate likes something that he thinks is boring and strange, so he doesn't really talk to her. When he finally takes the time to get to know her, he learns some really interesting things about her.

As you listen to the story, pay attention to how the characters react to each other's differences.

### During Reading

How do you think Maddie felt when Kenny didn't want to look at her new telescope?  
*(Sad; disappointed)*

When Kenny told Maddie about the new video game he played, how did she respond?  
*(She asked questions about it; she showed interest; she said it sounded like fun; she showed respect)*

How do you think that made Kenny feel? *(Happy; Maddie cared about what he was saying; excited to talk about the game)*

Why do you think Kenny didn't want to see Maddie's telescope or have lunch or look at the moon with her? *(He thought what she liked was boring and strange; he liked to talk about other things; he didn't know her very well)*

What new or interesting things did Kenny learn from Maddie? *(He learned about the Asteroid Belt and constellations; she helped him figure out how to get to Level 5 in his game)*

## After Reading

If Kenny hadn't decided to start talking to Maddie at her house, what would he have missed? (*Getting to know her better; learning new things; making new friends, having fun together*)

Having *respect* for someone means that you think good things about them and treat them kindly. Can you respect someone who likes or does different things than you? How could you show them respect? (*Talk to them; listen and show interest in what they do*)

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**Extension:** Have the children turn and tell their buddies something different that they each like to play. Then challenge them to think of ways to combine their interests into a new activity.

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## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: MY AWESOME BUDDY

*Children discuss the value of diversity, learn about something that makes their buddy unique, and share it with the class.*

### Set the Stage

Discuss the meaning of *diversity* and although people can have some things in common, no one is exactly the same.

Raise your hand if you have blond hair. Brown hair. Red hair. Black hair. What does it mean to say that there are *diverse* hair colors in our class? Now let's have everyone with brown hair raise their hands again. Do they have *exactly* the same kind of hair? What differences do you see? (*Point out how they differ in shade or texture.*) So even when people are similar in some ways, we still have a lot of diversity, and everyone is unique.

### Facilitate the Activity

Explain that the children will be learning what makes their class diverse and each person unique.

Have the class sit with their buddies and pass out the *My Awesome Buddy* activity sheets, asking them to write their *buddy's* name on the star. Ask them to think of something special they would like to share with their buddy and the class, such as what makes them proud, something they know a lot about, something they enjoy doing, or an experience they have had (provide a few examples). Give buddies a few minutes to share with each other and have them write and draw *about their buddy* on their activity sheet.

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**Tip:** You may wish to establish a system for which buddy will share first.

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Gather the class and invite them to share what makes their buddy unique. As they are sharing, model positive responses that emphasize what they can try and learn from one another (e.g., *It sounds like Elisa knows a lot about the weather. She might have some great ideas to share the next time you're working at the science center.*).

## Wrap It Up

**Why is diversity a good thing?** (*It makes things interesting, you can learn from each other, everyone can feel unique*)

Everyone in the class shared a lot of interesting things about themselves. If you heard something that you would like to try or talk about or learn more about, what could you do? (*Talk to a classmate who knows about it; spend time with that classmate*)

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**Tip:** Use the sheets to create a display or book to keep in the classroom.

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## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

**Diversity Displays:** Choose a topic (e.g., favorite after-school activity, what their bed looks like) for the children to illustrate. As a group, compare their illustrations and discuss similarities and differences. Create a display and emphasize how it shows all of their diversity.

**I Know a Lot About:** Have the children write/draw to complete the prompt: *I know a lot about \_\_\_\_\_ . I could help my friends learn how to \_\_\_\_\_ .* Use this work to create a class "directory" to encourage peer helping.

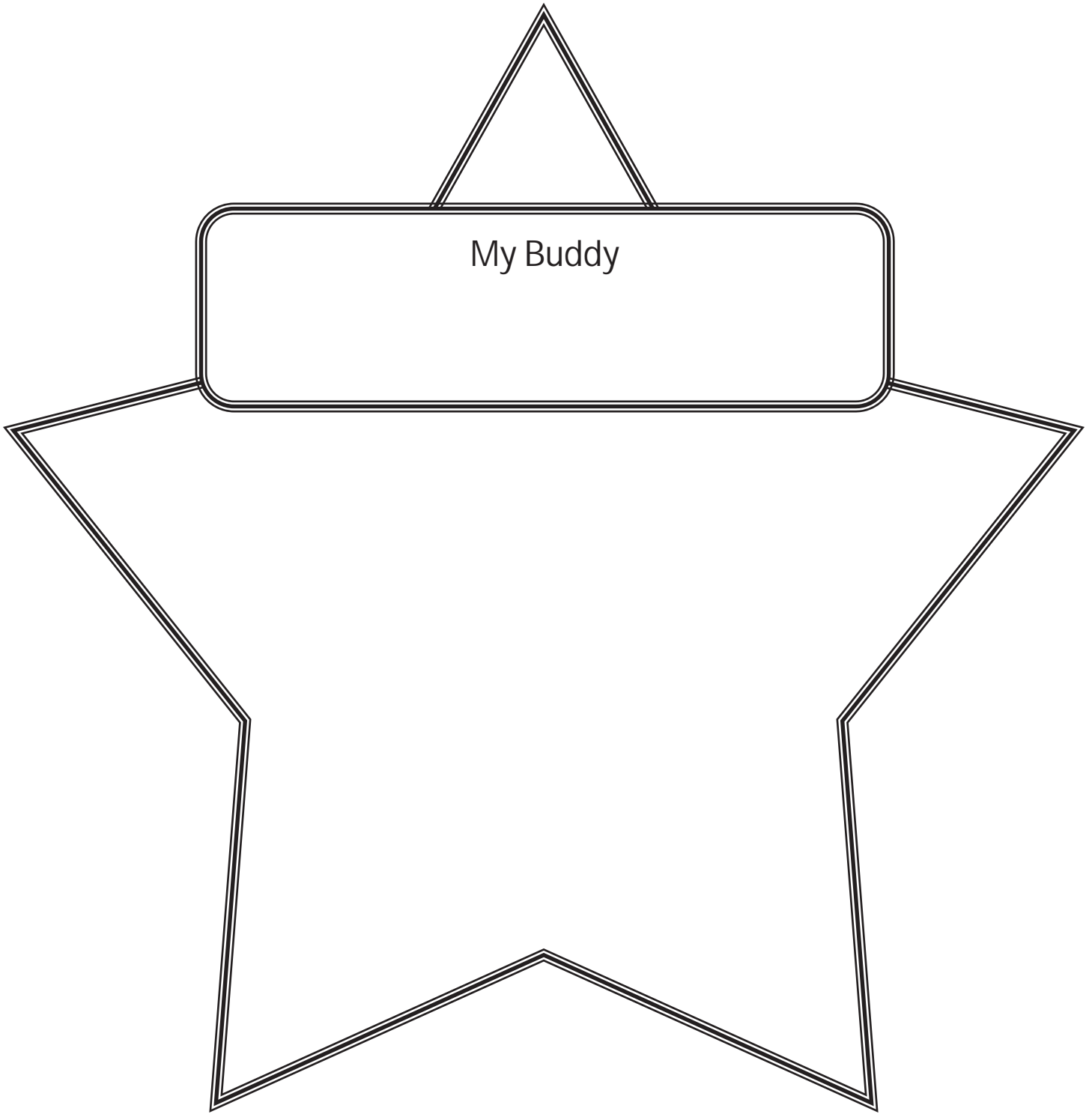
**I Want to Learn About:** Have children write/draw to complete the prompt: *I want to learn about \_\_\_\_\_ and list one to two specific questions that they have.* Use this work as a springboard for group discussions, encouraging classmates to share their "expertise," or use this to connect children with similar interests.

**Mind Map:** Have buddies work together to create a mind map of "What's Good about Diversity" or "Things We Can Learn from Each Other."

**What Makes Me Proud:** Gather the class into a circle and ask them to think of something that makes them feel proud or good about themselves (provide examples). Go around the circle and invite each to share with the class. End with a "hooray" cheer for the entire class.







My Buddy

is awesome because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## OVERVIEW

**Read and Discuss:** *The Thunderstorm*

**Explore and Practice:** Our Classroom Community

## GOALS

**This set of activities is designed to:**

- ▶ Promote a sense of connection and community within the classroom
- ▶ Foster a feeling of being valued and accepted as a member of the group
- ▶ Encourage social responsibility toward the classroom community and its members

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

**Children will be able to:**

- ▶ Reflect on what it means to be a community
- ▶ Identify their classroom as a community
- ▶ Work cooperatively to create a representation of their classroom community

## KEY CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

A *community* is a group of people who have something in common or do things with one another.

When you *belong*, you are a part of a group with other people.

Everyone in the class belongs to the classroom community.

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## MATERIALS

- ▶ *The Thunderstorm* storybook
- ▶ Butcher paper and art supplies
- ▶ Photos of children (optional)

*If you have not already done so, consider a name to establish for your classroom community (e.g., the Leap Frogs, the 1B Room Kids, etc.).*

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## RESEARCH AND RELEVANCE

Children learn and grow best when they have a sense of belonging and feel welcome, accepted, and connected to others in their lives. Although children can belong to many different groups, emphasizing the classroom community as an important part of their social identity highlights the shared connection that they have with each and every one of their classmates. This nurtures an awareness of others (*all/others*) and a sense of responsibility and caring toward each of their classmates. When the classroom community joins in celebrating the uniqueness of each individual child as well as the qualities and accomplishments of the group, children can develop their sense of being *me* while also learning to be a part of *we*.

### Think About This...

To what groups or communities do you belong?

Do you feel that you have a sense of comfort and connection within these groups? How does having or not having this sense impact your interpersonal or work experiences within these groups?

### Try This Today...

Use positive reinforcement to build a sense of connection and community responsibility by pointing out how children's actions can benefit the group.

*The Super Stars really worked together to clean up the classroom very quickly! Now we will all have time to play a few math games together before lunch.*

*Johnny, it was really kind of you to let Olivia have a turn using the magnifying glass. Sharing with each other helps everyone have a chance to work at the center.*

## READ AND DISCUSS: *THE THUNDERSTORM*

*Children listen to the story, discuss what it means to be in a community, and how they all belong to the classroom community.*

### Before Reading

What is a community?

A *community* is a group of people who share something in common, such as living near one another or doing the same activity. People who belong to a community care for one another and work together to accomplish their goals.

What kinds of groups or communities do you belong to?

In this story, some kids have to work together with many others to do something to help their community.

As you listen to this story, pay attention to what the characters do that show that they are a community together.

### During Reading

Who came to clean up the park? (*Kids, parents; neighbors; teachers*) Why do you think so many different people came to help? (*They were a community; they all used the park; they wanted the park to look nice; they wanted to help*)

What would have happened if only a few people had come to clean up the park, or if they had only cleaned up the areas they used? (*It would have taken a long time to clean up; the whole park wouldn't have gotten clean*) What needed to happen to make sure that the whole park was clean for everyone again? (*Everyone needed to help; everyone needed to work together*)

What did the kids at the tree house and everyone at the park do to show that they were a community? (*They worked together; helped one another; celebrated what they accomplished together*)

### After Reading

When you are part of a community, how do you think you should treat one another? (*Do things together; care about one another; respect one another; help each other*)

What makes our class a community? (*Learn and play together; care about each other; eat together; take care of the classroom together*)

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**Tip:** Provide examples and ask children to raise their hand if they belong to that group, making sure to include their class as a group to which they all belong.

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## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: OUR CLASSROOM COMMUNITY

*Children discuss what makes their classroom a community and then work cooperatively to create a representation of their classroom community.*

### Set the Stage

Ask the children to raise their hand if they belong to the *(class name)* community. Have them look around at their classmates and remind them that everyone who belongs is an important part of the community. Invite them to share some things that they like about being part of their class community, and record these ideas on the board.

### Facilitate the Activity

Discuss the meaning of a *symbol*.

A *symbol* is something that represents or stands for something else. Symbols are meant to tell us something about what they represent. Symbols can also be used to represent people or communities. What the symbol looks like or how it is made can tell something important about that community.

Explain that the children will be creating a symbol of their classroom community together.

**Today we are going to work together to make a symbol that shows we all belong to the *(class name)*. We will keep it in our classroom so that we can see it every day, and it will help us remember that we all belong to our classroom community. Everyone will work on it together because we all are an important part of our class.**

Have the children work together to make a banner or other representation of the classroom community (add photos if desired). Encourage cooperation by having them share materials and work with buddies or in small groups on different aspects of the project. (If working on a common paper, state the expectation that no one will cover another person's work.)

Add the class name to the banner and have the children help decide where to display it in the classroom. Gather the group to discuss the experience.

---

**Tip:** Provide a few examples of symbols, such as a sports team logo or school mascot.

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**Variation:** Have the children write what they like about their class community on paper strips and form into a chain.

---

## Wrap It Up

**Why was it important for everyone to work on this together?** *(Everyone is part of the class; everyone cooperates and does things together)*

**What are some ways in which we worked together as a community to make this?** *(Helped each other; cooperated; contributed ideas)*

**How do you feel when you think about how we worked together and what we made?** *(Happy, like we belong, proud, included)*

**What does this symbol show about our classroom community?** *(What we're like; how we work together)*

---

**Tip:** Frequently using the class name can reinforce the common identity children share and foster a sense of connection with classmates (e.g., *Okay, Super Stars, it's time to line up!*).

---

.....

## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

**Classroom Community Helper Pledges:** Have children write/draw what they can do that week to help the classroom community.

**Classroom News:** Have one child be the reporter every week and write up the classroom news. Other children may want to contribute and the "reporter" can put these notes together every week. E-mail or send copies of the class newsletter home each week, and compile the newsletters throughout the year into a class yearbook so that classmates can autograph them.

**Classroom Ad:** Have children work with a buddy or small group to create an ad for their classroom community, using language and illustrations to convey what is great about being in their class.

**Community Recipe:** Have children work with a buddy or small group to create a "recipe" for creating a caring classroom or school community.







# Empathy and Critical Thinking

Unit 2





## OVERVIEW

Unit 2 focuses on promoting emotion understanding and empathy and helping children become flexible thinkers by becoming aware and thinking critically about their own ideas and about the messages they receive from others.

## GOALS

**This unit is designed to help children:**

- ▶ Develop emotion understanding, including recognizing feelings and identifying their causes and consequences
- ▶ Develop empathy for others
- ▶ Increase flexible thinking and decrease stereotyped thinking
- ▶ Develop incremental (change and growth based) thinking

## ACTIVITIES

### 2.1 Recognizing Feelings

*Children discuss how various emotions look, sound, and feel and then practice demonstrating and identifying different emotions and intensities.*

### 2.2 Predicting and Explaining Feelings

*Children discuss how to think ahead and predict someone's feelings, how to think back or look for clues to explain someone's feelings, and practice predicting feelings from situations while playing a game.*

### 2.3 Relating Thoughts, Feelings, and Behaviors

*Children discuss the relations among thoughts, feelings, and behaviors and practice creating their own Think-Feel-Do chains for a given situation.*

### 2.4 Having Empathy

*Children discuss what it means to have empathy for someone and brainstorm ways to show empathy and caring for someone in different situations.*

### 2.5 Understanding Stereotypes about People

*Children discuss the problems and limitations of stereotypes about groups of people and practice ways to respond to them.*

### 2.6 Understanding Stereotypes about Objects, Activities, and Roles

*Children discuss the problems and limitations of stereotypes about toys, activities, and roles and how these things can change for everyone.*

### 2.7 Understanding That People Can Change

*Children discuss the potential for growth, learning, and change in each person and practice identifying and understanding entity (fixed-trait) thinking versus incremental (change) thinking.*



## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *The Bouncy Ball*

Explore and Practice: Feeling Thermometers

## GOALS

**This set of activities is designed to:**

- ▶ Foster awareness that emotions have external and internal cues
- ▶ Foster awareness that emotions can vary in intensity
- ▶ Promote recognition of own and others' emotions

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

**Children will be able to:**

- ▶ Describe and demonstrate how basic emotions feel (internal physical sensations), look, and sound (external physical and verbal cues)
- ▶ Identify basic emotions and different intensities based on physical and verbal cues

## KEY CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

**Emotions, or feelings, can change the way our bodies:**

- ▶ Look and sound on the outside
- ▶ Feel on the inside

Emotions can be weak or strong.

---

### MATERIALS

- ▶ *The Bouncy Ball* storybook
  - ▶ Whiteboard
  - ▶ *Emotion Cues* chart (teacher reference)
  - ▶ *Feeling Thermometers*
  - ▶ *Feeling Faces* cards (cut into cards)
-

## RESEARCH AND RELEVANCE

Emotional development includes children's experience, expression, and regulation of their own emotions, as well as the ability to understand others' emotions and develop empathy. A foundational skill is the ability to identify and label a range of emotions in oneself and others based on internal and external physical cues. Being able to accurately recognize emotions in themselves and others can help children manage their own emotions and interact more competently with others.

### Think About This...

How do you physically experience different feelings with your body? Do you tend to have low or high intensity reactions, or does this differ according to feeling?

Are there any types of feelings that are especially familiar or particularly uncomfortable for you to experience?

### Try this today...

Help the children develop an awareness of their own emotional reactions. When they are experiencing an emotion, help them use descriptive words to identify what is happening with their bodies on the outside or how they feel on the inside (make sure that the children are not too upset and that it is an appropriate time to discuss feelings).

## READ AND DISCUSS: *THE BOUNCY BALL*

*Children listen to the story and discuss how everyone has many emotions, which can change how they look and sound on the outside and how they feel on the inside.*

### Before Reading

How do you *feel* right now? Close your eyes—can you describe how your body feels on the inside? If someone looked at you right now, would they be able to tell how you feel on the inside by how you look on the outside?

*Emotions* are the feelings that happen when you react to something. Emotions can change how you look and sound on the outside and how you feel on the inside of your body. Everyone has many emotions, all day long. Some emotions are strong, and some are weak. Some emotions feel good, and some can feel uncomfortable.

In this story, a child experiences many different emotions—before he even gets to school.

As you listen to this story, pay attention to the different emotions the main character has and how they change the way he looks and sounds on the outside and feels on the inside.

### During Reading

Did Gabriel really mean that he was having a great start to his day? What clues showed how he really felt? (*Frowned, slammed the door; grumbled*)

When Gabriel saw that he had overslept and his stomach was twisting up in knots, how was he feeling? (*Worried; nervous, anxious*) When you are nervous or worried, what other things might happen to your body? (*Stomach shaking; heart racing/pounding; hands sweating; eyebrows furrowed*)

When Gabriel's dad offered to drive him to the park so he wouldn't be late, how did his feelings change? (*He felt relieved and relaxed*) What changes happened to his body? (*Breath exhaled; body relaxed; mouth smiled*)

How did Gabriel's feelings change as he kept talking to his dad about the Fall Farm Festival? Did they grow stronger or weaker? (*Got stronger; more excited; felt more tingly inside*)

---

**Tip:** Ask the children how they would have reacted to the various story situations, emphasizing that people can react to the same things differently or can show their feelings in different ways.

---

How can taking deep breaths be helpful when you are having strong emotions, like when Gabriel thought the festival might be cancelled? (*Calms you down; relaxes your body; helps you focus on something else; makes you breathe more slowly*)

What else could you do to calm down? (*Count to five; tell someone how you feel; think about something that makes you happy*)

---

**Extension:** Have the children practice taking a few deep breaths and letting their body relax

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## After Reading

What feelings did Gabriel experience in the hour before he left for school? (*Frustration/anger, surprise, worry/nervousness; relief; happiness; excitement; disappointment/sadness*)

Why is it important to pay attention to the feelings that you are having and how your body feels? (*I can think about what is making you feel that way; I can understand your feelings and stay in control*)

How can you figure out how someone else is feeling? (*Look at their face and body; listen to their voice; ask them how they feel*)

---

## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: FEELING THERMOMETERS

*Children generate a list of emotions, describe their physical and verbal cues, and demonstrate and identify different emotions of various intensities.*

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**Tip:** If necessary, first review the idea of how thermometers show variations in temperature.

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## Set the Stage

Review the concept of *emotions*.

*Emotions* are the ways that we react to things, and they can change how we feel on the inside and how we look and sound on the outside. Everyone can feel and show their emotions in different ways.

Ask the children to name as many emotions as they can, and write their responses on the board. Choose several different emotions to highlight (three to five), and challenge the class to describe how each one *looks* (on the outside), *sounds* (on the outside), and *feels* (on the inside), creating a mind map for each (e.g., the emotion word in the center, and three connecting bubbles that correspond to how that emotion *looks*, *sounds*, and *feels*).

---

**Tip:** Be sensitive to cultural differences in the expression of emotions, and emphasize that everyone shows their emotions in somewhat different ways.

---



## Facilitate the Activity

Discuss the idea that feelings can vary in intensity.

Everyone reacts to things differently, and one way that emotions can be different is whether they are *strong* or *weak* and whether they feel big or small. Sometimes you can feel an emotion really strongly (*hands raised and spread wide*), like when you are *very* upset, and sometimes you may feel it less strongly (*hands down and close together*), like when you are just a little bit upset. You might even start out feeling one way but later that feeling might grow stronger or weaker.

Hang (or draw) the *Feeling Thermometers* on the board, and explain how they correspond to stronger and weaker feelings. Ask the children to indicate (using hands close, moderately, or far apart or with a hand raised slightly, halfway, or high) whether they feel *not much*, *somewhat*, or *very* hungry as you point to each thermometer.

Invite a volunteer to choose a *Feeling Faces* card and to demonstrate feeling the emotion *not very much*, while standing under the corresponding thermometer. Ask them to say something (e.g., *My name is \_\_\_\_\_*) using a voice that matches their feeling. Have the class guess the emotion and describe what physical and verbal emotion cues they noticed. Ask the volunteer to move to one of the other thermometers and to demonstrate feeling that emotion more strongly (you may need to do this first if the class has difficulty identifying the initial emotion). Guide the children in discussing the differences they observe.

Repeat with additional emotions and new volunteers, allowing them to choose which intensity they wish to demonstrate first and then asking them to move to a stronger or weaker thermometer.

---

**Extension:** Ask the volunteers or the class to describe situations that might cause them to feel, for example, *very angry* versus *somewhat* angry.

---

## Wrap It Up

When something happens, like if we just found out that our class won a prize, why might people in our class look and sound differently from one another? (*People can have different feelings about the same thing, people show their emotions differently, people might have stronger or weaker feelings than one another*)

What could you do if you had a very strong emotion and it started to feel really uncomfortable, like it was *too much*? (*Take some deep breaths, think about something that makes you happy, talk to a friend or an adult*)

## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

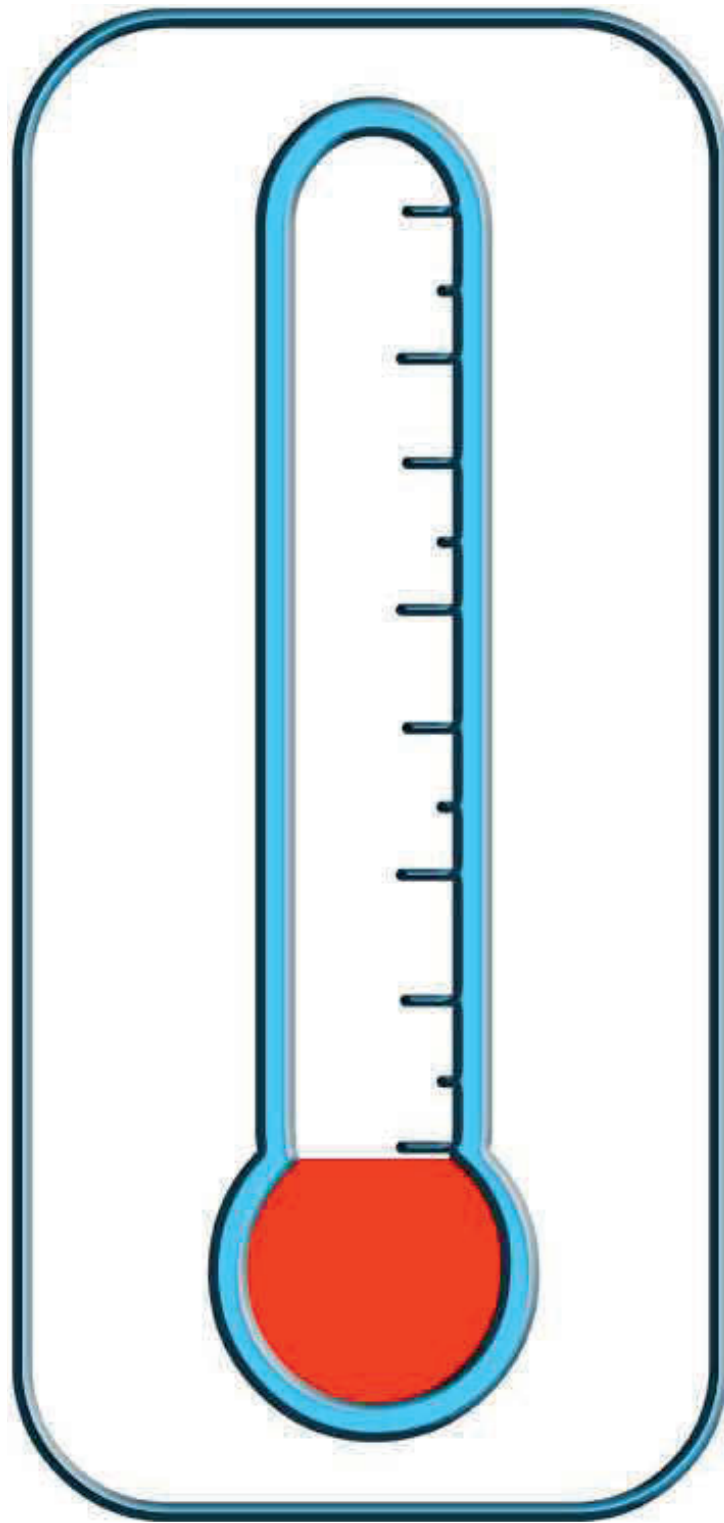
**Follow the Leader's Feelings:** Have children role-play emotions with their whole body by having them line up behind you and play follow the leader, matching their manner of walking to the emotion that you have announced and are demonstrating. For example, have children follow you in "excited walking."

**What's My Feeling Temperature?:** Demonstrate how you feel by making the appropriate facial expression and then lowering or raising your body like a thermometer to indicate how strongly you feel (e.g., scrunching down on the ground to show feelings that are just a little strong, standing up straighter to show feelings that are somewhat strong, and reaching up to the ceiling to show the strongest possible feelings). Announce a scenario (e.g., *How would you feel if you forgot your lunch at home?*) and have the children indicate how they would feel by demonstrating the emotion face and raising or lowering like a thermometer. After several scenarios, add challenges by having them face their buddy and close their eyes. After they respond to the next scenario, have them open their eyes and look at how their buddy has responded to see how similar or different they would feel in that situation. Remind children that people often feel differently about the same situation.

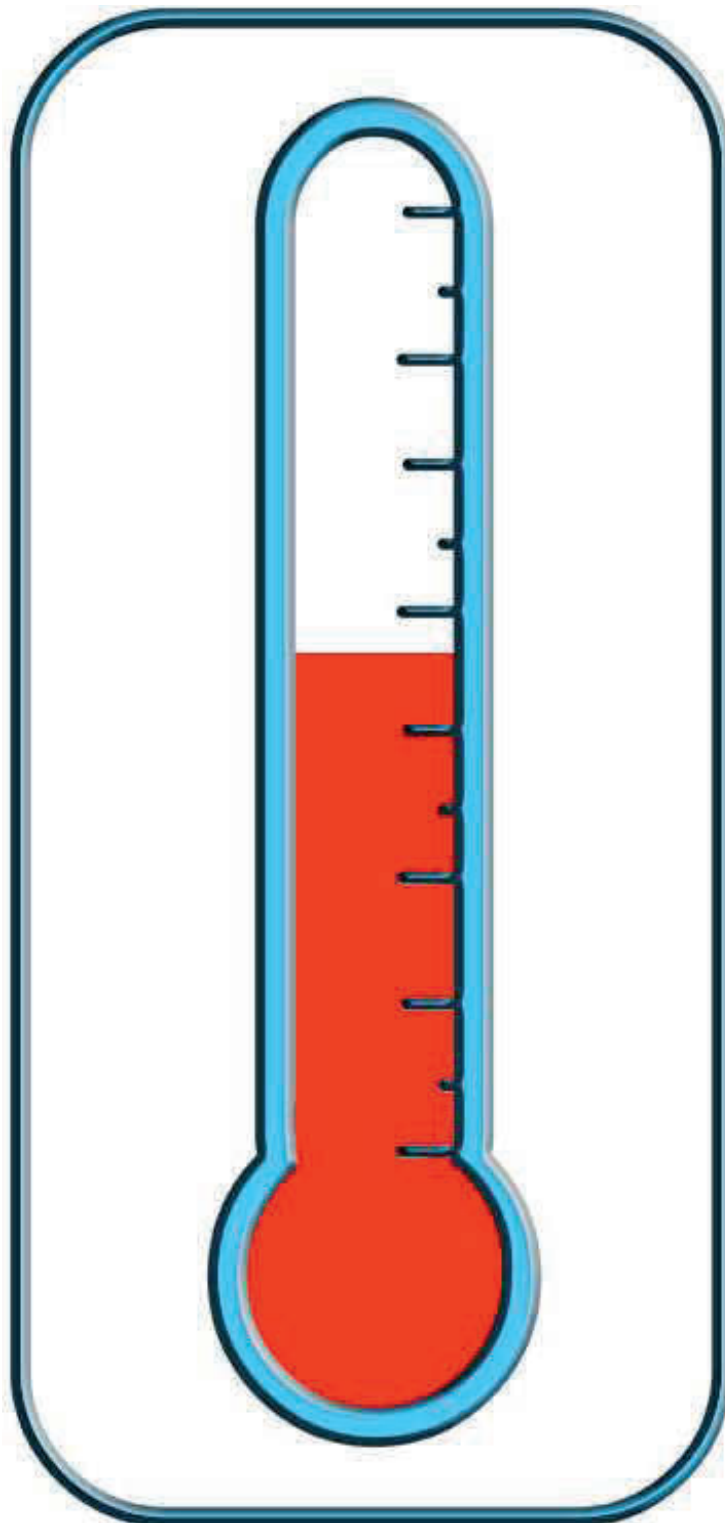
# Some Emotion Cues

Emotion	Can look like	Can sound like	Can feel like
Anger	Lowered inner eyebrows Bulging eyes Squinting eyes Tightly pressed lips Crossed arms Clenched fists Stiff body	Yelling Shouting Stomping	Hot Boiling Bubbling Tight
Disgust	Crinkled nose Puckered mouth Furrowed brow Squinting eyes	Gagging	Tight Shaky Sick
Embarrassment	Eyes down Red cheeks Hands over face Biting lip "Nervous" shaky smile	Shaking voice Quivering voice Quiet voice Silence	Hot Shaky Racing, pounding heart
Fear	Raised eyebrows Opened eyes Opened mouth Pulled back corners of the mouth Limbs pulled into body Shaking body	Shaking voice Quivering voice Whimpering	Dry mouth Tight Stiff Sweating Racing, pounding heart
Frustration	Furrowed brow Squinting eyes Tight lips Stiff body	Grunting Growling Stomping	Stuck Tight
Happiness	Raised corners of the mouth Crinkled eyes	Clapping Cheerful voice Squealing Laughing	Bubbling Jumping Relaxed
Sadness	Raised inner eyebrows Lowered eyelids Lowered corners of the mouth Trembling lip Slumped, drooping body	Crying Sobbing Moaning Whining	Weak Weepy Droopy
Surprise	Arched eyebrows Widely opened eyes Dropped jaw Palms raised Sudden backward movement	Gasping Screaming Cheering	Racing, pounding heart Jumpy

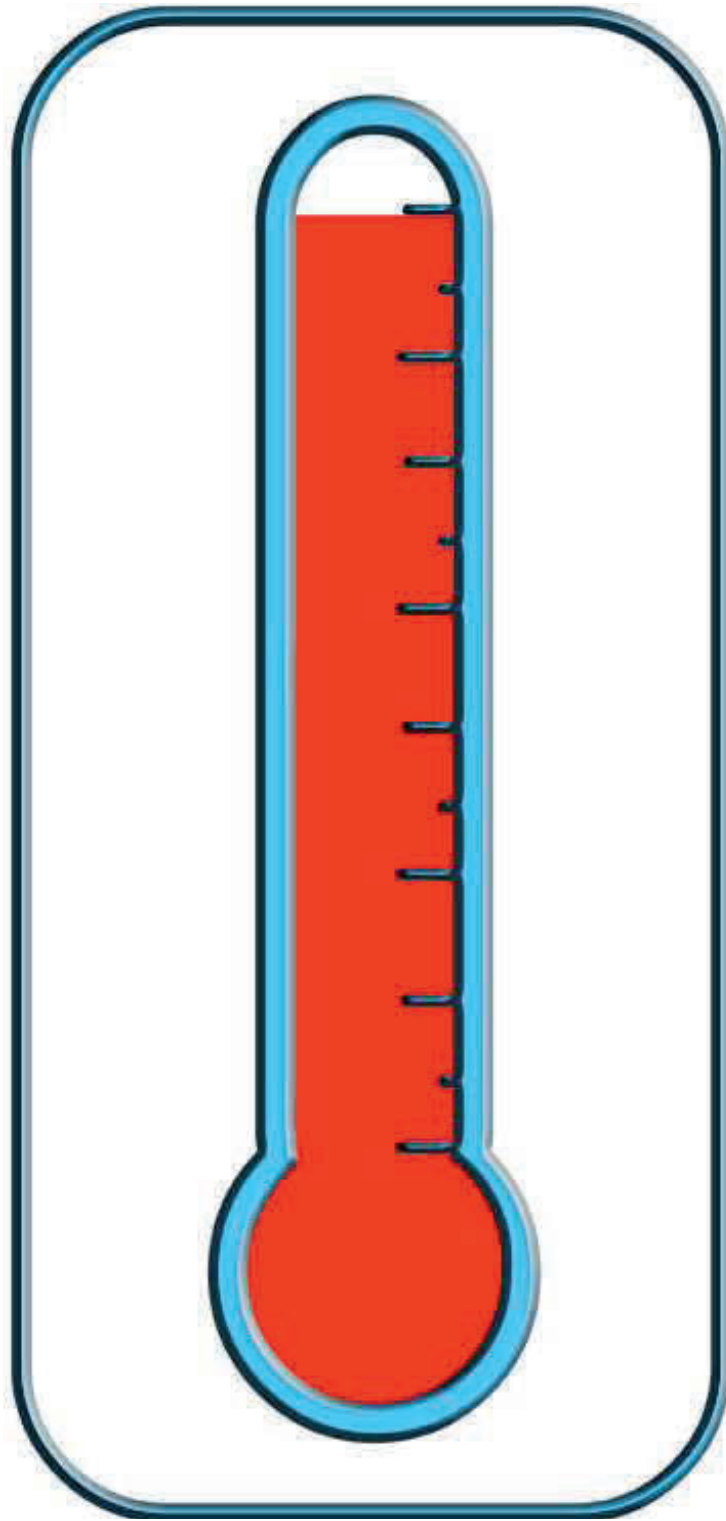




# Not Much



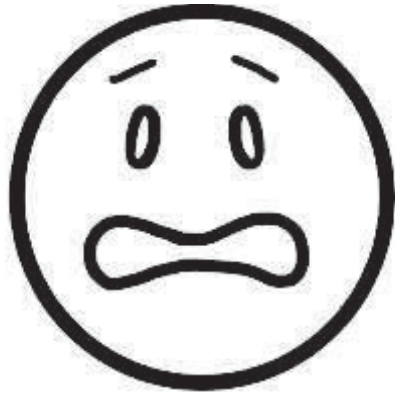
# Somewhat



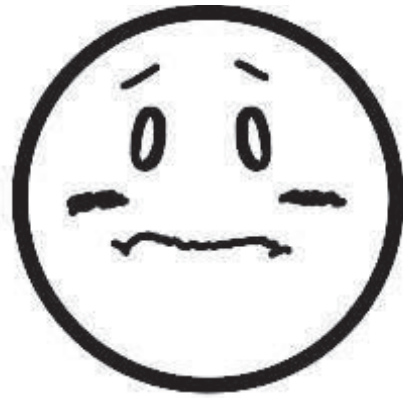
Very



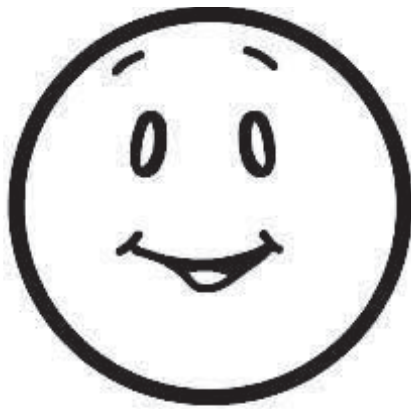




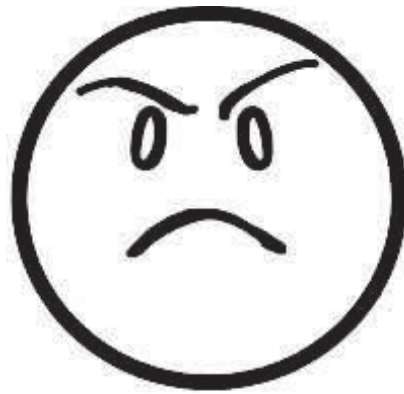
**Afraid**



**Embarrassed**



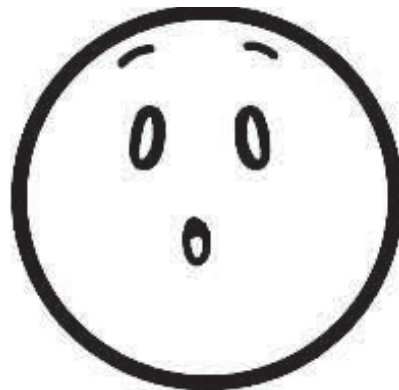
**Happy**



**Mad**



**Sad**



**Surprised**



## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *The Loose Tooth*

Explore and Practice: Emotion Bingo

## GOALS

This set of activities is designed to:

- ▶ Increase understanding of emotional consequences of situations
- ▶ Increase understanding of causes of emotions
- ▶ Promote an awareness of situational cues in understanding emotions

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Children will be able to:

- ▶ Predict emotions that may result from a given situation.
- ▶ Generate potential causes of various emotions.

## KEY CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

To *predict* means to make a guess about what might happen next.

You can *think ahead* and try to predict how someone might feel after something happens.

You can *think back* to what happened first to try and understand how someone is feeling.

You can pay attention to what is happening to find clues about why someone feels the way they do.

## MATERIALS

- ▶ *The Loose Tooth* storybook
- ▶ *Reasons for Feelings* picture scenarios
- ▶ *Emotion Faces* chart
- ▶ *Emotion Bingo* cards (copy and cut one four-face card for each child)
- ▶ *Emotion Bingo* scenarios
- ▶ Bingo chips or place holders (four per child)

## RESEARCH AND RELEVANCE

Social-emotional learning includes emotion understanding skills such as the ability to predict what feelings would likely result from a particular experience (feelings as consequences) and understanding and generating potential experiences that may result in a given feeling (causes of feelings). Children with greater emotional understanding tend to do better in school, both socially and academically.

### Think about this...

Do you find that it is easier to predict the feelings of some adults or children more than others? Does that impact the way you interact with those people in any way?

Have you ever been in a situation in which your emotional response differed greatly from someone else's who was involved in the same situation? What was that like for you?

Have you ever noticed that a child in your classroom seemed to be having a really bad day? What did you say or do? What do you say or do when you see someone who seems to be in a very good mood?

### Try this today...

While reading books aloud, pause after story events occur and invite the children to *think ahead* and predict how the character might feel next. If characters react in a surprising way, discuss why. Alternatively, have children *think back* to identify events or thoughts that explain why characters feel a certain way.

## READ AND DISCUSS: *THE LOOSE TOOTH*

*Children listen to the story and discuss how to use physical and situational clues to understand someone's feelings.*

### Before Reading

Have you ever seen a friend feeling happy or sad or angry and had to figure out why they felt that way? What can you do to try and understand someone's feelings?

Everyone has different feelings or emotions, and understanding each other's feelings can help people get along. Looking for clues, thinking back to what happened first, and talking to each other can help you understand how someone else is feeling and why they feel that way.

In this story, a group of friends has to figure out why they are each feeling the way they do.

As you listen to the story, pay attention for times when the characters have different feelings and think about what may be causing those emotions.

### During Reading

Why do you think that Kayla was surprised when she looked at the *Show and Tell* Board? *(She didn't know it was her turn)* When her friends found out that she was worried about *Show and Tell*, what did they do? *(Offered to help her think of something to share)*

What do you think Mia and Jeremy were excited to tell Kayla at lunch? *(An idea for Show and Tell)*

Why do you think Mia and Jeremy were surprised when they saw Kayla laughing? *(She looked different; she lost her tooth)*

How do you think Kayla will feel when she gets a tooth necklace? *(Excited; happy, proud)*  
Why do you think Kayla looked sad when she returned to the classroom? *(She didn't get a tooth necklace)* What clues did you use to figure that out? *(She had gone to the office to get a tooth necklace; she wasn't wearing a necklace; she was holding an envelope instead)*

Why do you think Kayla was suddenly excited about going to the carpet for Show and Tell? *(She had an idea for Show and Tell)* What do you think she was going to tell the class? *(She was going to talk about her tooth)*

---

**Tip:** As the characters express different emotions, have the children think about why they might be feeling that way before continuing the story.

---

### After Reading

What can you do to figure out why someone feels the way they do? (*Ask them; look around for clues; think back to what happened first; guess how someone might feel in that situation*)

Why is it important to try and understand how someone is feeling or why they feel that way? (*To show that I care; so I will know how to respond*)

---

## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: EMOTION BINGO

*Children play a game to practice predicting emotions that might result from given situations.*

### Set the Stage

Choose a situation likely to elicit a strong emotional reaction in the children, and ask them to imagine how they would feel in that situation (e.g., *How do you think you would feel if our class was chosen to perform a dance in front of the rest of the school?*). Have the children share their reactions with their buddies, and then invite a few to share with the class. Ask if buddies felt the same way, and if anyone thinks they would have a different feeling, emphasizing that *sometimes people feel differently about the same thing*. Summarize how the situation would make children feel (e.g., *So our class was going to perform a dance in front of the whole school, most of you would be really excited and a couple of you would feel a little nervous.*).

Emotions, or feelings, are one way that you react to things and situations. When you know the situation, you can *think ahead* in order to try and predict, or guess, how someone might feel next. You might be able to guess based on how you think you would feel or how you've seen other people react when that happens.

Show the class the first *Reasons for Feelings* picture.

Sometimes you already know how someone is feeling and you want to figure out the reason why. Let's look at this picture. If you saw a child standing in the lunchroom looking just like this, how do you think he would be feeling? (*Sad, disappointed, scared*) How would you know that he feels that way? (*Frowning, crying*)

What are some reasons that someone might be feeling sad in the lunchroom? (*He forgot his lunch; someone wasn't nice to him; he doesn't know where to sit*).

There can be many reasons why people have certain feelings. If you know how someone is feeling; you can look for clues in the situation or *think back* about things that happened first in order to figure out why that person feels the way they do.

Show the second *Reasons for Feelings* picture.

Let's look at another picture of this child who is feeling sad in the lunchroom. Now why do you think he is sad? (*He spilled his drink on his shirt*) What clue did you see that helped you figure out the reason why he is sad? (*Stain on his shirt*)

Show the third *Reasons for Feelings* picture.

Sometimes you might not see any clues about why someone has a certain feeling; but you can *think back* and try to remember what happened first. Let's look at a different picture and notice what this child's classmate is thinking and remembering about him. Now why do you think he is sad? (*Someone was mean to him*)

## Facilitate the Activity

Have children sit with their buddies and pass out a bingo card and bingo chips to each child.

Now we're going to play a game called *Emotion Bingo* that will help us think about different reasons for different feelings. I'm going to describe some situations and you are going to think ahead and predict how that would make you feel, and then cover that feeling face if you have it on your card. Share your answer with your buddy to see if you would feel the same way or differently. *When you and your buddy BOTH have all of the faces covered on your cards, you can say "Bingo!" together!*

Read the *Emotion Bingo* scenarios one at a time. After each situation, invite several buddy pairs to share their feelings about the given situation (refer to the *Emotion Faces* chart for possible feelings). Try to find a few times to highlight when students have similar reactions (e.g. *Oh, so you and James would feel the same way about that.*), and also point out that people may have different feelings about the same thing (e.g., *So you would feel mad if you forgot your lunch, but Sarah would feel embarrassed. It's important to try to figure out how other people might be feeling because it may not be the same way you would feel. If you had a better understanding of how Sarah was feeling, you might know what to say to her next time.*).

Continue playing as time allows (you may wish to mix up and redistribute bingo cards once or twice).

---

**Tip:** You may wish to cut the scenarios into slips to draw from a cup.

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### Wrap It Up

In this game, you had to think ahead and predict how someone might feel in a given situation. What if you already know how someone is feeling but you don't know why—what can you do to try and figure out the reason why they might be feeling that way? *(Think back to what happened first, look for clues in what is happening)*

How can understanding another person's feelings in a situation help you to be a better friend? *(You will know how to respond to them, you might discover that you have similar feelings)*

---

## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

**Emotion Matchup:** Cut the *Emotion Bingo* scenarios into cards and give each buddy pair three to four scenarios. Call out emotions on the *Emotion Faces* chart one at a time, and have the children select a scenario card for the given emotion. Buddies say "Matchup!" when they have matched all of their cards.

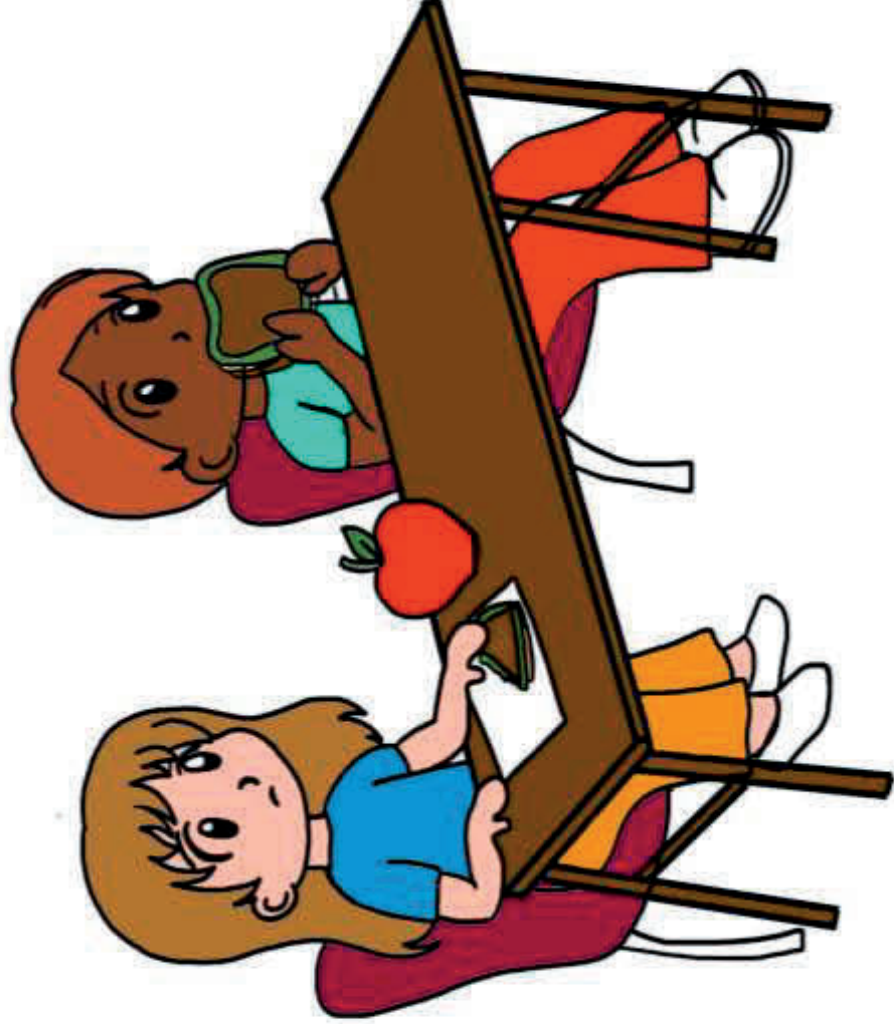
**My Feelings:** Have the children draw and write to complete the prompt: *I feel \_\_\_\_\_ when \_\_\_\_\_*. Gather the class and invite them to share their feelings and reasons.

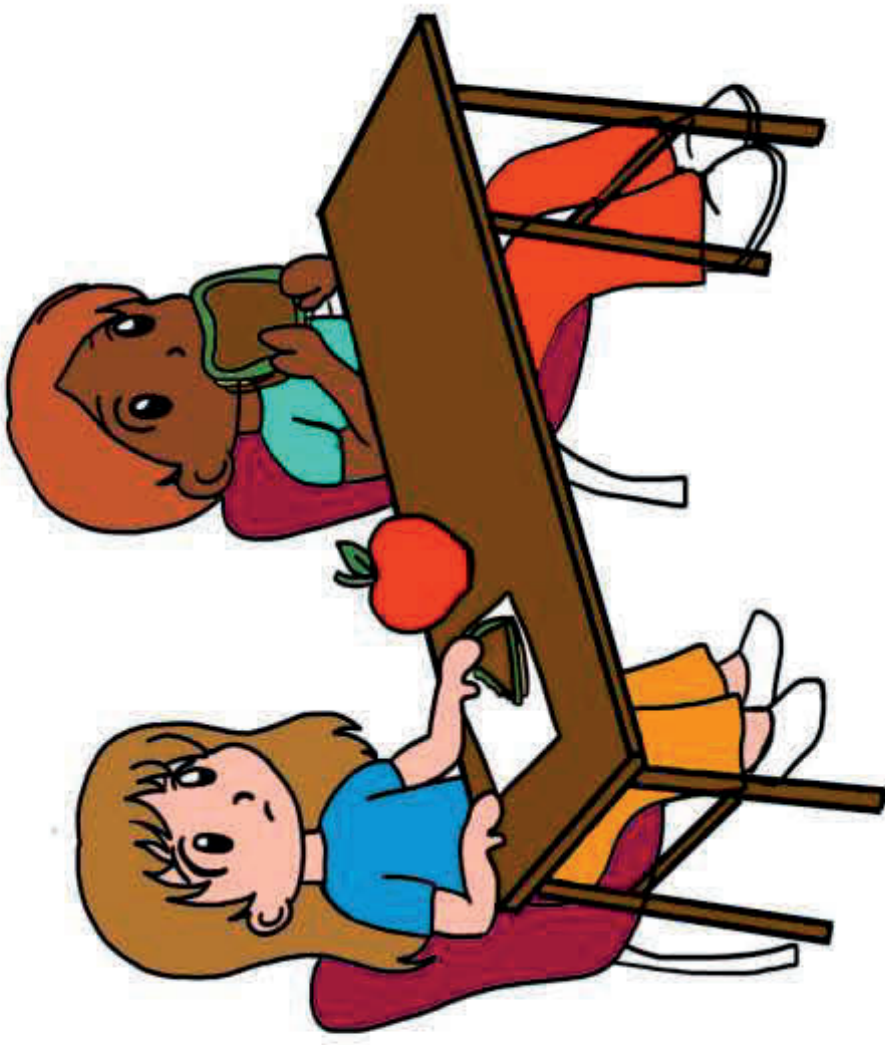
**Reasons for Feelings:** Give small groups an emotion word and have them make a list or mind map of at least five reasons why a person might feel that way.

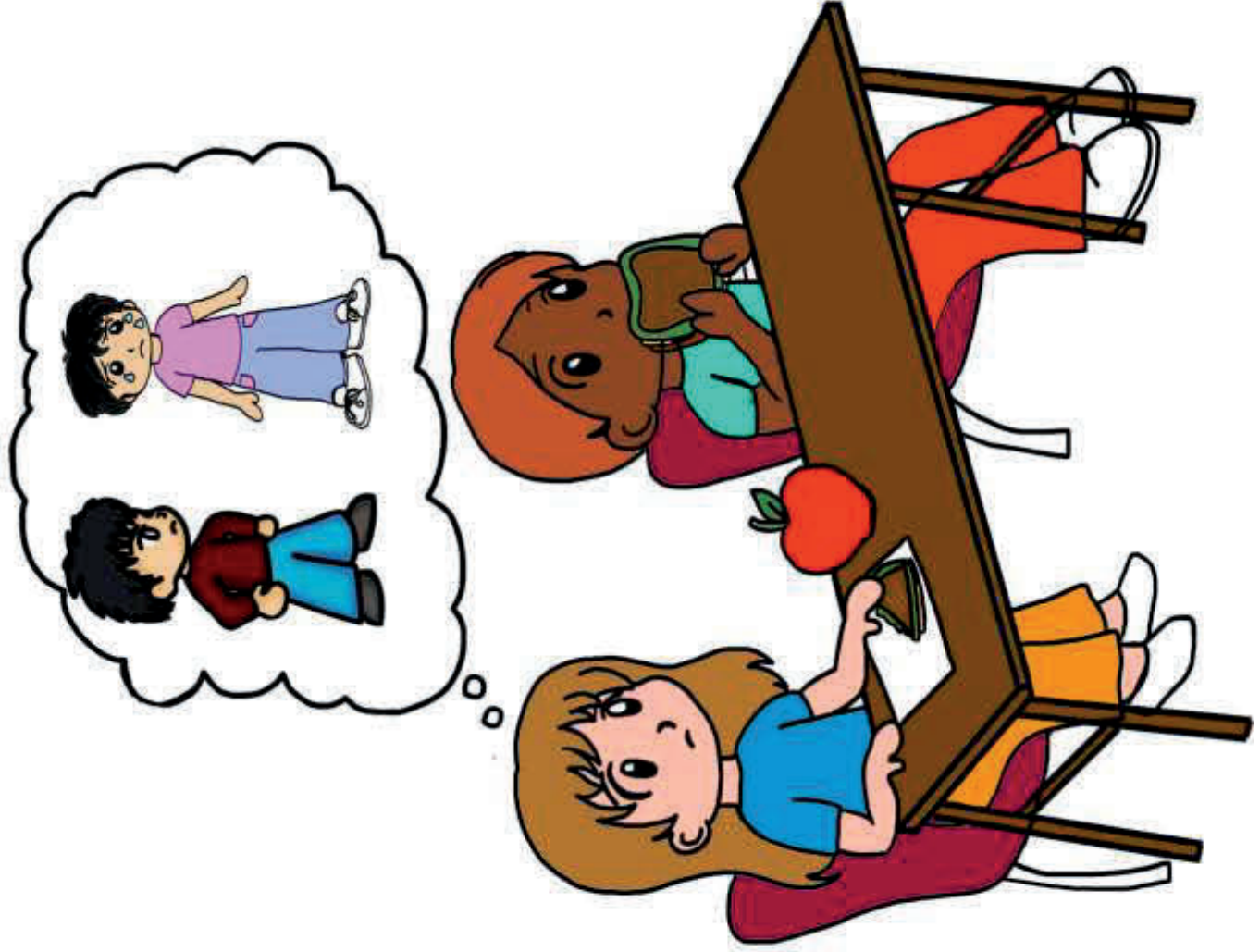
**Small Group Emotion Bingo:** Have the children play *Emotion Bingo* in small groups, taking turns reading the *Emotion Bingo* scenarios. Encourage them to ask each other questions about their feelings and reactions.

**What's the Story?** Give individuals or small groups of children magazine photos of people expressing emotions. Have them create a story about what emotion their character is experiencing, and why.





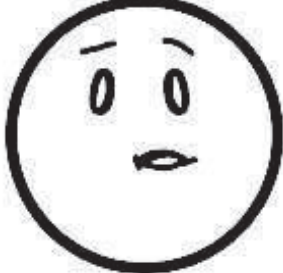






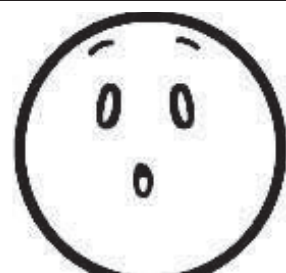
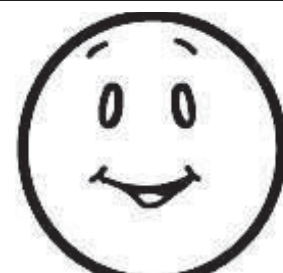





















# Emotion Faces


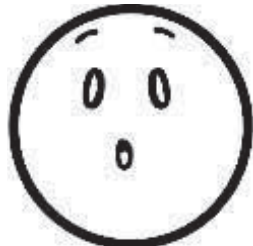


 <p>Angry</p>	 <p>Worried</p>	 <p>Disappointed</p>	 <p>Glad</p>
 <p>Shy</p>	 <p>Afraid</p>	 <p>Excited</p>	 <p>Sad</p>
 <p>Bored</p>	 <p>Surprised</p>	 <p>Happy</p>	 <p>Embarrassed</p>
 <p>Scared</p>	 <p>Frustrated</p>	 <p>Nervous</p>	 <p>Mad</p>







# Emotion Bingo





Emotion Bingo	
 <b>Angry</b>	 <b>Worried</b>
 <b>Shy</b>	 <b>Afraid</b>



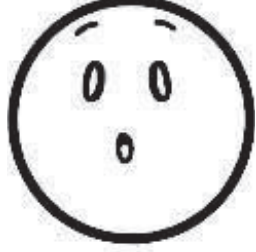

Emotion Bingo	
 <b>Disappointed</b>	 <b>Glad</b>
 <b>Excited</b>	 <b>Sad</b>





Emotion Bingo	
 <b>Bored</b>	 <b>Surprised</b>
 <b>Scared</b>	 <b>Frustrated</b>



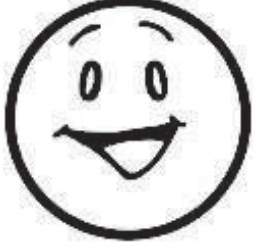

Emotion Bingo	
 <b>Happy</b>	 <b>Embarrassed</b>
 <b>Nervous</b>	 <b>Mad</b>

# Emotion Bingo

Emotion Bingo	
 Glad	 Scared
 Frustrated	 Shy

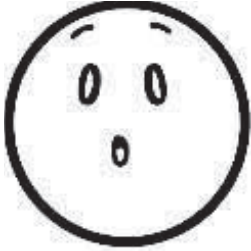



Emotion Bingo	
 Sad	 Afraid
 Surprised	 Bored





Emotion Bingo	
 Nervous	 Embarrassed
 Happy	 Angry





Emotion Bingo	
 Worried	 Mad
 Excited	 Disappointed



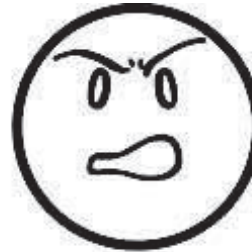



# Emotion Bingo

Emotion Bingo	
 Surprised	 Glad
 Bored	 Mad

Emotion Bingo	
 Afraid	 Happy
 Disappointed	 Embarrassed

Emotion Bingo	
 Worried	 Frustrated
 Nervous	 Excited

Emotion Bingo	
 Shy	 Sad
 Angry	 Scared



<p>You left your homework packet at home the day it was due.</p>	<p>A classmate said that he liked your drawing.</p>	<p>You said something that hurt someone's feelings and they started crying.</p>
<p>You had a good idea about how to solve a puzzle, but no one in your group was listening to you.</p>	<p>You answered a knock at your door and a friend was there wanting to play with you.</p>	<p>The person sitting next to you in the cafeteria was being careless and knocked their drink all over your lunch.</p>
<p>Your teacher told the class that one of your classmates was sick and in the hospital.</p>	<p>Someone laughed because you missed the ball during P.E.</p>	<p>Your team came in first place for the Field Day relay race.</p>
<p>You finally solved a hard puzzle.</p>	<p>Your friend had homemade cookies in their lunchbox and shared them with you.</p>	<p>You finished all of your work and didn't have a book to read or anything to do until the next activity.</p>
<p>A classmate wanted to show you something in their hand, and it was a big bug.</p>	<p>You asked to play a game on the playground at recess but the other kids said that they had already made the teams.</p>	<p>At lunchtime, the kids at your table all kept talking and talking about a new movie that you had never even seen.</p>
<p>You were asked to read the story you wrote out loud to the class.</p>	<p>You couldn't get the zipper of your backpack unstuck and a classmate offered to hold it while you pulled.</p>	<p>You found out that a good friend was moving to a different school.</p>
<p>Your partner for a class project was someone you had hardly talked to before now.</p>	<p>You helped a classmate and they didn't say thank you.</p>	<p>You suddenly heard a loud crash right outside the classroom door.</p>
<p>Someone cut in front of you in line for a game at recess, and then you didn't get to have a turn.</p>	<p>You couldn't find your bike lock anywhere in your backpack.</p>	<p>You were walking up to the board and you tripped and fell in front of the whole class.</p>

<p>You left a field trip permission slip at home the day it was due.</p>	<p>You helped a classmate find her lost folder.</p>	<p>You bumped into someone on the playground and knocked them down, and they started crying.</p>
<p>You had a good idea about how to solve a math problem, but no one in your group was listening to you.</p>	<p>A friend invited you to play after school.</p>	<p>The person sitting next to you wasn't being careful and knocked a bottle of paint all over your picture.</p>
<p>Your teacher told the class that one of the other teachers was very sick and would not be at school.</p>	<p>The kids at your lunch table laughed because you spilled your drink in your lap.</p>	<p>Your class came in first place in the school canned food drive.</p>
<p>Someone laughed at your new haircut.</p>	<p>A classmate shared some stickers with you.</p>	<p>There were 15 more minutes of recess and there was nothing that you wanted to do outside.</p>
<p>A classmate showed you the big scrape on her knee.</p>	<p>You asked to join some classmates in a board game but they said that there were no more pieces.</p>	<p>Someone came up behind you and yelled, "Boo!"</p>
<p>You were asked to spell a challenge word out loud in front of the class.</p>	<p>You couldn't turn the lid of the glue bottle and a classmate offered to help you open it.</p>	<p>You found out that one of your friends was going to move to a different class.</p>
<p>Your new buddy was someone you didn't know very well at all yet.</p>	<p>You found a classmate's homework and gave it back to them, and they didn't say thank you.</p>	<p>You suddenly heard an ambulance siren coming right into the school parking lot.</p>
<p>Someone took the last spot at the computers even though it was supposed to be your turn next.</p>	<p>You couldn't find your library book anywhere in your desk.</p>	<p>When you tried to kick the ball during a soccer game, you fell down in front of the whole team.</p>

## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *The School Dance – Part 1*

Explore and Practice: I Think, I Feel, I Do

## GOALS

This set of activities is designed to:

- ▶ Promote understanding of the relations among thoughts, feelings, and behaviors

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Children will be able to:

- ▶ Describe different thoughts, emotions, and behaviors that may occur in response to a situation
- ▶ Describe how thoughts about a situation can lead to particular feelings and behaviors

## KEY CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

What you think about a situation can influence how you *feel* and what you *do*.

People can *think, feel, and act* differently in the same situation.

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## MATERIALS

- ▶ *The School Dance – Part 1*
  - ▶ storybook
  - ▶ Whiteboard
  - ▶ *Think, Feel, Do* figures
  - ▶ *Think, Feel, Do* examples
  - ▶ *Think, Feel, Do* activity sheets (one two-page set per buddy pair)
  - ▶ Scissors and glue
-

## RESEARCH AND RELEVANCE

Emotion understanding skills include the recognition that people can have different thoughts (beliefs and ideas) and feelings about the same situation. Understanding this variability in cognitive and emotional reactions allows children to begin to understand the perspectives of others, an important relationship skill. Also important is the understanding of how thoughts influence feelings and behaviors, and the recognition that because thoughts about a situation can vary across people, they might react and behave differently.

### Think about this...

How mindful are you of your own thoughts? Do you often take time to intentionally reflect on your beliefs about the people and the issues in your life and your work?

Have you ever tried to intentionally change your thoughts about someone, even though you didn't really want to do so (e.g., gave someone the benefit of the doubt)? Did you find that your feelings or behaviors toward that person changed at all?

### Try this today...

Help children make connections between what people do and the thoughts that may be motivating their behavior (e.g., *When Martin Luther King, Jr. gave his "I Have a Dream speech," did he think that things could change, or that they would always stay the same? If he thought that things would never change, what kind of speech do you think he would have given instead?*).

## READ AND DISCUSS: *THE SCHOOL DANCE — PART 1*

*Children listen to the story and discuss the different thoughts and feelings that might be associated with each character's behaviors.*

### Before Reading

Have you and a friend ever had very different feelings about the same thing?  
Have you ever been surprised by the way someone else reacted to something?

Sometimes we have different ideas and feelings than other people, and that can make us react to things in different ways. When we know what others are thinking and feeling, it helps us understand why they do the things they do.

In this story, two friends have a hard time getting along because they each react in different ways to a task they are supposed to work on together.

As you listen to this story, pay attention to what happens when the characters don't understand one another's behaviors, and think about what they could do to clear up the misunderstanding.

### During Reading

When it was time to go onstage to practice; what did Annie think about being in the school dance? *(It was going to be fun; she loved to dance; she couldn't wait for the performance)*

What did Kenny think would happen during the dance? *(He didn't want to dance; he thought he might bump into people)*

As Kenny was thinking about how he didn't want to dance; how did that make him feel about practicing the dance onstage? *(Nervous; worried; anxious; didn't want to dance)* What clues showed you that he felt this way? *(He sighed; frowned; slouched (walked in a droopy way) toward the stage; his stomach felt tight)*

Did Annie and Kenny understand how each other felt? How did this misunderstanding cause problems for them? *(Annie was frustrated that Kenny wouldn't practice with the team and didn't understand why; Kenny felt badly for letting down his team)*

What did Annie think about Kenny that made her frustrated with him? *(Thought that he didn't care about being a part of the team; thought that he didn't want to practice)*

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**Tip:** Ask the children how they would have reacted to the various story situations; emphasizing that people can react to the same things differently or can show their feelings in different ways.

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## After Reading

If Annie had known Kenny's real thoughts and feelings about the dance, do you think she would still be angry at him? What should she have done instead? (*Encouraged him; understood him; helped him practice; listened to his feelings*)

Is it okay for people to think differently about the same thing? Why do you think Kenny didn't tell Annie how he really felt? (*He might have been worried that she wouldn't understand; he didn't want to let her down; he didn't want to disagree; he didn't want her to worry about him*)

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## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: I THINK, I FEEL, I DO

*Children discuss the links among thoughts, feelings, and behaviors and predict behaviors that might result from having different thoughts and feelings.*

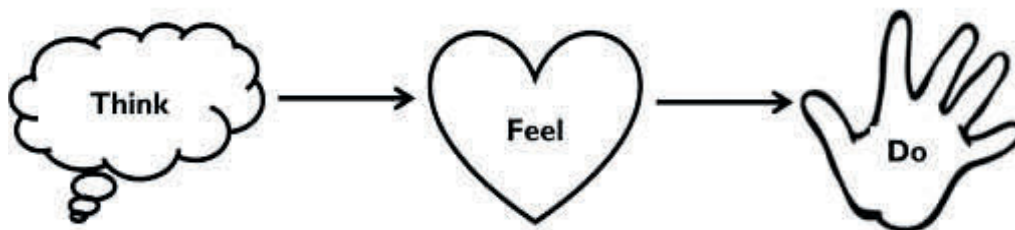
### Set the Stage

Pretend that you are thinking very hard about something, and ask the class if they know what you are thinking, and why (*because only you know, you are thinking inside of your head, you are not saying your thoughts*). Then ask the class what it means to "think about something" or to "have a thought," and discuss their answers.

Thoughts are your ideas, or things that you might say to yourself inside of your head. Most people are thinking about something almost all the time. What you think can change how you feel about it or what you do next.

### Facilitate the Activity

Hang (or draw) the three *Think*, *Feel*, and *Do* figures and draw arrows between them, as shown below.



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**Tip:** If the children talk first about their feelings, guide them in considering the source of those feelings (e.g., *If you would feel sad about not going on a field trip, what might you be thinking, or saying to yourself about it?*).

---



Using the *Think, Feel, Do* examples as a guide, discuss the scenario as you demonstrate the links between the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that people have in a given situation.

- ▶ Write the situation underneath and to the left of the figures. Have the children think about a time when they have been in that situation or if they can imagine it (e.g., *What would you think if you found out that our class field trip had been cancelled?*).
- ▶ Invite one child to share what they would think, and write it under the *Think* figure.
- ▶ Draw an arrow to the right, and ask the children how having that thought might make someone feel about the situation, and write the emotion under the *Feel* figure.
- ▶ Draw an arrow to the right, and ask them what they might do next if they felt that way about the situation (e.g., *If you thought about how much you had wanted to go on the field trip and then you felt sad about not being able to go, how might you act? What would you do?*), and write the behavior under the *Do* figure.

Repeat the process with another example, listing a new situation and guiding the children in discussing a resulting thought, feeling, and behavior.

Review the *thought, feeling, behavior* diagram with the children.

What you think about a situation can change the way you feel and what you do next. When we know how someone thinks about a situation, we can understand why they feel and behave in the ways that they do.

Pair the class with buddies and pass out the *Think, Feel, Do* activity sheets (one two-page set per pair). Guide them in cutting out the *Feel* and *Do* pieces and gluing them next to the corresponding thoughts on the first page. When completed, gather them together to share their work with the class.

## Wrap It Up

Why is it important to pay attention to what you are thinking? (*Because our thoughts can make us feel and act in certain ways so that we can understand our feelings*)

If you were upset or angry about a situation, what could you do to try and change how you feel? (*Try to think differently about it, talk to other people and see what they think and feel about it*)

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**Extension:** Use blank *Think, Feel, Do* activity sheets to have children practice generating thoughts, feelings, and/or behaviors using new situations.

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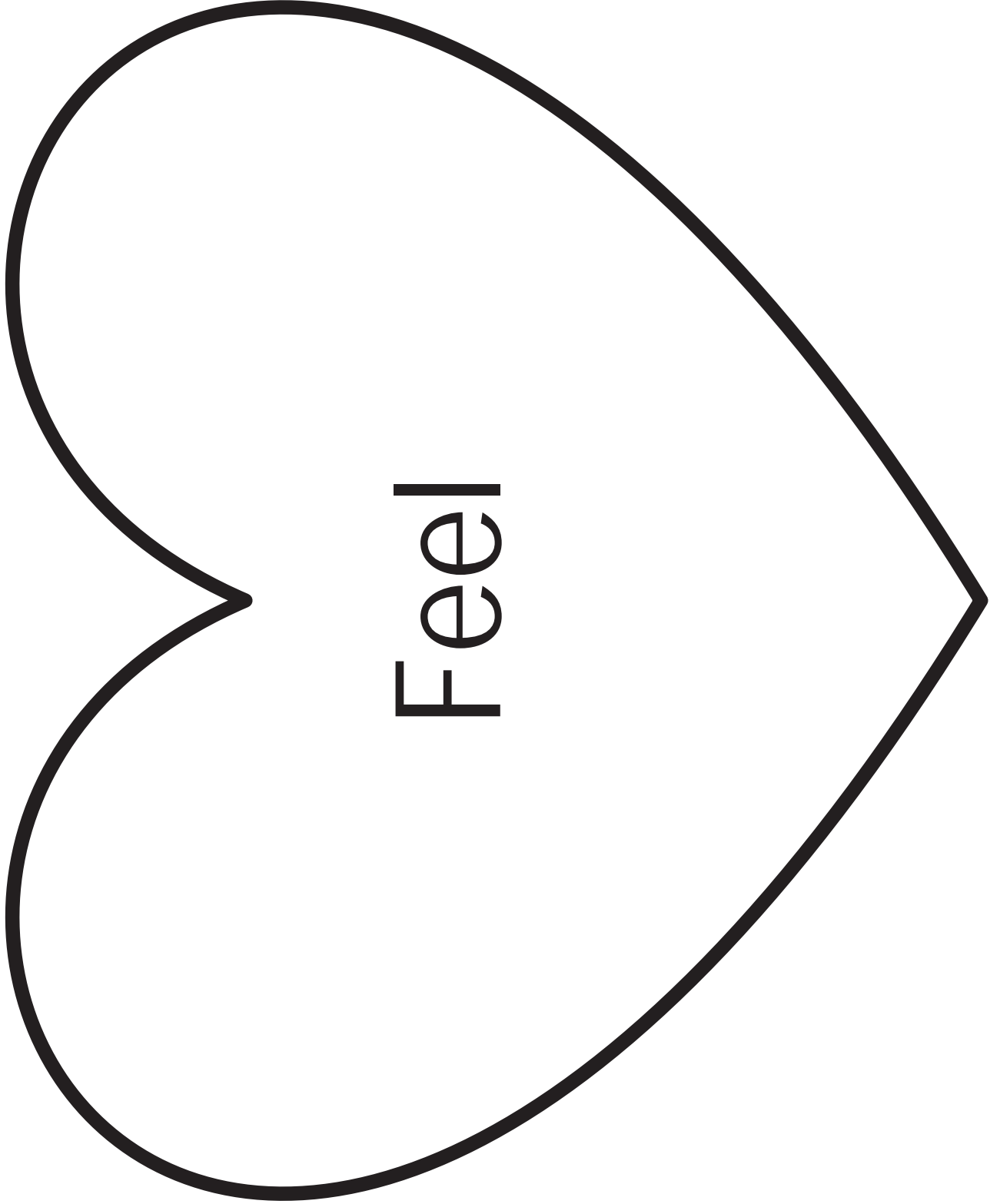
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## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

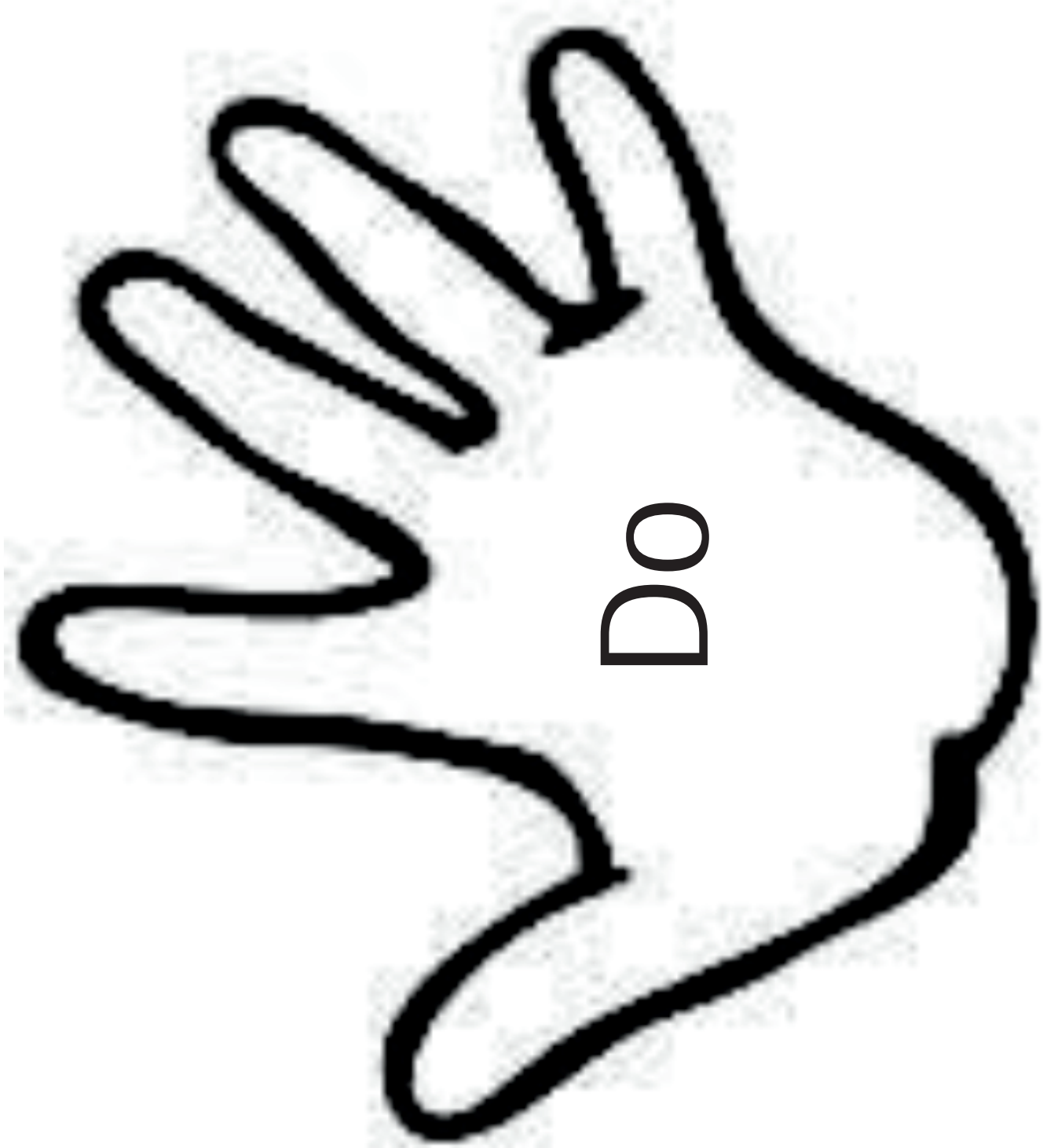
**Penny for Your Thoughts:** Occasionally, signal that it is time to take a break (e.g., ring a bell) and have the children stop what they are doing, close their eyes, and sit quietly for a minute or two. At the end of this time, invite a few children to share their last thoughts.



Think

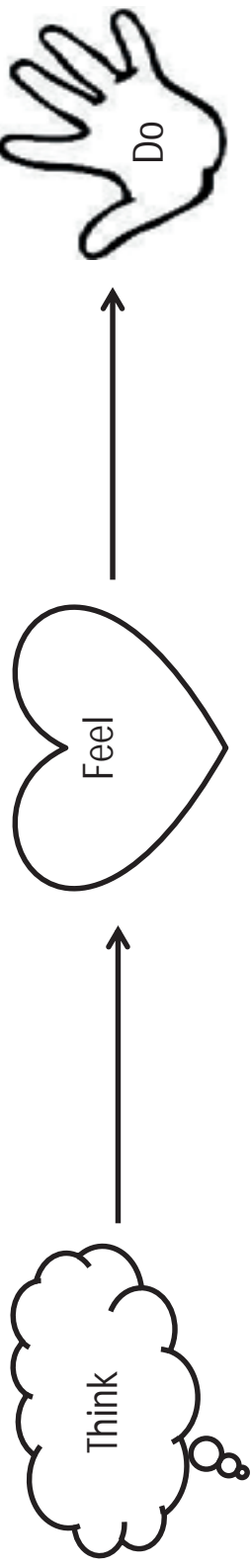


Do



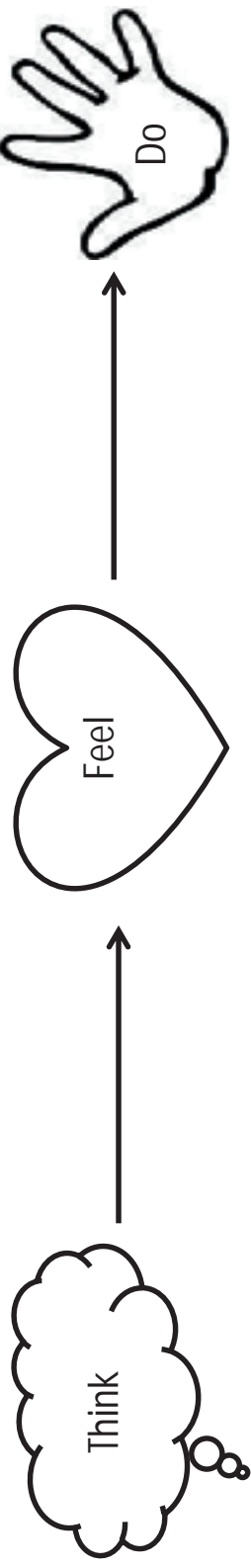


SITUATION 1: Our field trip to the science center is cancelled.



I really wanted to go! ———> Sad, disappointed ———> Put your head down on your desk.

SITUATION 2: Our class won the pizza party!



I love pizza! ———> Happy, excited ———> Clap and cheer.

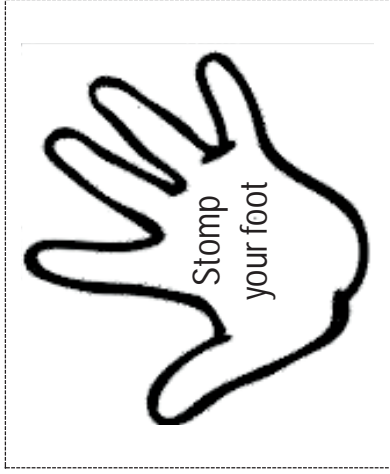
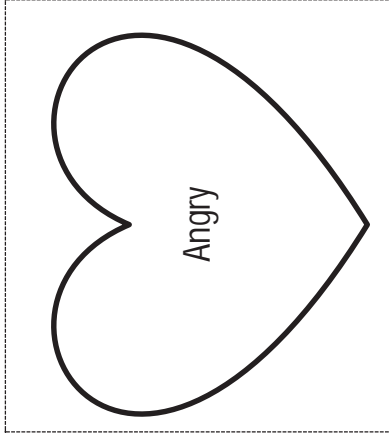
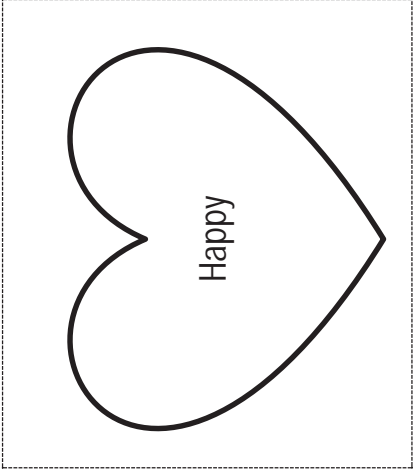
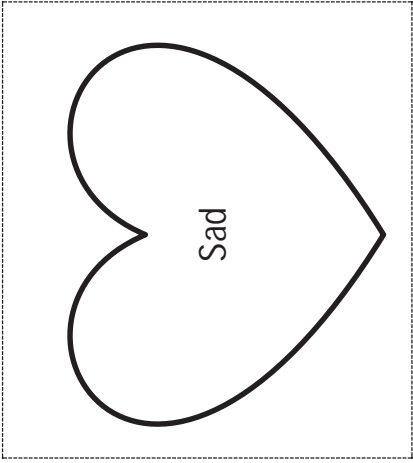




<p>Situation</p> <p>You learned how to spell a new word.</p>	<p>Think</p> <p>I did great!</p>	<p>Feel</p>	<p>Do</p>
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<p>Situation</p> <p>You have no one to play with at recess.</p>	<p>Think</p> <p>I am lonely.</p>	<p>Feel</p>	<p>Do</p>
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<p>Situation</p> <p>You have to stop playing early.</p>	<p>Think</p> <p>That's not fair!</p>	<p>Feel</p>	<p>Do</p>
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Situation

Think

Feel

Do



Situation

Think

Feel

Do





## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *The School Dance – Part 2*

Explore and Practice: *I Know Just How You Feel*

## GOALS

This set of activities is designed to:

- ▶ Promote understanding of others' perspectives and feelings
- ▶ Promote empathic responding to others' emotions

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Children will be able to:

- ▶ Describe ways to show empathy and caring to someone in a given situation

## KEY CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

Having *empathy* means that you feel and understand how someone else feels.

Understanding how someone feels can help you be a good friend to them.

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## MATERIALS

- ▶ *The School Dance – Part 2* storybook
  - ▶ *I Know Just How You Feel* cards
-

## RESEARCH AND RELEVANCE

Empathy is the ability to identify with and understand another person's emotions—to feel what they feel. To have empathy, children must have some awareness and recognition of their own and others' emotions. In order to act upon empathy and show caring for another's feelings, children must be able to consider those feelings and determine what actions or responses would be appropriate in a given situation. Children with greater empathy behave more prosocially toward others.

### Think about this...

Have you ever experienced being misunderstood because someone did not share or understand your feelings in a given situation?

Have you ever hidden your feelings (e.g., told someone that you were fine when you actually weren't) because you didn't think they would understand?

What factors can make it hard to respond empathically to someone?

### Try this today...

Model empathy for children by showing an awareness and understanding of their feelings—even if you don't share or agree with them (e.g., *I can see that you're all really excited because you just came in from the playground, but it's time to take it easy and get ready to start our next activity*). Help them understand your feelings as well, both positive and negative (e.g., *It makes me feel very worried when you start running as soon as you go out the door, because someone might trip and get hurt*).

## READ AND DISCUSS: *THE SCHOOL DANCE — PART 2*

*Children listen to the story and discuss how having empathy and understanding how someone feels can help them respond to them in caring ways.*

### Before Reading

Has there ever been a time when you felt happy or sad or scared, and you had a friend who knew just how you felt? Have you ever known how a friend was feeling because you had felt that way before too?

Having *empathy* means that you feel and understand the way that someone else feels, and that can help you be a good and caring friend to them.

In this story, two friends discover that they each have things that are hard for them to do, and that they both feel the same way when they have to do those things.

As you listen to this story, pay attention to what happens when the characters realize that they each have had very similar experiences and can really understand how the other person is feeling.

### During Reading

What did Kenny think when Annie told him that he should do all the talking in the poster presentation? How did he respond? *(He thought he was going to have to do all the work; he said that she should talk too)*

How do you think Kenny and Annie felt when they discovered that they both had something that was hard for them to do and made them nervous? *(Relieved; understood)*

Once Annie knew how Kenny felt; what did she think about Kenny not wanting to practice? *(She had felt the same way; she understood)* What did she do to help Kenny? *(She offered to help him learn the dance; encouraged him)*

Once Kenny knew how Annie felt about talking in front of the class; what did he think about Annie not wanting to talk about the poster? *(He had felt the same way; he understood)* What did he do to help Annie? *(He offered to help her practice for the presentation; encouraged her)*

When it was finally time to give their presentation and perform at Family Night; they were each still a little nervous. How did they show empathy and caring for one another during those events? *(They encouraged each other; showed support for each other)*

How did Kenny's feelings about dancing and Annie's feelings about talking in front of people change? Why? *(They felt more comfortable because they had helped one another practice; they felt as if others knew how they felt; they had encouraged one another)*

## After Reading

What can you do to understand someone else's feelings? *(Put myself in their shoes; imagine how I would feel in the same situation; think about a time when I felt the same way; ask them to tell me about how they feel)*

How do you think understanding how other people feel can help you be a good friend? *(You can understand why they say and do certain things; you will know how to respond to them and help them)*

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## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: I KNOW JUST HOW YOU FEEL

*Children identify the feelings of characters in scenarios, think about their own similar experiences, and describe ways to show empathy and caring to someone in those situations.*

## Set the Stage

Have the children think of a time when they saw someone who was sad or hurt and did something kind to show that they cared about them. Invite several children to share what they did and then ask them how they think the person felt initially and afterward.

Explain that understanding how someone feels can help you figure out how to respond and show caring.

Being aware of how other people are feeling can help them be more caring. When something happens, how you might feel in that situation can give you an idea about how someone else might feel. When you have *empathy* and understand how someone is feeling, you can figure out what to say or do that shows that you care about them.



## Facilitate the Activity

Read a scenario from the *I Know Just How You Feel* cards and discuss with the class:

- ▶ If they have ever been in a similar situation and how they felt
- ▶ How the character might feel
- ▶ Ways to show empathy and concern to someone in that situation

Guide the children in considering the different ways in which someone might react (encouraging them to think of at least two ways, if possible), and thinking of ways to respond that would be most appropriate and helpful when people have different reactions.

Discuss several more scenarios as a group, or divide children into buddies or small groups and give them each a scenario card to discuss, encouraging each child in the group to share their similar experiences. Gather them together to share their ideas with the group.

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**Extension:** Have the children role play the scenario and their caring responses. Guide children in trying different emotional reactions and caring responses for the same scenario.

---

## Wrap It Up

Why is it important to show that we care about how others feel? *(It is kind; it makes them feel good; they know that someone cares about them)*

What could you do if you don't know how someone is feeling to help them feel better? *(Ask them; ask an adult for help)*

.....

## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

**How I'm Feeling:** Create a set of cards with feeling faces or words (multiples of the same feeling). Keep these in an accessible area and establish a system so that children can use the cards to communicate their feelings to others if they are not able to with words (e.g., they are too upset; they don't know whom to talk to). You might encourage children to choose and display cards on their desk or a student chart, or they could hand the card to a friend or an adult. When you introduce the system to children, have a discussion about ways to respond to others' feelings.



A classmate trips and spills his pencil case out all over the floor.

*Has anything like that ever happened to you?*

*How might your classmate feel?*

*What could you do to be caring?*

A friend tells you that she is moving away next month.

*Has anything like that ever happened to you?*

*How might your friend feel?*

*What could you do to be caring?*

Your teammate kicks the ball into the wrong goal and your team loses the game.

*Has anything like that ever happened to you?*

*How might your teammate feel?*

*What could you do to be caring?*

You hear a classmate tell the teacher that his dog is very sick.

*Has anything like that ever happened to you?*

*How might your classmate feel?*

*What could you do to be caring?*

You hear some kids saying mean things to a classmate at recess.

*Has anything like that ever happened to you?*

*How might your classmate feel?*

*What could you do to be caring?*

A classmate tells you that it is her birthday tomorrow.

*Has anything like that ever happened to you?*

*How might your classmate feel?*

*What could you do to be caring?*

A classmate tells your class that she won a drawing contest.

*Has anything like that ever happened to you?*

*How might your classmate feel?*

*What could you do to be caring?*

A very quiet classmate stands up to tell the class about her poster, and you see her shaking a little and looking down.

*Has anything like that ever happened to you?*

*How might your classmate feel?*

*What could you do to be caring?*

You see a classmate by himself after school, and he tells you that no one picked him up today.

*Has anything like that ever happened to you?*

*How might your classmate feel?*

*What could you do to be caring?*

You see a classmate crumple up his drawing and throw it down with a frown.

*Has anything like that ever happened to you?*

*How might your classmate feel?*

*What could you do to be caring?*

You see a classmate sitting alone on the seesaw and no one wants to go on it with him.

*Has anything like that ever happened to you?*

*How might your classmate feel?*

*What could you do to be caring?*

A classmate is looking in the lunch tub, and he tells you that he can't find his lunch.

*Has anything like that ever happened to you?*

*How might your classmate feel?*

*What could you do to be caring?*

## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *The Soccer Game*

Explore and Practice: The Problems with Stereotypes

## GOALS

This set of activities is designed to:

- ▶ Foster increased understanding of *variability within* social groups (in preferences, characteristics, and behaviors)
- ▶ Foster increased understanding of *similarities across* different social groups (in preferences, characteristics, and behaviors)
- ▶ Promote flexible thinking and decrease stereotyped thinking

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Children will be able to:

- ▶ Define *stereotype*
- ▶ Describe limitations and problems associated with stereotypes and overgeneralizations
- ▶ Demonstrate ways to challenge stereotypes

## KEY CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

When you make an *assumption*, you believe something without knowing if it is really true.

Having a *stereotype* means assuming that everyone in a group is just the same.

Stereotypes are unfair and they aren't true about all people.

You have to get to know people to know what they are really like.

Overgeneralizing words to avoid: All, every, none, only, always, never.

## MATERIALS

- ▶ *The Soccer Game* storybook
- ▶ Whiteboard
- ▶ *Overgeneralization* Words signs

## RESEARCH AND RELEVANCE

Children are natural “sorters”—they tend to group people and things into simple categories in order to make sense of a complex world (everyone does this at times). Social categorization is the grouping of people by an identifiable and meaningful characteristic that is shared in common, such as gender or race.

### Advantages of Categorization

- ▶ Organizes a large body of complex information
- ▶ Allows for the use of inferences (e.g., can better predict behavior or motives by merely knowing group membership)

### Disadvantages of Categorization

#### *Results in tendencies to:*

- ▶ View members of the same group as much more similar than they actually are
- ▶ Exaggerate differences among members of different groups
- ▶ Use essentialist thinking, or the belief that an underlying “essence” (e.g., “boyiness”) exists that ties all members of a group together and makes them similar
- ▶ Form stereotypes about individuals
- ▶ Make inaccurate assumptions about individuals based on group membership

Stereotypes are beliefs about individuals based on their membership in a particular social category or group. They are often used to make assumptions about others or to interpret and predict their behavior, and are reflected in overgeneralizations such as *NO boys \_\_\_\_\_* or *ONLY babies can \_\_\_\_\_* or *ALL teenagers are like \_\_\_\_\_*. They also send the message that children should think or feel or act a certain way—the same as the others in their “group”. Because young children do not yet have highly flexible or sophisticated cognitive skills, it can be challenging to change their stereotypes once they are formed. However, guiding children in thinking critically about the accuracy of these beliefs and messages can help them better understand individual variability within groups and the many similarities across people of different groups.

### Think about this...

Have you ever felt that someone made an assumption about you based on your membership in a particular social category (e.g., age, race, gender, religion, economic class) or community? How did that make you feel?

Have you ever found yourself making assumptions about others based on their social group before you had a chance to really get to know them? What strategies have you used to avoid doing this?

Have you ever found yourself making overgeneralized statements about the interests, temperaments, or abilities of children who belong to a particular social group? What strategies have you used to avoid doing this?

### Try this today...

Model empathy for children by showing an awareness and understanding of their feelings—even if you don’t share or agree with them (e.g., *I can see that you’re all really excited because you just came in from the playground, but it’s time to take it easy and get ready to start our next activity.*). Help them understand your feelings as well, both positive and negative (e.g., *It makes me feel very worried when you start running as soon as you go out the door, because someone might trip and get hurt.*).

## READ AND DISCUSS: *THE SOCCER GAME*

*Children listen to the story and discuss how stereotypes and overgeneralizations can cause people to make incorrect guesses about others and miss out on opportunities with one another.*

### Before Reading

Has anyone ever thought they knew what you liked or what you wanted to do, without ever asking you?

Having a *stereotype* means assuming or thinking that you know what someone is like or what they like to do just based on how old they are, or whether they are a boy or girl, or how they look. Stereotypes are unfair and they are often wrong. It is only by getting to know people that you can find out what they are really like.

In this story, a group of kids face several situations in which people assume or think they know what others are like without ever asking them.

As you listen to this story, pay attention to the assumptions or stereotypes that the characters are making about one another.

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**Tip:** To avoid introducing and reinforcing stereotypes, allow children themselves to bring up any stereotypes that they have encountered, and then address them accordingly.

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### During Reading

What do you think his classmates were assuming or thinking when they didn't invite Max to join their dance? (*That only girls would want to play together; that only girls would want to dance; that they didn't want to play with someone new*)

How would it feel to be left out of something that you actually wanted to do? (*Disappointed; sad; angry; lonely*)

Why did one of the kids think that Max must be good at soccer? (*Thought he must be just like his sister*) Was that assumption true?

Do you think you can know what someone is like on the inside by only looking at the outside—what they wear or how they look? What is it called when you make an assumption like that about someone else? (*A stereotype*)

## After Reading

Has anyone ever thought that you were just like other kids who dress the same way, or just like other kids from our school, or just like the other kids in your family? Do you think that because people are in a group and have something in common that they have to be just the same in other ways too?

How could believing stereotypes about people keep you from getting to know them? (*I might think you already know what they are like; I might not try to find out what we have in common*)

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## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: THE PROBLEM WITH STEREOTYPES

*Children discuss why people sometimes use stereotypes, why they are problematic, and how to challenge them.*

### Set the Stage

Invite the children to answer a question about yourself that they are likely to know and have them think about what influenced their answers (e.g., *Do you think that I like to sing? Why do you think that? Have you heard me sing or talk about singing?*). Then ask them to answer a question that they are unlikely to know about you. Ask them if it was harder to think about the answer to the second question (e.g., *Now what do you think my favorite lunch is? Does anyone know that? Is it harder to know the answer to that question? How could you find the answer?*).

Explain that guessing what other people are like can be a problem, and that getting to know others is how we can find out what they are really like.

There are some things we might be able to tell about other people by looking on the outside (e.g., *how old they are, whether they are wearing a soccer uniform*). But there are many things about people that are on the inside and that we won't know unless we ask them or they tell us. Sometimes we might *think* we know something about a person because of how they look or who they are (e.g., *that someone does not like to swing because she is an adult*). But those guesses aren't always true. Everyone is different, and we can't *really* know what other people are like until we get to know them.



## Facilitate the Activity

Explain that you are going to write a word representing a group of people on the board, and ask children to brainstorm how they think that kind of person could be described (e.g., *What do you think a \_\_\_\_\_ is like?*). Choose a word that will likely elicit stereotypes, but *do not choose a social category like race, gender, or religion*. After children have generated several adjectives or phrases, and you have listed them on the board next to the group word, repeat with a second word.

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**Tip:** Possible words could be *rockstar, athlete, toddler, scientist, princess*.

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Discuss why they may have made those choices in describing that group of people (e.g., *What do you know about rock stars? Do you know any princesses? Have you read books about scientists?*). Ask if they *know* those about them, or if they were guesses about what they might be like. When you establish that they were guesses, draw large thought bubbles around the word lists.

A *stereotype* is an assumption about what someone is like based on things such as age, gender, appearance, or job. When you use a stereotype, you assume that *all* people in that group are just the same—that you think all people of that age or gender or who wear clothes like that or who have that job are alike.

Ask the children if they think that the stereotypes on the board are true about ALL people in that group, and guide them into thinking of examples that do not fit those stereotypes. Discuss how no one is exactly the same, emphasizing “some are, some aren’t” or “some do, some don’t” (e.g., *There might be some very cool rock stars out there, but do you think ALL rock stars are cool? Probably some are and some aren’t*). Acknowledge that it is true that people in a group do have some things in common (e.g., most rock stars play a musical instrument), but not everything.

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**Tip:** Hang (or draw) the *Overgeneralizing Words* signs as the class decides that various stereotypes using those words are untrue.

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Discuss some of the problems with stereotypes.

Why can stereotypes be unfair? (*They aren’t always true; not everyone in a group is the same; they are only guesses*)

Your thoughts about someone can change how you feel and act toward them. If you use a stereotype and think that someone is unfriendly; without really knowing them; what could happen? (*You wouldn’t try to talk to them; you wouldn’t get to know them*) What if the person wasn’t like that stereotype at all? (*You would miss out on making a friend; you could hurt their feelings*)

Why do you think people use stereotypes? (*They don’t know the person so they guess what they are like; they hear other people using stereotypes*)

What could you do if you hear someone using a stereotype? (*Tell them that “some do; some don’t”; remind them that stereotypes aren’t always true and are unfair; suggest that they get to know the person to find out what they are like*)

## Wrap It Up

How can you find out what people are really like; such as what they think or what they like to do? (*Talk to them; spend time with them*)

If stereotypes are just thoughts; can you change a stereotype that you might have? How? (*Think something different; find out what the person is really like*)



## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

**All About Me:** Have children create a list or mind map of words and phrases describing themselves (e.g., likes/dislikes, common activities, physical attributes, personal characteristics, talents, history, etc). Provide prompts and encourage children to generate as many different descriptors as possible. As a class, discuss the many ways in which people are unique.

**Stereotype Rewrite:** Write a simple story using stereotypes. Have children circle the overgeneralizations in the story and then rewrite the story without stereotypes.

**Stop Stereotypes! Signs:** Give buddy pairs a stop sign and a green light cut from construction paper. Using these, have buddies think of a message about the problems with stereotypes (e.g., *Stereotypes aren't fair!*) and a message about positive ways to think about and treat others (e.g., *Get to know people!*) and work together to make a poster.















## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *The Relay Race*

Explore and Practice: A Box for Everyone

## GOALS

This set of activities is designed to:

- ▶ Reduce stereotyped thinking about objects, activities, and roles
- ▶ Promote strategies for challenging stereotypes and stereotype-based teasing
- ▶ Promote flexible thinking and decrease stereotyped thinking

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Children will be able to:

- ▶ Identify limitations and problems associated with stereotypes about objects, activities, and roles
- ▶ Demonstrate ways to challenge stereotypes

## KEY CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

Things can be for everyone.

It wouldn't be fair if things were only for some people.

It is important to respect people's choices.

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## MATERIALS

- ▶ *The Relay Race* storybook
  - ▶ Three boxes (one labeled "boys;" one labeled "girls;" one with a blank label)
  - ▶ Objects or pictures that are gender-stereotyped (e.g., truck, purple socks, skull shirt, bracelet) and "neutral" (e.g., animal puzzle, clay)
-

## RESEARCH AND RELEVANCE

Children are quick to recognize associations (e.g., *Long hair is for moms, but not dads*), and they form explanations, expectations, and predictions based on this information. Often, these associations reflect their continual observations of the world (e.g., *Mom drives the car when she is by herself, but when she is with Dad, he always drives*) as well as the many direct and indirect messages they receive about how males and females should look, dress, and act; what they are like; and what they should do (e.g., *I see only boys in the toy commercials that are loud and flashy*). These repeated “associations” are the foundations for gender schema—cognitive representations of what it means to be male or female—and are the source of stereotypes (cognitive schema form in the same way about what it means to be a parent versus child, teacher versus student, etc.).

Once stereotypes are formed, young children can be very rigid in applying them to people and things in their world. In fact, as early as preschool some children begin to act as “gender police”—enforcing gender-based stereotypes about toys, clothing, and roles within the classroom. These messages are limiting for children and can make them feel uncomfortable or ashamed of their own individual interests and preferences. Kids often claim to like or dislike things based on whether they think they are “for” their own gender—regardless of whether or not they actually choose to play them.

*Pink is for girls—you can't wear that.*

*We're playing knights and warriors. If you want to play with us, you can be the princess we have to save.*

*Girls are supposed to wear dresses. Why don't you ever wear dresses?*

*You look like a boy.*

Encouraging children's engagement in a variety of activities and roles—including those traditionally gender-typed for their own as well as the other sex—will support the development of a broad range of interests and skills that can increase successful learning. This doesn't mean that children should avoid things that are “stereotyped” for their own sex if they enjoy those activities. It also doesn't mean that every child *should* like or do everything...but they should feel that they *can* if they want.

### Think about this...

What influenced your engagement in different activities as a child, or now as an adult? What factors impacted your eventual career?

Do you or have you ever crossed typical “gender norms” in your chosen hobbies or social activities? How does that feel? What kind of response have you received from others? Have you ever been reluctant or been discouraged to engage in activities that cross “gender norms?”

### Try this today...

Be mindful of the subtle messages that children receive about gender.

- ▶ Describe gender-typed activities and occupations with similarly positive terms to demonstrate that they are equally valued.
- ▶ Encourage children’s involvement in all types of activities, based on their personal preferences, strengths, or areas where they can learn and grow.
- ▶ Refrain from inviting or assigning children classroom jobs based on gender.
- ▶ Review classroom literature, posters, and other materials for biased gender messaging.

Set clear classroom expectations about stereotyping and teasing, and do not allow these behaviors based on gender or any other social category (or, for any reason).

*It’s not okay to say that Max looks like a girl because he is wearing purple flip flops. Colors are for everyone, and everyone gets to choose for themselves what they want to wear or play.*

## READ AND DISCUSS: *THE RELAY RACE*

*Children listen to the story and discuss fairness and the limitations that result from stereotypes about things and activities.*

### Before Reading

What are some activities that you really enjoy doing now or that you would like to do someday? Have you ever heard someone say that certain activities are only for some kids but not for other kids?

Thinking that activities or things should only be for some groups of people and not for others can happen because of *stereotypes* or assumptions about what people are like. Everyone has different interests and abilities, and it is fair for people to be able to choose for themselves what they like and what they want to do.

In this story, a group of kids face a situation in which people have used stereotypes to plan activities that are only meant for some kids and not for others.

As you listen to the story, think about how it would feel if you were told that you shouldn't or couldn't do some of the fun activities you mentioned earlier.

### During Reading

How did Annie feel about not being able to do the scooter challenge and having to do the braiding challenge instead? (*Disappointed; frustrated; thought it wasn't fair; thought she would rather scooter than braid*)

Which child was actually really good at braiding? (*Max*) Did that surprise you? Why or why not?

How did the kids feel about having separate relay races? (*Disappointed; excluded or left out of some challenges; thought it wasn't fair; wanted to be on a team with their friends*)

What are some of the advantages of being on a relay race team instead of just doing a race by yourself? (*Everyone gets to participate; everyone on the team can contribute in different ways; it is fun to work toward something together*).

Would having separate relay races really allow all the kids to work together as a team? What are some reasons that having separate races would have been problematic? (*Kids didn't get to do what they wanted to do or what they were good at; kids were separated from their friends; they didn't have someone on their team that was really good at some of the challenges; it wasn't fair that some things were only for some kids*)

## After Reading

Have you ever heard someone say that something was only for some kids and not for others? How could you respond to someone who makes this kind of a stereotyped statement? *(Tell them that things can be for everyone, ask them why they think that; tell them about all kinds of kids who like to do those things)*

What are some examples of things that aren't for all kids? *(Things that are dangerous for kids; things that are someone else's personal belongings)*

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**Tip:** Emphasize how thinking “things can be for everyone” also means that those things must be safe and fair for everyone.

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## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: A BOX FOR EVERYONE

*Children identify the limitations and problems associated with stereotypes about objects, activities, and roles and practice challenging stereotypes.*

### Set the Stage

Share a story in which you noticed gender stereotypes or biases and ask the children about their awareness and experiences with these. Conversations might include:

*I was at the toy store and noticed that some of the aisles were pink and some were blue. Have you noticed that? Why do you think it is like that? When you go to the store, do you look in the blue aisle, the pink aisle, or both? Why?*

*I saw a commercial for a new toy \_\_\_\_\_ the other day, and I noticed that there were only girls in the commercial. Have you seen other commercials or ads that only include boys or girls? Why do you think that is?*

*I saw a sign at the Children's Center the other day that said there was going to be a Pirate Party with games and activities and face-painting. Who thinks they would like to go to something like that? The sign said that the event was for boys ages 5–8 years. Why do you think that is?*

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**Tip:** Families sometimes express concerns about their child's interests, activities, or friendships, and occasionally these are related to gender-based expectations. Support families by being respectful of cultural values and focusing on highlighting children's strengths and positive characteristics as you talk with families.

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### Facilitate the Activity

Explain that children might encounter many examples in which toys or activities are targeted at only one group, such as boys or girls, and that this is unfair and limiting.

Sometimes we might come across toys or activities that seem to be only for some people and not for us, like if we see things that are supposed to be “for boys” and other things that are supposed to be “for girls.” But it wouldn’t be fair if some things were only for some people. Things can be for everyone, and we can each make our own choices about how we look and what we like and do.

Set out the “boy” and “girl” boxes and show the class the collection of objects and pictures. Explain that the class is going to sort the objects according to who they think people say they are for. Show the objects one at a time and ask children if it should go in the “boy” box or the “girl” box. If children do not think an object belongs in one of the boxes, set it in a pile in front of you. If the children suggest that the object belongs in one of the boxes, sensitively guide the class regarding the accuracy of this thinking and in considering the idea that there aren’t things that are only for some people, but that “things can be for everyone.” With the class, generate and discuss counterexamples, being sensitive to those who may have counter-stereotypical preferences or interests.

**So you’re saying that a lot of people think that jewelry is just for girls. Let’s think about that idea. Do you think that ONLY girls can wear jewelry? Do you think that boys wear jewelry? Do you know any boys who wear necklaces or bracelets or other kinds of jewelry? Are there any boys here who wear those—has anyone ever told you that you shouldn’t wear that or that it was for girls? How did that make you feel? So it sounds like jewelry isn’t just for girls, but that jewelry can be for anyone. What do you think about that idea?**

As you discuss various examples, it should become clear that NOTHING SHOULD BE PLACED IN THE BOY/GIRL BOXES and that all items will end up in the extra pile. Retrieve the third box and put the items from the pile into this box. Ask children who this box should be for (*Everyone, all kids*) and write this on the label.

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**Tip:** If children make stereotyped comments, turn the discussion back toward the class with a general example before continuing, in order to avoid singling out or shaming any individual children.

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## Wrap It Up

Why is it important for people to know that things can be for everyone? (*They don’t feel excluded or left out; they want to try new things; they don’t feel badly about what they like and do*)

What if someone told you that \_\_\_\_\_ was for boys/girls? What could you say? (*Things can be for everyone; you get to choose what to play with and do; you could tell the person an example of a boy/girl who has or likes that object or activity*)

## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

**Break the Biases:** After a whole group discussion about biases, have the children:

- ▶ Create and describe a new book or television character that is non-stereotypical and has a mix of characteristics and interests
- ▶ Modify and describe an existing book or television character to be nonstereotypical, with a mix of characteristics and interests
- ▶ Create a new advertisement for a toy or activity that is typically portrayed in a stereotyped manner

**Challenging Stereotypes:** Model and then have the children practice responses that challenge stereotyped statements, using examples such as the following:

What if you heard someone say...

The monkey bars are only for third graders to play on.

*That's not true—things on the playground can be for everyone, so everyone can play on the monkey bars.*

We're going to use beads and string today, so the girls can make bracelets and the boys can make key chains.

*Everyone can choose what they like because things can be for everyone.*

Why are you wearing that hat? That's for girls!

*There aren't boys' hats or girls' hats—everything is for everyone.*

Teachers can't wear neon glasses!

*Neon glasses can be for everyone who wants to wear them.*

**Exploring Careers:** Throughout the year, invite men and women with a variety of occupations to visit the class and talk about their work. Ideally, invite a male and female with the same occupation to visit at the same time. Ask visitors to share some of the reasons that they chose these careers and why they feel well suited and/or satisfied with their choices. Use these opportunities as a springboard for new classroom activities or themes that can involve all children.

**Someday I'd Like to:** Have a class discussion about various activities or occupations, emphasizing that things can be for everyone. Have children illustrate and write about something that they would like to learn or do someday. Gather the class back together to share their work. As they share, ask if any classmates have similar interests.





## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *The Celebration of Authors*

Explore and Practice: Worm Thoughts, Caterpillar Thoughts

## GOALS

This set of activities is designed to:

- ▶ Foster incremental thinking—belief in the potential for flexibility and change in preferences, characteristics, abilities, and behaviors across time
- ▶ Promote motivation and persistence

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Children will be able to:

- ▶ Identify statements that reflect entity (fixed trait) thinking versus incremental (change) thinking

## KEY CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

People can change.

It is important to work hard and keep trying to learn new things.

*Incremental (Change) Thinking Vocabulary to Use:*

Grow  
Learn  
Change  
Sometimes

*Entity (Fixed) Thinking Vocabulary to Avoid:*

Always  
Never

## MATERIALS

- ▶ *Celebration of Authors* storybook
- ▶ *Worm Thought* and *Caterpillar Thought* figures
- ▶ *Worm Thoughts, Caterpillar Thoughts* activity sheet

## RESEARCH AND RELEVANCE

People who have an “entity theory” belief that personal characteristics (e.g., interests, abilities) are fixed and cannot be changed and in turn expect that individuals will feel, think, and behave very consistently across time and situations. In addition, people with an entity view have stronger stereotypes than those with more flexible thinking and often view members within a social group (such as gender or race) as extremely similar to one another and very different from members of other groups. In contrast, people who hold an “incremental theory” view personal characteristics as changeable through growth, effort, or learning. They believe that people are influenced by situational or psychological factors and tend to perceive more variability across members of a group than do entity thinkers. Thus, fostering incremental thinking in children can help them develop more flexible and less rigid social views and to be open to the possibility of change in themselves and others.

In addition, when these two types of thinking guide beliefs about ability, they can affect school achievement. For example, those who have an incremental view of intelligence and ability believe that these can be changed with effort, and may be more likely to see value in working toward improvement or trying other strategies. On the other hand, those with an entity theory tend to have diminished motivation in the face of challenge (because they believe there is nothing they can do to alter the outcome) and are at risk for helplessness and underachievement.

### Think about this...

Has there ever been a time when your feelings or opinions about a matter of importance to you changed over time? Do you think that you would have been able to predict this change earlier?

What are your thoughts on the nature of such traits as emotionality, activity level, sociability, self-regulation, social competence, academic abilities, and creative abilities—do you think they are generally “hard-wired” and fixed or that they are more learned/socialized and malleable? How do your views on these characteristics impact your beliefs, expectations, and interactions with the children in your classroom?

### Try this today...

Promote incremental thinking, or belief in the potential for growth and change, by focusing on process rather than product—call attention to children’s *efforts* rather than the *outcome* of those efforts, and help them reflect on and take ownership of their own learning and growth.

#### When children succeed:

Instead of saying: *You’re really good at tying your shoes!*

Say: *You have been practicing tying your shoes over and over, and now you’ve finally done it by yourself!*

#### When children struggle:

Instead of saying: *It’s okay, not everyone is good at drawing animals.*

Say: *Animals can be tough to draw. You’re working so hard at it that I’m sure you’re going to keep getting better and better!*

## READ AND DISCUSS: *THE CELEBRATION OF AUTHORS*

*Children listen to the story and discuss the reasons why people can grow and change in what they like, feel, and do, including the importance of persistence and effort toward learning something new.*

### Before Reading

Has anyone ever surprised you by doing something unexpectedly or doing something differently from what they usually do?

Sometimes it can be easy to think that people act or feel or think in certain ways all the time because that is just the way they are, but it is important to remember that everyone can change in many ways.

In this story, a child thinks that he is not very good at something and that he will never be able to do it well. With the help of a friend, he discovers that it is possible for people to learn new things and grow and change.

As you listen to the story, pay attention to when the characters change by learning something new or doing something differently than usual.

### During Reading

Why do you think Jordan expected that he would write the worst story ever before he even gave it a try? *(He had a hard time writing before; he thought he wasn't good at writing; he didn't think he could write any better)*

What advice or help did Annie offer Jordan about the writing project? *(Keep trying; try it a different way; she offered to help him by listening to his ideas)*

Why did Jordan expect Annie to be nervous about talking in front of the group at the Celebration of Authors? *(She usually gets nervous doing this)* Did she get nervous this time? Why not?

Why were Jordan and Annie surprised when the kid in the red hat said *hi* and smiled at him? *(They thought he wasn't very nice; he hadn't been nice to them in the cafeteria; he was often grumpy)* Does it seem like he was *always* a not-very-nice or grumpy kid; or just sometimes?

### After Reading

When Jordan decided to give the writing project a try; was it easy right away? What did Jordan have to do? *(He had to try a few different ideas; write a few poems; keep practicing)*

What do you think might have happened if Jordan had continued to think that he was just not a good writer and that this would never change? *(He might not have tried to write a poem; he would have felt badly)*

Are people *always* “just the way they are” or can they sometimes change how they feel or what they do? Instead of thinking that people are always the same; what can you do to find out what they are really like? *(Spend time together; talk to them; ask them questions)*

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## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: WORM THOUGHTS, CATERPILLAR THOUGHTS

*Children discuss how “worm” thoughts (reflecting entity or fixed-trait thinking), and “caterpillar” thoughts (reflecting incremental or change thinking) can impact feelings and behaviors, and practice identifying examples of each.*

### Set the Stage

Brainstorm ways in which children have changed over time.

Thinking back to when you were a baby, have you changed or have you stayed the same? In what ways? *(Learned how to talk and walk, started school)*

How have you changed since last year in school? *(Started playing soccer, made new friends)*

How have you changed since yesterday? *(Learned a new math concept, tried something new for dinner)*

Explain that people can change in many ways.

Every person has the ability to change in many ways—in their abilities, interests, feelings, or behaviors. Sometimes you might change how you feel or what you do because you are in a different situation. Other times you might change because of things that you do to learn or to grow, like trying something new or practicing something.

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**Tip:** Provide some examples of situational change (e.g., *Annie not feeling nervous speaking in front of a small group; feeling nervous on a roller coaster by yourself, but feeling excited riding it with a friend*).

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### Facilitate the Activity

Show the *Worm Thought* and *Caterpillar Thought* pictures.

Which of these creatures stays the same and will never be anything different? (*The worm*)

Which one is able to change into something else? (*A caterpillar turns into a butterfly*)

Write the following two statements on the board:

I will always be bad at spelling.

She never wants to talk to anyone.

Ask the children whether the statements are about people staying the same or being able to change, and circle the words that provide the clues (i.e., *always, never*).

Hang the *Worm Thought* above the sentences.

These are “worm” thoughts because they don’t leave any possibility that a person can change. Let’s think about how these kinds of thoughts could change how we feel and behave.

How would you feel if you thought that the first statement was true? (*Badly; disappointed; frustrated*) What might you do if you felt that way about spelling? (*Wouldn’t want to try at spelling anymore; might start to think I am bad at other things*)

How would you feel or what would you think about this person if you thought that the second statement was true? (*Wouldn’t want to talk to her; might think she was unfriendly*) What might you do if you felt that way? (*Might not try to talk to her or ask her to play; might ignore her*)

Hang the caterpillar sign in an open space on the board; next to the “worm” thoughts.

“Caterpillar” thoughts are those that are open to the possibility that people can change; just like caterpillars change into butterflies. We are going to work together to change these “worm” thoughts into “caterpillar” thoughts that show how a person can change.

Brainstorm with the class and write “caterpillar” thoughts on the board for the first example (*I can spell more words than I did last year. I can study an extra night and do better on the next spelling test*) and the second example (*Maybe she feels shy. She might want to talk to someone today*). Discuss how the new thoughts would change how they felt and behaved in that situation.

Have the children sit with buddies and pass out the *Worm Thoughts, Caterpillar Thoughts* activity sheet to each pair. Have children work together to read each statement and circle whether it is a worm or a caterpillar thought.

As a group, review the answers to the activity sheet. For the worm thoughts, have children identify and cross out the overgeneralizing word (i.e., *always, never*). Together, brainstorm caterpillar thoughts to replace the worm thoughts (e.g., *Instead of thinking that worm thought, what could you say to yourself instead in order to think like a caterpillar?*) and discuss how thinking that way might change how they felt and what they might do next.

## Wrap It Up

What would it be like if everyone was the same all the time and never changed? (*Boring; never get to be surprised; wouldn't be able to learn or try anything new; wouldn't be able to make new friends*)

Why do you think it is important to remember that people can change? What would happen if you thought that you could never change or learn anything new? (*Wouldn't try anything new; wouldn't try to learn things*)

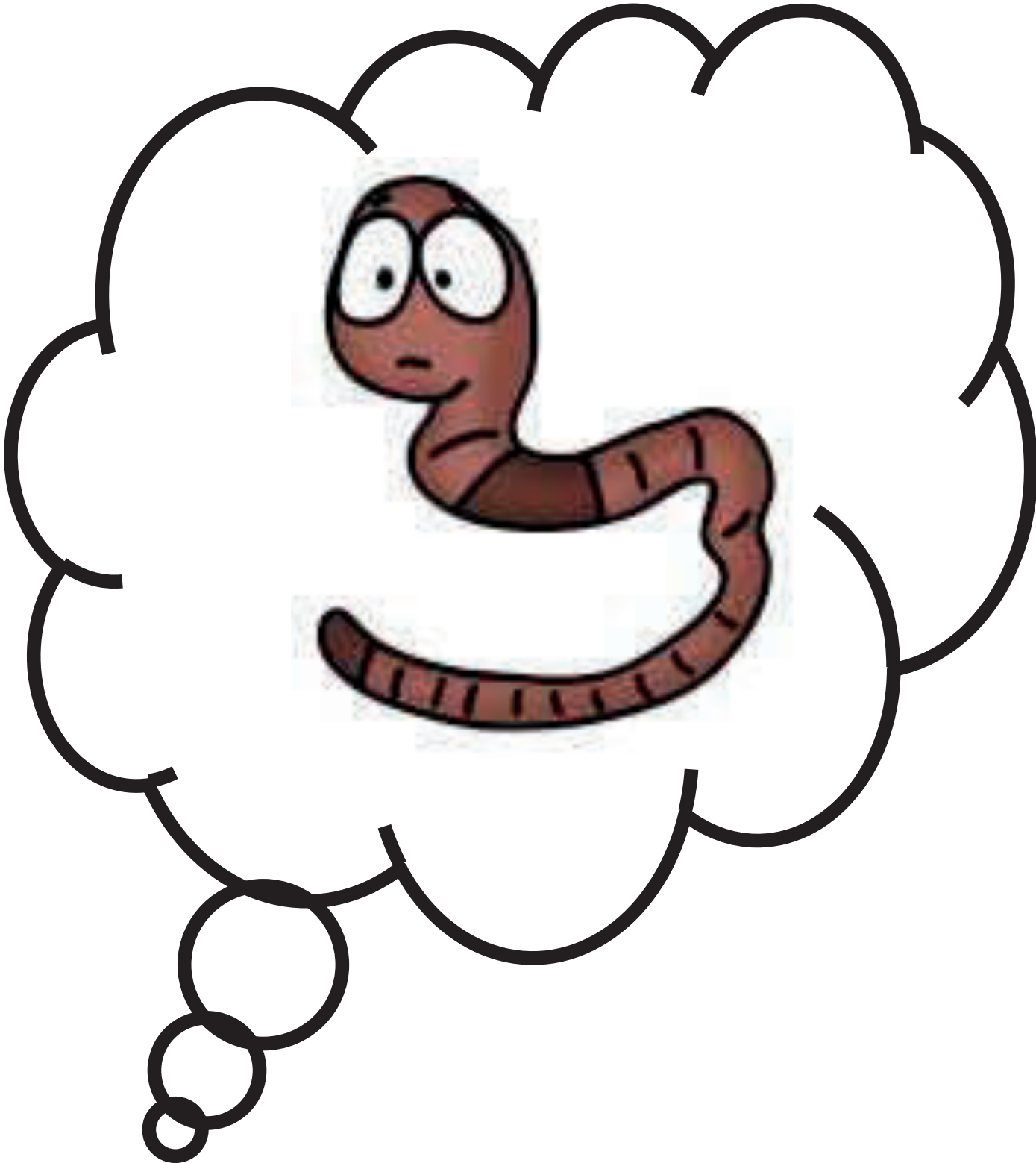
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## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

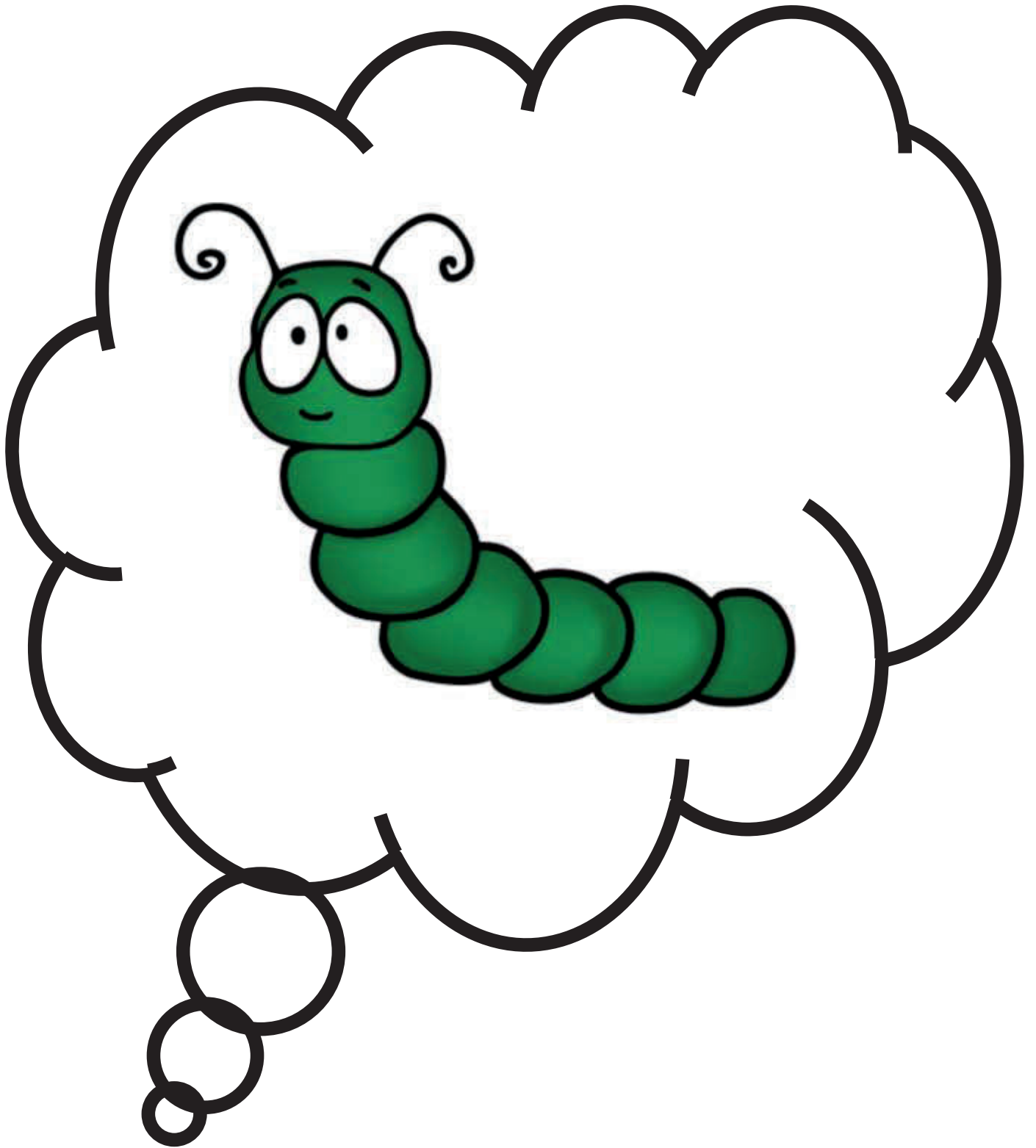
**How I Change:** Have children draw and write about one of the following (perhaps on butterfly cutouts), and then share about their reflections with the class.

- ▶ One way that they have changed during this school year (e.g., *became a big brother, learned to skate, cut their hair short*). Provide a prompt such as *I used to \_\_\_\_\_ but now I \_\_\_\_\_*.
- ▶ One way that they want to change during the rest of the school year. Provide a prompt such as, *Right now I \_\_\_\_\_ but soon I will \_\_\_\_\_*.

**Process and Progress Journal:** Have children keep a journal in which they can record their efforts at learning (e.g., what is challenging, successful strategies, what they have mastered, examples of how their work has changed over time, etc.).



2.7 Worm Thoughts, Caterpillar Thoughts figures (Grade 1)





## Caterpillar Thought or Worm Thought?

1. He looks mad. He is always so grumpy!



2. Sometimes he is quiet but sometimes he likes to talk.



3. I am never going to learn how to skate!



4. Maybe she is just having a bad day today and will want to play tomorrow.



5. If I really practice, I can get better at math.



6. She is never nice to other kids.







# Communication



Unit 3



## OVERVIEW

Unit 3 focuses on promoting comfort, self-confidence, and respect when children communicate with others and helping them develop and practice positive and successful communication skills.

## GOALS

This unit is designed to help children:

- ▶ Develop skills for careful and thoughtful listening
- ▶ Develop respectful and reciprocal patterns of communication
- ▶ Learn conversational skills
- ▶ Gain positive and effective strategies for asserting their ideas, preferences, and needs

## ACTIVITIES

### 3.1 Listening and Responding to Others

*Children discuss effective and ineffective communication behaviors and practice listening, responding, and taking turns while talking with a peer.*

### 3.2 Engaging in Conversation

*Children discuss behaviors that are “conversation makers” or “conversation breakers” and participate in a whole-group conversation game.*

### 3.3 Being Assertive

*Children discuss situations in which it is important to speak up, and practice assertive speaking by “speaking up and speaking kindly.”*



## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *The Mixed-Up Day*

Explore and Practice: Back and Forth Buddies

## GOALS

This set of activities is designed to:

- ▶ Promote attentive listening skills
- ▶ Promote reciprocal communication skills
- ▶ Foster self-regulation

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Children will be able to:

- ▶ Name examples of effective and ineffective communication
- ▶ Demonstrate attentive listening, appropriate responding, and turn-taking with a partner

## KEY CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

Listening to others is important because:

- ▶ It shows that we care about what they are saying
- ▶ It is respectful
- ▶ We can learn things

Responding to others is important because:

- ▶ It lets them know that we listened to them
- ▶ It is respectful

It is important to *listen* carefully, *think* about what the person has said, and then *respond*.

It is fair to take turns speaking and listening.

## MATERIALS

- ▶ *The Mixed-Up Day* storybook
- ▶ “Talking sticks” (or other small objects to pass; one per buddy pair)

## RESEARCH AND RELEVANCE

The ability to listen to others in a thoughtful and careful manner is critical for children’s social and academic learning, allowing them to gain information and develop vocabulary, comprehension, and oral language skills. Although young children make increasing strides in their abilities to self-regulate—including paying attention and controlling their bodies—there are a number of factors that can make it challenging for them to listen carefully. Environmental challenges may include external distractions such as noise and movement, which cannot always be controlled, and internal challenges may include comprehension difficulties, a lack of motivation or interest, or competing interests. It is important to provide children with many opportunities to practice focused, attentive listening and to help them monitor their own listening behavior and comprehension.

Responding to others can be an often-overlooked communication skill. In addition to listening attentively, it is important for children to learn that it is appropriate and respectful to acknowledge that someone has spoken to you by responding verbally or behaviorally. Engaging in reciprocal “back and forth” communication is critical for being able to maintain conversations with others.

### Think about this...

Have you ever found yourself not listening to a child, or colleague? In what situations do you notice this happening?

Have you ever found yourself listening carefully to a child or colleague, but not explicitly acknowledging (verbally or nonverbally) that you have heard them? In what situations do you notice this happening?

How do you model appropriate listening and responding with the children in your classroom?

### Try this today...

Be explicit in describing how you are modeling and engaging in attentive listening with children.

*We can talk about your question as soon as I finish writing the agenda on the board so that I can give you my full attention.*



## READ AND DISCUSS: *THE MIXED-UP DAY*

*Children listen to the story, discuss the importance of listening carefully and responding to others, and identify and explain examples of effective and ineffective communication.*

### Before Reading

Has there ever been a time when someone was talking to you, but you didn't understand what they said? Has there ever been a time when someone misunderstood what you were trying to say?

Good communication includes speaking clearly, listening carefully, and responding or asking questions about what was said. These help you communicate with others and avoid misunderstandings.

In this story, a group of children are making a lot of communication mistakes with one another, and their plans for the afternoon become very mixed up!

As you listen to the story, pay attention for times when the characters could communicate better.

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**Tip:** Occasionally during the discussion, call “instant replay” as you stop and ask children to repeat what was just said.

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### During Reading

Why didn't Mia get a chance to tell Jordan that she was nervous? (*He was talking all the way to school; she didn't speak up*) How would you feel if you wanted to share your feelings or ideas with someone; but you didn't get a chance or they weren't really listening to you? (*Frustrated; sad; disappointed*)

Why didn't Jordan know how Mia was feeling when they got to school? (*He wasn't looking at her; he didn't see the clues*) Why is it important to look at someone who is speaking? (*So I can see their facial expression; to see where they might be looking or pointing; to show them that I am listening*)

Did Kim understand what Jordan wanted her to bring to the tree house after school? What could she have said to find out? (*I didn't hear you. What did you mean? Can you please repeat that? Can I ask you a question about that? What did you say?*)

When Jordan tried to tell Gabriel about the plans after school; what did Gabriel do? (*Interrupted; didn't listen*) Why do you think he did that? (*He might have been excited to say something back; was in a hurry; thought he already knew what Jordan was going to say*)

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**Tip:** Be sensitive to cultural differences in beliefs about appropriate eye contact when speaking to someone.

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How could you tell that Gabriel didn't really hear Mia ask him about coming to the tree house after school? (*He didn't respond to her question*) Why is it important to respond when someone speaks to you? (*To let them know I heard them; to show that I thought about what they said*).

### After Reading

Why is it important to listen carefully to others? (*It shows that I care about what they are saying; I will know what is happening or what to do next; I will know how someone thinks or feels; I will learn about them*)

Have you ever had a hard time listening to or understanding someone? What can make it hard to pay attention and listen? (*It's noisy; there are other things going on to listen to or watch; I am doing other things at the same time; I want to do something else; I want to talk*)

**Tip:** Remind the children that some kids and adults use their eyes, ears, mouths, and bodies in different ways to listen and communicate (e.g., some people communicate with gestures).

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## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: BUDDY INTERVIEWS

*Children practice speaking and listening attentively, responding appropriately, and turn-taking while talking with a buddy.*

### Set the Stage

Discuss what it means to *communicate*.

To *communicate* means to exchange ideas, feelings, or information with someone else. Communication includes speaking, listening, responding, or asking questions. Good communication skills are important in order to share ideas with one another and avoid misunderstandings.

Brainstorm effective and ineffective ways to communicate, writing ideas in a T-chart on the board, such as the one below.

Communication Do's	Communication Don'ts
Look at the person	Look away
Listen carefully	Interrupt
Stay quiet and still	Move or wiggle
Respond to the person	Ignore

### Facilitate the Activity

Discuss how successful communication involves listening, thinking about what the speaker has said, and responding appropriately, and why these are important.

*Listening* to others shows that you care about what they are saying and helps you learn and understand things. When you are listening carefully to someone, you pay attention with your eyes, ears, and entire body and think about what they are saying. Then you can *respond* to or answer them. Responding lets the speaker know you heard them and that you have thought about what they said.

Ask children what it would be like if they were talking to a friend and one did all the listening and the other person did all the talking (*boring; wouldn't get a chance to say anything; not fair*). Emphasize the importance of taking turns listening and speaking.

When you are talking with someone; it is important to go back and forth and to take turns speaking and listening. That is fair because everyone has a chance to say things and to listen to what others have to say.

Explain that the children will be talking back and forth with their buddies. With a volunteer; model passing a "talking stick" back and forth as you take turns talking about a topic (e.g.; *What you are going to do after school?*); and ask them to pay attention and let you know if you forget to take turns. "Forget" a couple of times by continuing to hold the ball and (1) talking for a long time; or (2) not responding at all. Point out how the volunteer is being a good listener when you are speaking.

Have the children sit and face their buddies and give each pair a talking stick. Have them demonstrate how they will look when they are being good listeners to each other. Explain that the child holding the stick should speak and then pass it to their buddy. When their buddy receives the stick, it is their turn to speak and then pass it back. Remind them that if they are holding the stick for a long time that this means they are forgetting to take turns. Provide a topic (e.g.; favorite movie); monitor buddy exchanges; and end the conversation after a short time. Repeat with another topic as time allows.

Gather the children and invite them to share what they learned about their buddy.

### Wrap It Up

How did you make sure that you and your buddy both had a chance to talk and to listen?  
(*Took turns; listened to each other*)

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**Extension:** Have the children draw or write what they learned about their buddy, and then share it with the class.

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Was it hard for you to wait for your turn to talk? What did you do while you waited?  
*(Listened; thought about what my buddy was saying; looked at my buddy)*

How does it help our class when everyone uses good communication behaviors with one another?  
*(It shows respect; we can hear and know what to do; it helps us to learn)*

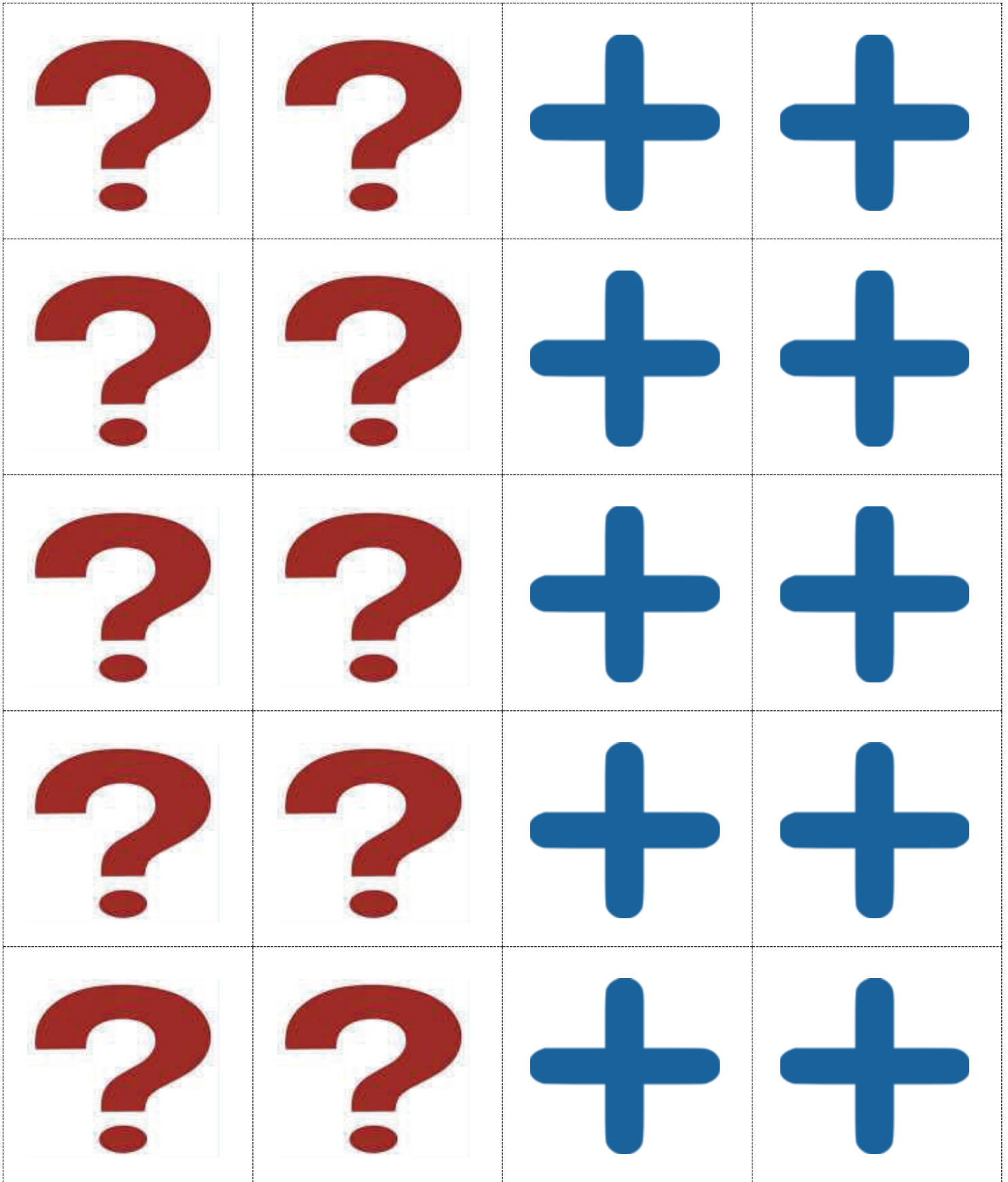
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## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

**Back and Forth Chants:** Split the class into two groups facing one another and lead children in a familiar chant, having half the class begin the chant and then the other half 1) repeat the words, or 2) say the next part of the chant.

**Communication Checklist:** Create a checklist of good communication behaviors (e.g., *Did I look at the person talking?*) and have the children rate themselves (*yes, no, sometimes*) on each behavior after a partner activity or group work. As a class, discuss which communication behaviors can be challenging, and how to work on improving in these areas.

**Listening Challenge:** Before reading a story, give children one to three pieces of information to pay attention to during the story (it may help to have a related prop or a visual). After the story, discuss what the children heard.





## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *The Dog from Outer Space*

Explore and Practice: Conversation Can

## GOALS

This set of activities is designed to:

- ▶ Promote conversational skills

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Children will be able to:

- ▶ Identify behaviors that can maintain or disrupt conversations
- ▶ Identify on-topic and off-topic responses that are appropriate in maintaining a conversation
- ▶ Demonstrate listening and making relevant comments and questions during a conversation game

## KEY CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

Good conversation skills include:

- ▶ Speaking clearly
- ▶ Listening thoughtfully
- ▶ Making on-topic comments
- ▶ Asking on-topic questions
- ▶ Taking turns speaking and listening

Be a *conversation maker*, not a *conversation breaker*!

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### MATERIALS

- ▶ *The Dog from Outer Space* storybook
  - ▶ Whiteboard
  - ▶ *Conversation Mind Map* example
  - ▶ *Question/Comment* cards
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## RESEARCH AND RELEVANCE

The ability to participate in conversations with others helps children build relationships, exposes them to new and diverse ideas, and promotes oral language skills. Engaging in conversation requires a number of complex skills, including careful listening, attending to nonverbal cues, speaking, turn-taking, and perspective-taking (often with multiple others). Children need ongoing practice in all these skills to be able to listen thoughtfully, contribute appropriately, and make sense of their exchanges with others.

### Think about this...

Have you ever found yourself having a hard time really listening to someone, because you were thinking about the next thing you wanted to say? What strategies do you use to help yourself focus on your partner's words when you are eager for your turn to speak?

What communication "blunders" do you frequently observe in your classroom, or among your colleagues? What would remedy these?

### Try this today...

Be explicit in reinforcing children when they use effective conversational skills such as making thoughtful comments or questions and talking turns.

*I noticed that when Sam told you about her soccer game last night, you asked her some questions about it. I'll bet that made her feel good that you answered her right back and were interested in what she was telling you.*



## READ AND DISCUSS: *THE DOG FROM OUTER SPACE*

*Children listen to the story and discuss effective and ineffective ways of maintaining a conversation with someone.*

### Before Reading

What does it mean to have a *conversation* with someone?

A *conversation* is when people talk and listen to one another to exchange their ideas, thoughts, or feelings. Everyone participates in the conversation together by listening thoughtfully and making comments or asking questions about the topic.

In this story, a group of kids has a conversation about something funny that happened to one of them. During the conversation, sometimes the kids do things that help make the conversation continue, and sometimes they do things that break the conversation.

As you listen to the story, pay attention for examples of “conversation makers” and “conversation breakers.”

### During Reading

When Jeremy asked Kenny if he was worried about Sammy; was this a *conversation maker* or a *conversation breaker*? Why is it helpful to ask how people feel about things? (*Everyone has different feelings; it helps me understand the person's feelings and have empathy for them; it lets them know that I care about what they are saying*)

When Kayla said that she remembered how loud Sammy barked; was this a *conversation maker* or a *conversation breaker*? Why is it helpful to share similar experiences or memories that you might have had? (*It helps me feel connected to one another; I can understand how each other feels; I can remember things that I have done or experienced together*)

When Jeremy asked if the kids had ever tried Fruity Krunchies; was this a *conversation maker* or a *conversation breaker*? If you were having a conversation and someone said something “off topic;” how would you feel? (*Frustrated; ignored; might think they weren't listening or didn't care about what I was saying*)

When Kayla was looking out the window and thinking about what she wanted to say next; was this a *conversation maker* or a *conversation breaker*? What could happen if you start thinking about other things while someone is talking? (*I won't know what they said; I won't know how to respond; they might think I don't care about what they're saying*)

### After Reading

Why is it important for everyone to have opportunities to speak and listen in a conversation? (*Everyone can contribute their ideas and feelings, everyone feels included; I can learn things from everyone*)

What is something that you think you could have a conversation about for a really long time?

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**Tip:** Emphasize commonalities by asking classmates if they would like to join in a conversation about that topic.

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## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: "CONVERSATION CAN"

*Children practice making appropriate comments and questions and use listening and speaking skills during a group conversation game.*

### Set the Stage

Review the idea of *conversation makers* and *conversation breakers*.

*Conversation makers* are behaviors that help conversations between people to continue, like listening carefully and taking turns speaking. *Conversation breakers* are behaviors that can end conversations or make them difficult to continue, like interrupting, not paying attention, or saying things that are off-topic, or unrelated to the conversation.

Discuss how you can keep a conversation going by listening and making comments or asking questions about the topic. Write a specific conversation starter on the board (e.g., *I got a new puppy*). Brainstorm appropriate responses with children (e.g., *Pretend that someone said this to you. How could you respond to keep the conversation going?*) and make a mind map or chart (refer to the *Conversation Mind Map* example). Be explicit in labeling the type of response (e.g., *ask for more information*). When children offer (or you provide) off-topic suggestions, write them in a separate list labeled "conversation breakers" and discuss why the comment would not help maintain the conversation.

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**Tip:** Acknowledge that it is okay for conversations to gradually go in a different direction sometimes, but that abruptly changing the topic to yourself or to something else is not appropriate.

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### Facilitate the Activity

Sit in a circle so that the children can see one another. Explain that the class will be playing Conversation Can together to see how long they can continue a conversation (set a specific time to end). Pass out *Question and Comment* cards (one of each to each child) and explain the game:

- ▶ After the conversation has started, the children should raise the appropriate card to indicate that they have a comment or question to add
- ▶ When they make a comment or question, they should place the appropriate card down in front of them
- ▶ The children may only use each card one time at the most (children do not need to use a card to answer a question directed to them)
- ▶ Everyone is encouraged to contribute if they want to say something
- ▶ Everyone should listen thoughtfully to one another

Choose a conversation topic and invite the children to begin talking. Facilitate the conversation, designating who will speak next, when necessary. Provide reinforcement and support throughout the conversation, and redirect children as appropriate if off-topic comments are made. End at the specified time or when there are no more comments or questions (if desired, choose a new topic and challenge the class to have an even longer conversation).

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**Tip:** To encourage a group conversation rather than simply teacher-directed comments, remind speakers to look around at the group or to the person that has asked them a question.

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## Wrap It Up

What things were easy or challenging about continuing a conversation? (*Easy: It was fun and interesting; there were a lot of things to talk about. Hard: Waiting for a turn; remembering to look at everyone*)

What could you do if you notice that someone isn't really included in a conversation? (*Ask them what they think or feel; make sure that people are taking turns and giving everyone a chance to speak*)

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## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

**Small Group Conversation Can:** Break children into groups of three to four and give each child a Question and a Comment card. Assign or allow groups choose a topic and have them play Conversation Can together, explaining that they should hold up the appropriate card when they have something to say and that they may use their cards repeatedly during the conversation. Remind them that they will need to figure out how to take turns speaking and listening, ensuring that everyone is participating, and maintaining the conversation within their own group. Monitor groups and provide reinforcement and support as needed. After a designated time has passed, end the game and gather the group together to discuss the experience.

- What things were easy or challenging about continuing a conversation?*
- Did anyone ever want to talk at the same time? What did your group do?*
- Were there times when no one had anything to say? What did your group do?*
- How did you make sure that everyone was included in the conversation?*
- Did you talk about the same topic the entire time, or more topics?*

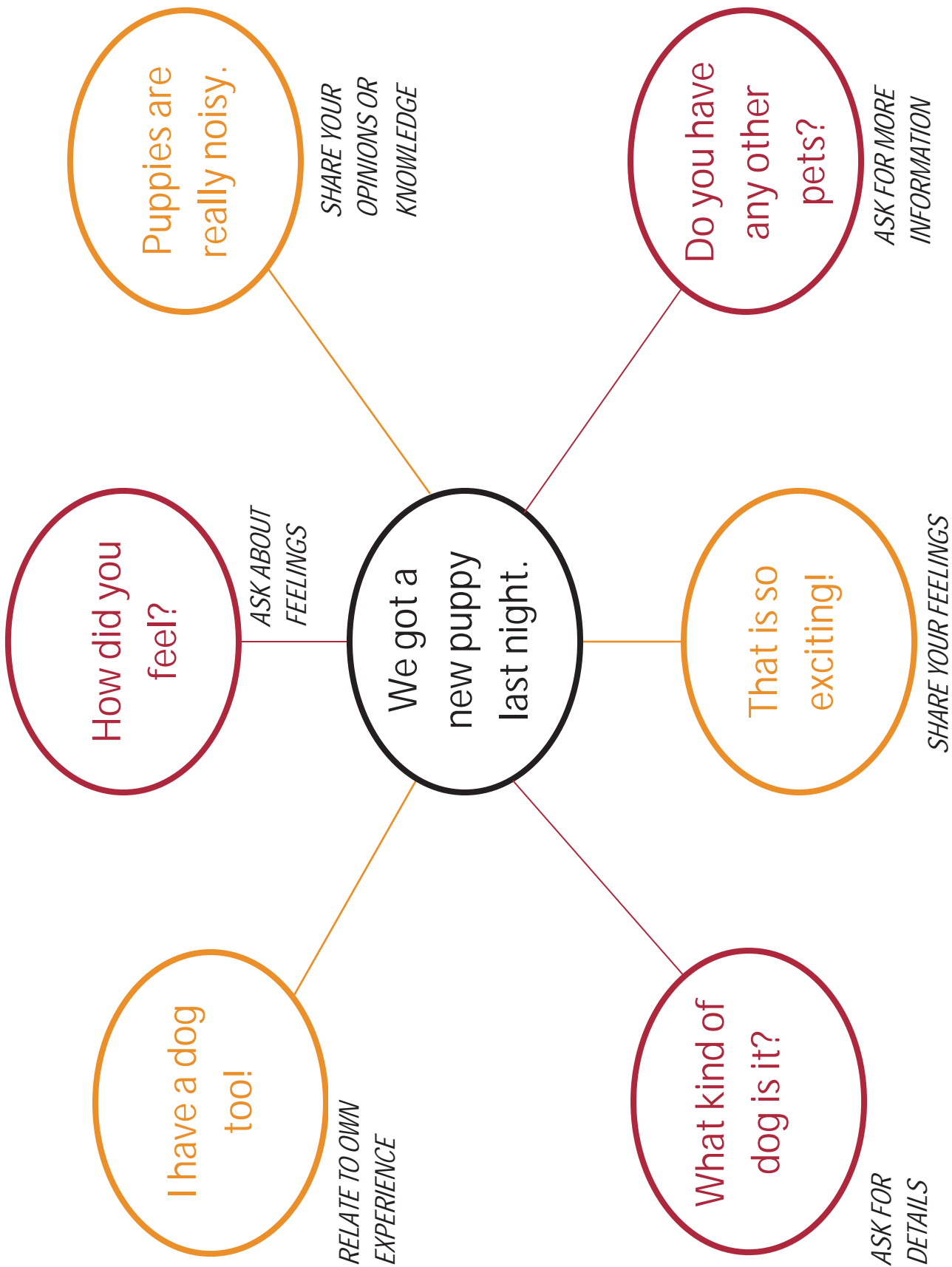
**Conversation Maker/Breaker Poster:** Brainstorm “conversation makers and breakers” and create a chart such as the one below. Have the children work with a buddy to create a poster or flyer titled “Be a Conversation Maker, Not a Conversation Breaker!” that describes how to be an effective communicator and why it is important.

### Conversation Makers

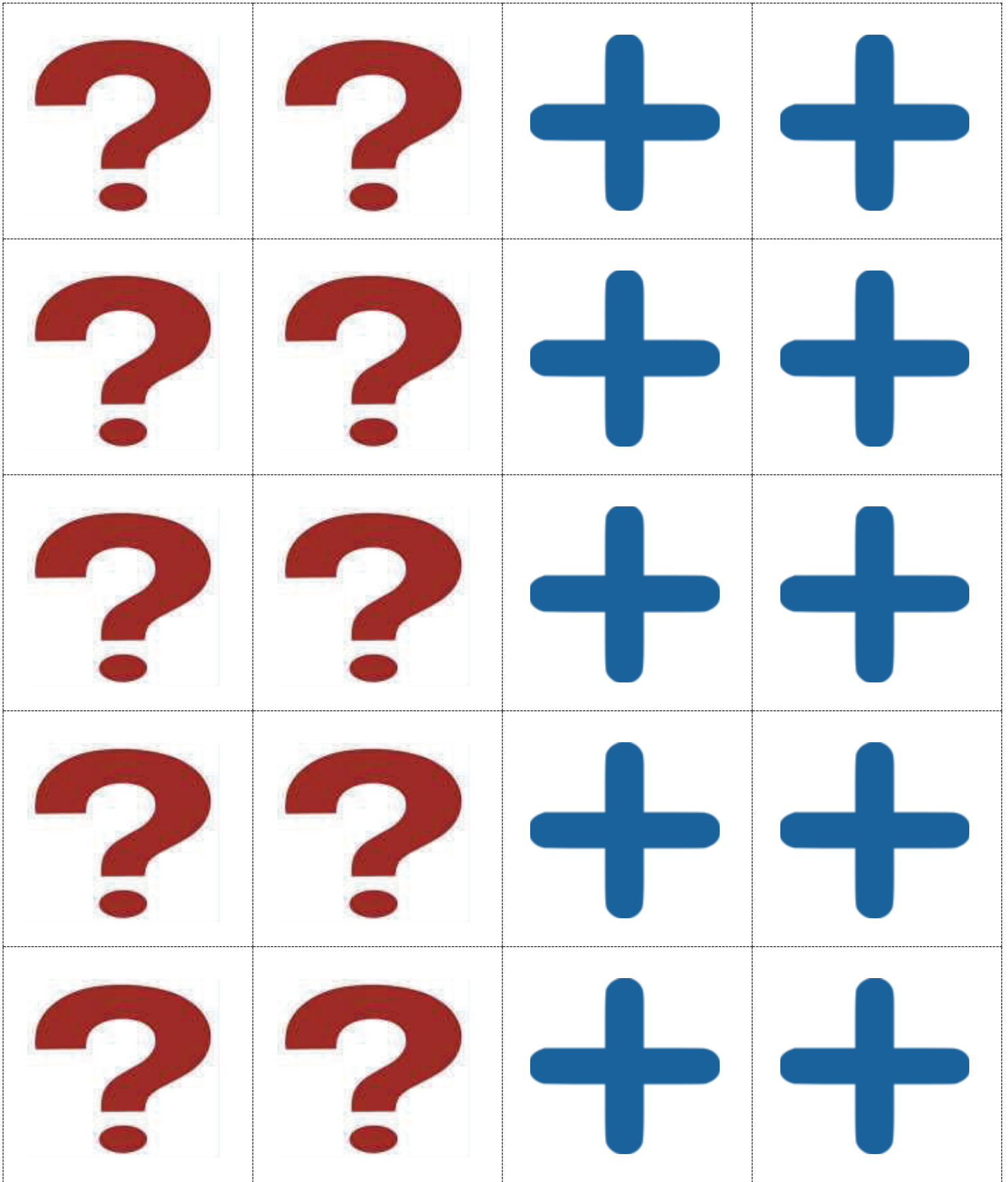
- Taking turns speaking and listening
- Asking questions related to the topic
- Making comments related to the topic
- Answering questions that are asked
- Listening thoughtfully to the speaker
- Showing interest in what the speaker is saying
- Speaking clearly
- Coming and staying close to one another

### Conversation Breakers

- Interrupting
- Not giving others a chance to speak
- Asking unrelated, off-topic questions
- Making unrelated, off-topic comments
- Not speaking or responding
- Looking bored, uninterested
- Thinking about what you want to say instead of listening
- Speaking too quietly or quickly, mumbling
- Wandering away











## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *The Sailboat*

Explore and Practice: Speak Up, Speak Kindly

## GOALS

This set of activities is designed to:

- ▶ Foster self-confidence in communicating needs, desires, and ideas
- ▶ Promote assertiveness skills

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Children will be able to:

- ▶ Identify situations in which it is appropriate or inappropriate to speak up
- ▶ Demonstrate respectful, assertive speaking

## KEY CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

You can speak up with others because your ideas and feelings are important to share.

When you *speak up and speak kindly*:

- ▶ Stand tall
- ▶ Look at the person
- ▶ Use a strong, respectful voice
- ▶ Use kind words

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## MATERIALS

- ▶ *The Sailboat* storybook
  - ▶ Paper and writing materials
  - ▶ *Speak Up, Speak Kindly* cards (copy and cut into one card per buddy pair)
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## RESEARCH AND RELEVANCE

For social interactions to be successful, children must not only practice good listening but also communicate to others effectively. Sometimes it can be challenging or uncomfortable for children to speak up appropriately, and this can prevent them from having their ideas, desires, and needs heard, acknowledged, and addressed. Some children may be quiet, timid, or passive and need support developing self-confidence to assertively express themselves. Other children may be loud, boisterous, or aggressive and need support speaking respectfully so that others will listen. There can also be a mismatch in communication styles among children. Some children may be more direct in their expressions (e.g., *I need that red crayon you have, or, Please hand me that red crayon*), whereas other children may have a more indirect manner (e.g., *Can I please use that red crayon?* or *I don't have a red crayon to use*). Children could find that their communication attempts are successful with some peers but less effective with those who have different expressive styles.

Children need to feel that their words and ideas are important. Self-confidence in speaking up is enhanced when children feel they are in a safe, respectful environment and when they see others around them acknowledge and value what they say. The ability to communicate effectively also fosters a sense of self-agency—the feeling that they can and do have some influence and control within their social environment and interactions—and that will motivate them to engage in these interactions with others again.

### Think about this...

Do you find any particular communication behaviors more challenging for yourself—listening thoughtfully, waiting to share your own ideas, speaking up with your ideas? What contexts make these behaviors more difficult?

### Try this today...

Reinforce the children speaking assertively and provide support for those who are passive or reluctant to speak up in a group.

*You all have some good ideas about how to solve this problem. Let's make sure you hear from everyone—what do you think, Liam?*

*You look like you might have an idea, Christina. Would you like to share what you're thinking?*

*I heard Sergio remind everyone to wait quietly in line, and then I noticed that you all stopped chatting. It was good that he spoke up in such a clear, strong voice so that everyone could hear and be reminded.*

## READ AND DISCUSS: *THE SAILBOAT*

*Children listen to the story, discuss why it is important to speak up, and when speaking up is appropriate.*

### Before Reading

Have you ever wanted to share your ideas about something, but felt like it was difficult to speak up?

Sometimes it can be difficult to tell your thoughts or feelings to others, or you might not be sure if it is okay to speak up. Everyone has important things to say and share. As long as you are speaking kindly, it's okay to speak up.

In this story, a child feels uncomfortable sharing her ideas with her friends, but when she finally does; her ideas are really helpful to them.

As you listen to the story, pay attention for times when it would be helpful if a character spoke up.

### During Reading

Do you think it's okay to speak up and ask for something; even if the answer might be no? When is it okay or not okay? *(Okay if the request is kind, acceptable, and fair; no if the request is unkind, unrealistic, or unfair [e.g., Can I have your lunch?])*

Why didn't Kim want to share her idea about making the boxes into a sailboat? *(She was worried her friends wouldn't like it or would say it was a bad idea)*

What could happen if you only spoke up when you were sure that you were right or that you had a good idea? *(I would miss opportunities to share ideas and problem-solve; trying ideas that don't work can help me learn)*

Why didn't Kim speak up when Annie called the stick a "rudder" even though she knew it was a mast? *(She didn't want to tell her she was wrong or hurt her feelings)* Is it okay to disagree with what others say or do? What kind of voice and words should you use to speak up and disagree? *(Clear; strong; respectful; kind)*

What do you think would have happened if Kim hadn't spoken up about her idea to use ropes to hold up the mast? *(The kids wouldn't know how to make the mast stand up; they might have gotten frustrated; the stick might have fallen on someone)*

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**Tip:** Emphasize that children can *Speak Up, Speak Kindly*.

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## After Reading

What can make it hard to speak up with our ideas and feelings? *(We aren't sure if our idea is good; someone might disagree; we are nervous to talk to people we don't know or to a group of people)*

When is it really important to speak up? *(In an emergency; when I and others need something; when I know something others need to know)* What could happen if you didn't speak up in one of those situations? *(I or someone else could be hurt; things could go wrong)*

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## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: SPEAK UP, SPEAK KINDLY

*Children discuss when it is appropriate to speak up to others and practice how to Speak Up, Speak Kindly.*

## Set the Stage

Have the children sit with their buddies. Give each pair a piece of paper and have them draw a line to divide it in half. Tell them you are going to draw a picture on the board that they must copy on their whole paper; however, they may only draw on their own half of the paper and they may not speak during the activity. Make a simple line drawing on the board (e.g., cat face, house, hot air balloon) and have them begin. If they have questions for you, redirect them to their paper and remind them that they may not speak during the activity.

After the children have completed their drawings (end early if you sense a great deal of frustration), have them turn their paper over and divide it again. Draw another picture on the board and ask them to copy it in the same manner, but tell them that they may talk to one another while they are working.

Invite the children to share their drawings and discuss the process of the activity.

What was it like to draw the first picture with the instructions that I gave? *(Hard; confusing)*  
How were you feeling? *(Frustrated; wanting to say something)*

How was it different while you were drawing your second picture and allowed to speak?  
*(Easier; could make the picture)* Why was it easier or better? *(Could talk to each other; could help each other)*

## Facilitate the Activity

Explain why it is important to feel comfortable speaking up and using kind words.

There are many reasons why you might need or want to speak up, whether it is to ask a question, to share an idea, or to ask for help. It is important for everyone to feel that they can speak up and tell others what they think, feel, or need. When you speak up, it is also important to use kind words. That way, you not only share your thoughts and feelings but also respect their thoughts and feelings.

Write the four elements of *speaking up and speaking kindly* on the board, and brainstorm what each looks or sounds like. Invite several volunteers to demonstrate the various skills with a buddy.

- ▶ Stand tall
- ▶ Look at the person
- ▶ Use a strong, friendly voice
- ▶ Use kind words

Pass out a *Speak Up, Speak Kindly* card to each buddy pair and have the children think whether it would be okay to speak up in that situation and, if so, what they might say (and if not, why not). Gather the group to discuss the scenarios, and have the buddy pairs role-play the situations using friendly, assertive speaking. Ask the class to repeat what was said for each scenario so that all children have an opportunity to practice speaking up.

## Wrap It Up

What do you do with your eyes when you speak up and speak kindly? (*Look at the person*)

What kind of voice do you use? (*Strong; clear; friendly; respectful*) What kind of words do you use? (*Kind; friendly; respectful*)

How does it help others when you speak up and speak kindly? (*I can share my ideas and feelings with them; I can help them; I can say nice things to them*)

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**Tip:** Be aware of cultural differences in beliefs about appropriate eye contact when talking with someone.

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## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

**Say It Loud, Say It Proud:** Gather the children in a circle and pass around a “microphone,” giving each child an opportunity to briefly share a topic (e.g., something they would like to do this weekend) and practice assertive speaking.

**What’s on My Mind:** Have the children think about an issue in the classroom or on the playground that is a concern or for which they have an idea and have them draw, dictate, or write about what they could say to speak up about the issue, and to whom. Encourage them to try *speaking up and speaking kindly* about this issue with their classmates or the classroom community at school this week.

You can't zip your backpack by yourself.

*Is it okay to say that you need help?*

You don't like your friend's new hat.

*Is it okay to say that you don't like how someone looks or what they are wearing?*

You have an idea about a new game to try, but you aren't sure if your friends will want to do that.

*Is it okay to say when you have an idea?*

You see that a classmate is stuck at the top of the jungle gym.

*Is it okay to say when someone might be in danger or needs help?*

A classmate tells you where to find more pencils, but you don't understand what he said.

*Is it okay to say that you don't understand or need to ask a question?*

Your friend is scared to climb the ladder to the slide, and you think that is really silly.

*Is it okay to say that you think someone else's feelings are silly or wrong?*

You think that your drawing is the best in the class.

*Is it okay to say that you did something better than someone else?*

Your friend has been using the jump rope for a long time and you want a turn.

*Is it okay to say that you would like someone to share or that you want something?*

Your friend asks you to help him clean up some books, but you have to finish cleaning up your puzzle.

*Is it okay to say no to someone if you aren't able to do something?*

You are watching some friends who are already playing a game together, and you want to play with them too.

*Is it okay to say that you would like to play with someone?*

You hear a classmate say something mean to another child.

*Is it okay to say what someone says or does isn't kind or isn't fair?*

You really like the story your classmate wrote.

*Is it okay to say something nice about someone or about something they did?*





# Problem Solving



Unit 4



## OVERVIEW

Unit 4 focuses on fostering children's ability to resolve conflicts and working cooperatively and compatibly with others.

## GOALS

This unit is designed to help children:

- ▶ Accept and value different feelings and perspectives
- ▶ Develop empathy
- ▶ Identify and generate solutions to interpersonal problems
- ▶ Develop cooperation skills
- ▶ Understand how to compromise with others
- ▶ Practice self-regulation

## ACTIVITIES

### 4.1 Identifying Problems

*Children discuss the first two steps in problem-solving (Stop, Talk), practice recognizing different perspectives, and state the problems described in peer scenarios.*

### 4.2 Solving Problems

*Children discuss the last two steps in problem-solving (Think, Try), practice generating positive solutions to problems presented in scenarios, and problem-solve with a peer during a collaborative project.*

### 4.3 Cooperating

*Children discuss teamwork skills and work together on a collaborative activity.*

### 4.4 Recognizing How Behaviors Affect Others

*Children discuss how their behaviors affect others and learn how to compromise in order to be considerate and fair to others.*



## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *The Sleep Under*

Explore and Practice: Spot the Problem

## GOALS

This set of activities is designed to:

- ▶ Foster self-confidence in sharing feelings and ideas
- ▶ Foster awareness and acceptance of different feelings and perspectives
- ▶ Promote empathy
- ▶ Promote skills in recognizing and identifying interpersonal problems

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Children will be able to:

- ▶ Name the first two steps in problem-solving (Stop, Talk)
- ▶ Identify multiple perspectives and state the problem in a given scenario

## KEY CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

It's okay to disagree if you feel differently than someone else.

When you have a problem or disagreement, you can:

- ▶ **STOP** and calm down
- ▶ **TALK** so you can understand and say the problem
- ▶ **THINK** of possible solutions
- ▶ **TRY** a solution and see how it works for everyone

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### MATERIALS

- ▶ *The Sleep Under* storybook
  - ▶ Spot the Buddy Problem activity sheet
  - ▶ Spot the Problem Scenarios
-

## RESEARCH AND RELEVANCE

Conflicts are a natural part of social interactions—people often have different feelings, perspectives, or ideas. Young children often need additional support in negotiating conflicts with peers because they have difficulty with another’s perspective (particularly when upset), and this can make it difficult for them to think of solutions that will be mutually satisfying for everyone involved. One strategy that children could use to avoid conflict is going along with what others want, even if it does not make them feel okay. Avoiding conflict does not solve the problem—they should feel comfortable expressing their ideas and feelings respectfully, even when these are different from those of others.

Adults can provide support by guiding children to stop and remain calm, talk about each person’s feelings and perspectives so that they can identify the problem, generate possible solutions and potential consequences, and choose and try a course of action and see how it works. Younger children are usually able to do these steps in simple forms and with adult facilitation. With time and practice, these steps can become more detailed and nuanced, as children’s social interactions become more complex. Eventually, children will develop the flexible capability to begin to resolve peer disputes without assistance.

### What You Can Do to Problem-Solve

Children can:	Adults can:
<b>STOP</b> <i>and calm down</i>	Remain calm; acknowledge and label how children feel; help them use calming strategies
<b>TALK</b> <i>about the situation and state the problem</i>	<i>Gather information by asking children’s perspectives on the situation; guide children in stating the problem</i>

### Think about this...

Have you ever ended up in a conflict because of missing or misunderstanding someone else’s feelings or perspective?

When a friend or colleague does not share the same opinion on a matter of importance to you, how likely are you to feel that this person is “wrong?” How hard do you try to accept or understand their opinion and/or to explain or convince them of the “right” perspective?

What strategies do you find effective in working with people whose ideas or feelings differ from your own?

### Try this

When reading stories or discussing events that have happened (e.g., a story that a child is sharing with the class) and involve a conflict or difference of opinion, take opportunities to guide the children in recognizing each person’s perspective and using words to label the problem. This gives children practice developing empathy and identifying problems in situations in which they are not currently involved (and possibly already feeling upset).

*How did this character feel when her baby brother ripped up her homework? Why? Do you think he meant to ruin her homework and make her angry? Why do you think he ripped it up? How do you think he felt when she yelled at him? So it sounds like the problem is that when she leaves her homework on the table, her brother can get it and ruin it.*

## READ AND DISCUSS: *THE SLEEP UNDER*

*Children listen to the story and discuss the importance of speaking up about their feelings, even when they disagree with others, so that they can understand a problem and work together to find a solution.*

### Before Reading

**Have you ever disagreed with your friends about what you wanted to do together? What did you do about this problem?**

**It's okay to feel differently than someone else, but it's important to talk to each other so that you understand the problem and find a solution together.**

**In this story, one child doesn't want to do what her friends want to do, but she is afraid to tell them and ruin their plans. When she finally shares her feelings, they are able to figure out a new plan that works for everyone.**

**As you listen to the story, pay attention for the problem that arises when the characters feel differently about the same thing and what they do to resolve it.**

### During Reading

Why didn't Maddie want to tell her friends how she felt at first? *(She knew they were excited to have the sleep under there; she didn't want them to be upset; she didn't want to ruin their plans)*

Why did Maddie take a deep breath before she told her friends how she felt? *(She was nervous/worried; she was trying to calm down)* What else can you do to calm down? *(Count to 10; take a walk; think of something that makes me happy)*

If Maddie had gone up to the tree house with her friends; what could have happened? How would she have felt? *(She could have been very scared; she wouldn't have had fun; she could have felt sad or angry; she could have been too afraid to climb up or back down the ladder)*

When Maddie finally stopped and talked to her friends about how she felt; what was the problem they finally realized they had? *(They didn't all like to be high or want to be in the tree house; they needed to change where the sleep-under was so Maddie could be included)*

What solution did the kids come up with? Was this a good solution? Why? *(They all agreed on the solution; everyone felt okay about it; they got to have the sleep under but Maddie was still included)*

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**Tip:** Have children practice taking a deep breath and letting their bodies relax.

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## After Reading

Why is it important to share your feelings and ideas; even if you disagree with someone else? (*Everyone's feelings and ideas are important; it helps people understand one another; I can figure out the problem and think of different solutions*)

How can talking about how each person feels help you find a fair solution to a problem? (*I know what each person wants or needs; I will understand the problem better; I will know if each person is okay with the solution*)

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**Extension:** Have the children turn to their buddies and practice disagreeing in a strong, respectful voice (e.g., *I disagree; I have a different idea; I feel differently*).

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## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: SPOT THE PROBLEM

*Children discuss the first two steps in solving problems (Stop, Talk), practice identifying different perspectives, and state problems in given scenarios as a group and with a buddy.*

## Set the Stage

Share a real class scenario and ask the children if they think this would be a problem (e.g., *We only have one set of astronomy cards in the science center. What if two children both want to use them at the same time? Would this be a problem?*).

Discuss the first two steps in solving a problem:

[STOP] Sometimes when you are having a disagreement or problem with someone, you could feel upset or angry. The first thing to do is *stop* and calm down. When you are feeling calm again, you will be able to talk and listen to each other. So, what is the first thing you do when you have a problem? (*Stop and calm down*)

[TALK] After you are calm, the second thing to do is *talk* to each other about what is happening so you can understand the problem. You can say how you feel and listen to how the other person feels. When you figure out the problem, you can say what it is out loud. So what do you do together to figure out the problem? (*Talk to each other*)

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**Tip:** Remind the children of classroom guidelines for expressing angry feelings (e.g., It is okay to be angry and talk about it, but it isn't okay to hurt people or property).

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## Facilitate the Activity

Explain that the class will talk about different situations that might happen among children and try to “spot the problem.”



Guide the children in discussing the *Spot the Problem Scenarios*. Have them share answers with their buddies before inviting a few to share with the class. Read or role-play each scenario and:

- ▶ Identify the characters' feelings and what they could do if they need to calm down
- ▶ Identify each character's goals or thoughts
- ▶ State the problem in words
- ▶ Briefly discuss one to two possible solutions

Have the children sit with buddies and choose a method to assign each as Buddy 1 or Buddy 2. Distribute a *Spot the Buddy Problem* activity sheet to each pair and read the scenario to the class. Have buddies draw (on the face) how their character feels and write (in the thought bubble) what their character wants to do. Next, have buddies decide what the problem is and write it in words. Gather the class to share their work, brainstorming a few solutions to the problem.

## Wrap It Up

What is the first thing you do when you are having a problem with someone else?  
(*Stop and calm down*)

After you stop and calm down, what do you do next when you have a problem?  
(*Talk and listen to each other about how we feel*)

Why is it important to say the problem out loud in words? (*We will both know what the problem is; we will be able to think of solutions*)

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## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

**Agree/Disagree Game:** Make a statement and have the children indicate whether they agree or disagree by giving a thumbs up, thumbs down, or flat hand (for “not sure”). Or, place signs in different parts of the room (Agree, Disagree, Not Sure) and have the children respond by standing under the appropriate sign. Begin with statements that are more concrete (e.g., *I love chocolate ice cream. Dogs are my favorite animals.*) and continue with statements that become increasingly more abstract and/or controversial (e.g., *Children should be able to vote for the President. Children should be able to have sleepovers on school nights.*). Each time, ask for a volunteer from each group (agree, disagree, or not sure) to talk about their opinion, reminding them to use respectful and positive statements (e.g., *I like strawberry ice cream best!* rather than *Chocolate ice cream is disgusting!*). Discuss the experience by asking the class if the game was difficult (e.g., *Was it difficult to have a different opinion than your friends? Did you want to change your opinion after you heard other kids' opinions?*). Emphasize that sometimes everyone has different opinions and it is important to express their opinions and differences respectfully.

**Disagree Respectfully Role-Play:** Discuss some conflict scenarios and invite children to role-play the scenario and demonstrate respectful and assertive ways to disagree using a strong voice, kind words, and respecting the other person's feelings or ideas.

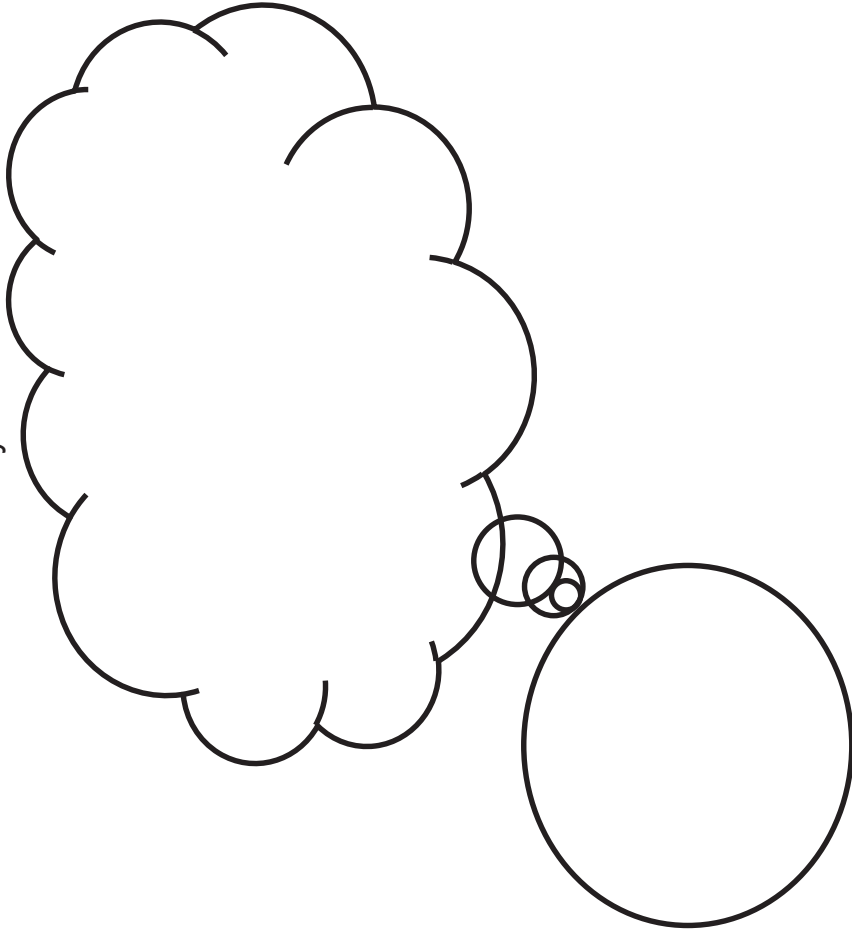
- ▶ *You and a friend are building with magnetic tiles together. Your friend wants to add more tiles and build the tower really high, but you think that it might fall down*
- ▶ *A friend asks if you have seen a new movie and tells you, "It was the best movie ever!" You don't like that movie at all*
- ▶ *You and a friend are making a skyscraper with blocks. Your friend wants to try to build a bridge instead, but you want to finish the skyscraper*

**What's the Problem Role-Play:** Have the children role-play brief problem-solving situations. Guide them in identifying how each of the characters feel, how to calm down, and what each of them want. Have them state the problem in words and then brainstorm possible solutions.

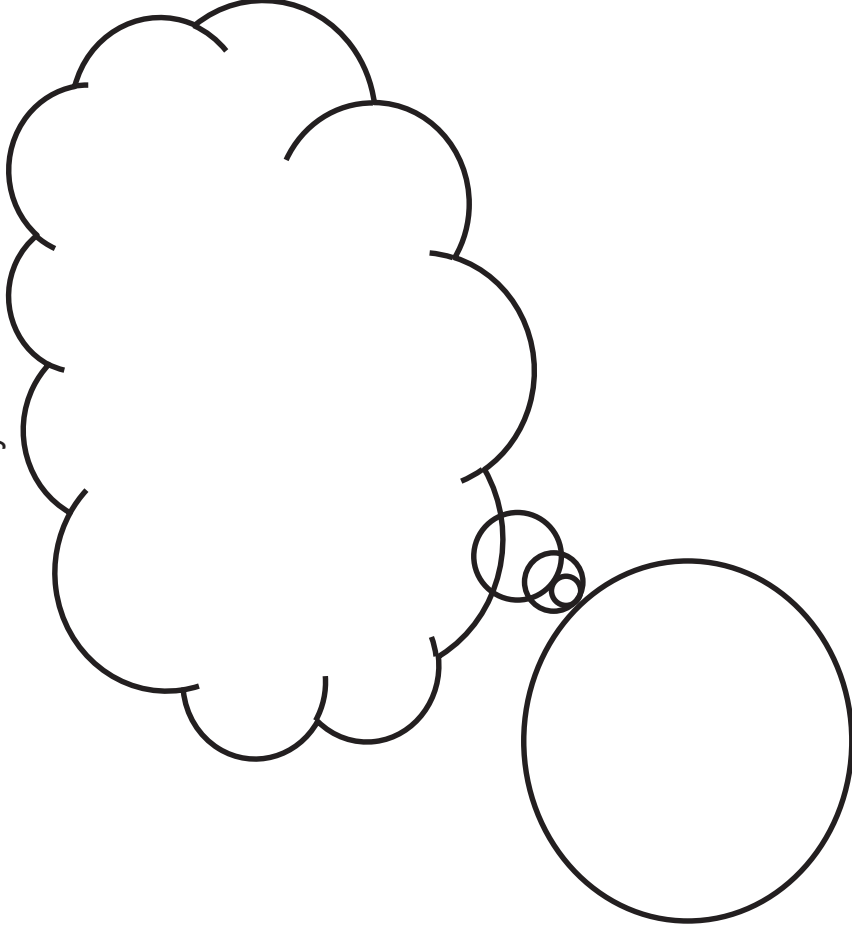
- ▶ *Two children reach for the same box of neon markers at the same time*
- ▶ *One child accidentally knocks a classmate down on the playground*
- ▶ *One child wants to put stickers on their shared paper, but their buddy wants to use markers*
- ▶ *One child accidentally smears another child's painting*

Buddy 1 picks up a bug off the ground and is excited to show it to Buddy 2. Buddy 2 doesn't like bugs and yells, "Get away!"

Buddy 1



Buddy 2

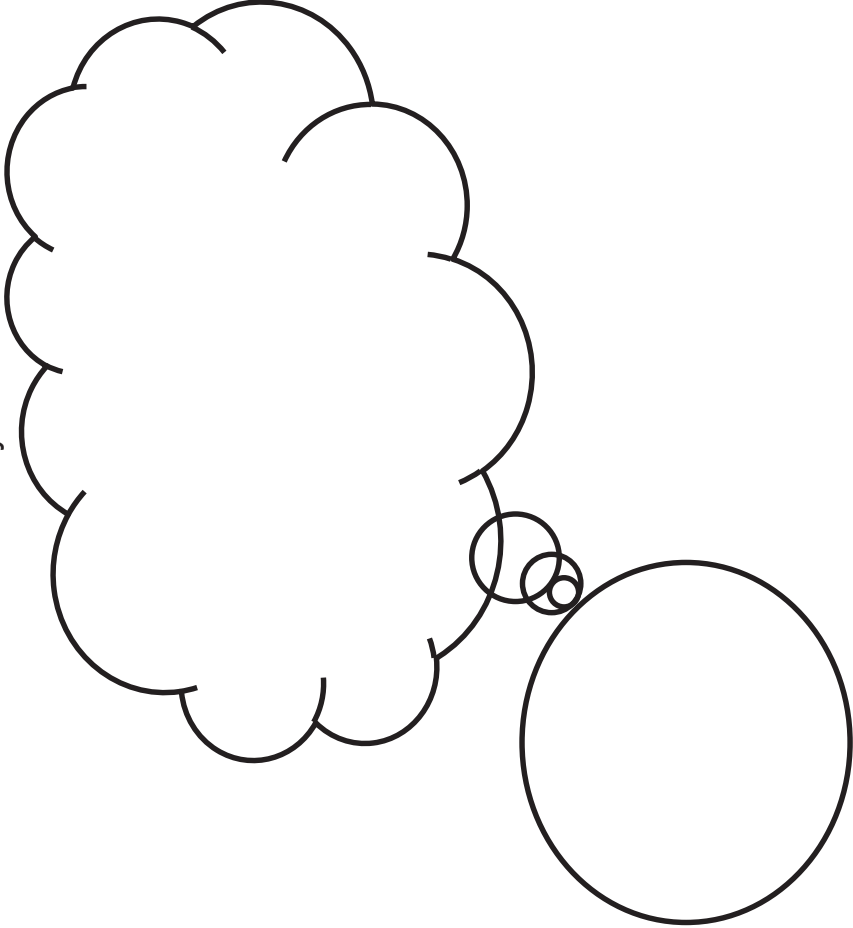


Problem: \_\_\_\_\_

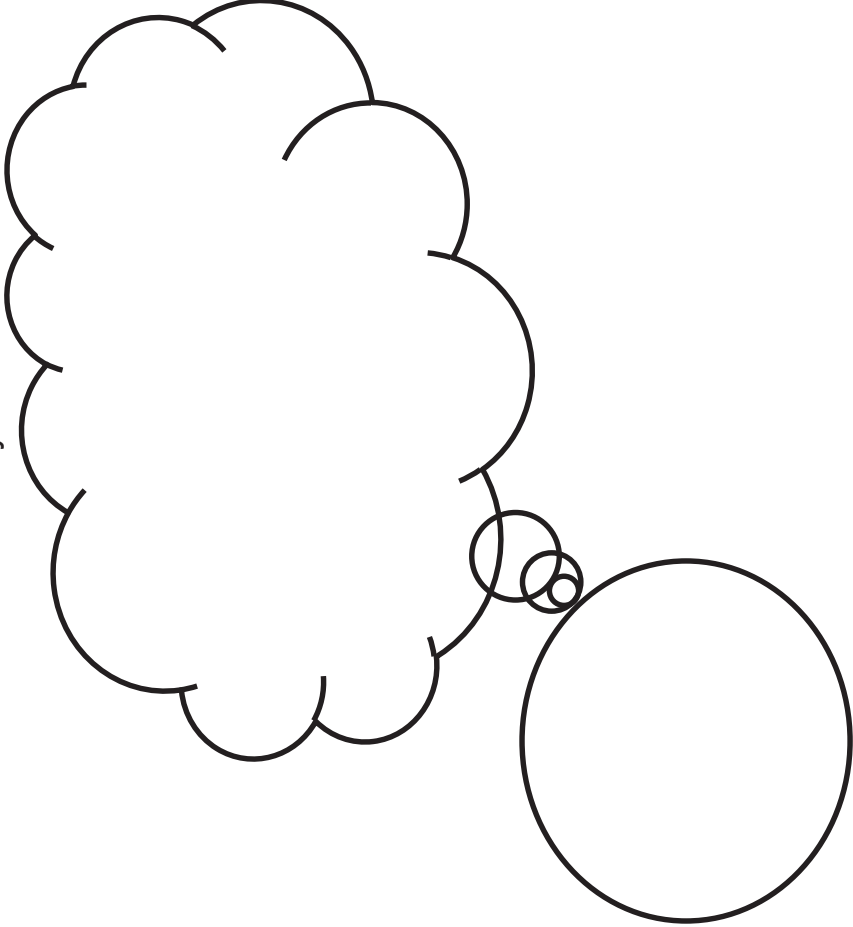


Situation:

Buddy 1



Buddy 2

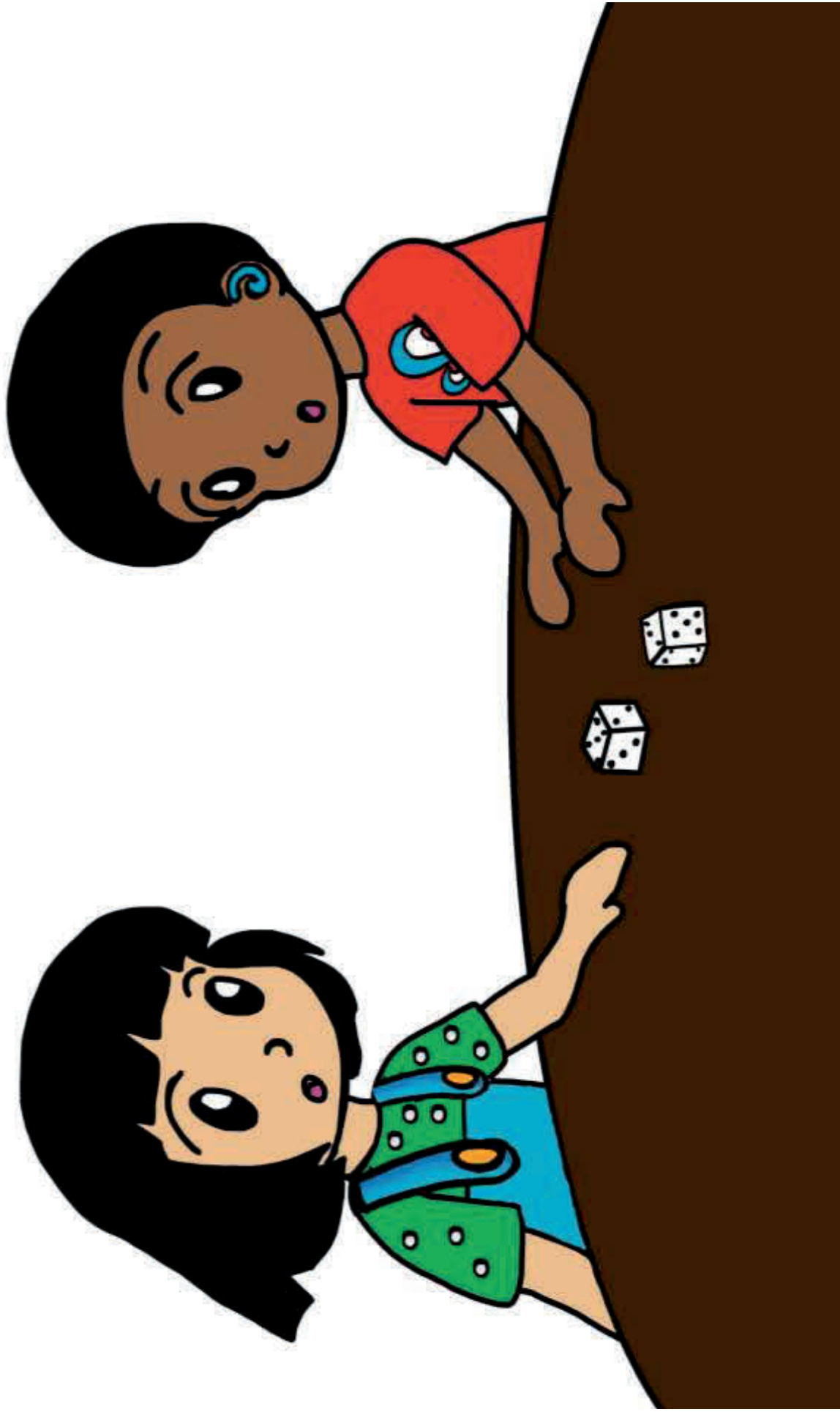


Problem:

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Kim and Jordan are playing a game together. Kim thinks that it is her turn; but Jordan reaches for the dice at the same time and says that he is next.

## STOP

How do you think Kim feels? *(Upset; disappointed; confused)*

What should Kim do first so they can solve the problem? *(Stop and calm down)*

What could she do to calm down? *(Take a deep breath; count to ten)*

## TALK

Once Kim stops and calms down; she and Jordan can talk about the problem.

What do you think Kim wants? *(To take the next turn)*

What do you think Jordan wants? *(To take the next turn)*

What is the problem that Kim and Jordan have? *(They both want to take the next turn)*

## THINK; TRY

Kim and Jordan both want to have the next turn. What are some things they could do to solve this problem? *(Try to remember the last person who had a turn; find a fair way to decide, such as flipping a coin; start the game over)*





Mia is building a big tower with blocks and Kenny is playing Follow the Leader in the same area. Kenny doesn't see Mia's tower as he marches by and knocks it all down.

## STOP

How do you think Mia feels? *(Angry; sad; disappointed)*

What should Mia do first so they can solve the problem? *(Stop and calm down)*

What could she do to calm down? *(Take a deep breath; take a break)*

## TALK

Once Mia stops and calms down; she and Kenny can talk about the problem.

What do you think Mia wants? *(To build a block tower)*

What do you think Kenny wants? *(To play Follow the Leader)*

What is the problem that Mia and Kenny have? *(They want to play different things in the same area)*

## THINK; TRY

Mia and Kenny are trying to play different things in the same area; and now Mia's tower is ruined. What are some things they could do to solve this problem? *(Kenny could help fix her tower; one person could play in a new area)*

## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *The Ball Situation*

Explore and Practice: Plan It Together

## GOALS

This set of activities is designed to:

- ▶ Promote skills in generating alternative solutions to interpersonal problems
- ▶ Foster awareness that people can have different ideas about how to solve a problem
- ▶ Emphasize fairness in problem-solving and decision-making

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Children will be able to:

- ▶ Name the last two steps in problem-solving (Think, Try)
- ▶ Generate fair solutions to given scenarios
- ▶ Practice solving problems during a collaborative project with a peer

## KEY CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

There can be more than one way to *solve a problem*.

Everyone's ideas and feelings are important, so it is fair to decide together.

A *compromise* is when each person gives up a little of what they want so everyone can agree on a solution.

A good solution makes everyone feel okay.

When you have a problem or disagreement, you can:

- ▶ **STOP** and calm down
- ▶ **TALK** so you can understand and say the problem
- ▶ **THINK** of possible solutions
- ▶ **TRY** a solution and see how it works for everyone

## MATERIALS

- ▶ *The Ball Situation* storybook
- ▶ *Problem-Solving* poster
- ▶ *Plan It Together* activity sheet

## RESEARCH AND RELEVANCE

Young children can often have a difficult time thinking about the feelings and perspectives of others because they tend to focus on one thing at a time and on the more concrete (rather than internal) aspects of a conflict situation. Sometimes focusing on their own needs and feelings can lead children to behave in ways that seem controlling or bossy, and this can make it difficult to resolve conflict among peers. When conflicts occur in the classroom, they provide learning opportunities in which adults can guide children through the process of peaceful and effective problem-solving. Helping children develop positive strategies for resolving their day-to-day conflicts with peers will help prevent them from developing unhealthy patterns of behavior that could lead to social difficulties later in life. Other children benefit as well as they observe examples of positive conflict resolution.

### What You Can Do to Problem-Solve

Children can:	Adults can:
<p><i>THINK of possible solutions</i></p> <p><i>TRY a solution and see how it works for everyone</i></p>	<p><i>Encourage children to think of multiple solutions, remind them to listen to one another's ideas, suggest additional solutions by prompting</i></p> <p><i>Guide children in choosing a solution (let children decide as long as it is reasonable), provide support in carrying out and evaluating the solution</i></p>

### Think about this...

How do you tend to approach disagreements or conflicts with other adults—do you take charge, go along with the opinions of others, try to smooth over angry feelings, focus on solutions, etc.?

Do you find compromising with others easy or challenging? Are there particular areas or situations that are more difficult for you to compromise?

### Try this

When reading stories or discussing events that have happened (e.g., a story that a child is sharing with the class) that involve a conflict or difference of opinion, take opportunities to ask the children to think of as many possible solutions to the problem as they can. Guide them in thinking about the consequences of these possibilities for each person involved (e.g., *If they decided that the playground field should be for the kids who want to play soccer, those kids would be happy, but what about the kids who don't play soccer but still want to have room to play other games? What would they do?*).

## READ AND DISCUSS: *THE BALL*

*Children listen to the story and discuss the importance of solving a problem by listening to everyone's ideas and working together to find a compromise that makes everyone feel okay.*

### Before Reading

**Have you and a friend ever had to figure out a problem together, like how to share something that you both wanted to use? How did you decide what to do?**

**There can be many different ways to solve a problem, so it's important to decide together and to choose a solution that works for everyone. Sometimes you might have to compromise and each give up a little of what you want in order to find a solution that is fair.**

**In this story, there is a problem on the playground, so a group of friends has to figure out what to do.**

**As you listen to the story, pay attention to the different ideas that the kids have for solving the problem and how they finally reach a compromise.**

### During Reading

Were Annie's ideas—taking a ball from the fourth graders or having their class get all of the balls—a fair solution? How would the kids in the other classes have felt if they had to do things Annie's way instead of deciding together? (*Sad; angry; like they didn't get to help decide; like no one asked for their ideas*)

Sometimes you have to *compromise* to solve a problem, so each person has to give up a little of what they want agree to come to a solution that makes everyone feel okay. How was the kids' solution of each class taking turns using the balls on different days a *compromise*? (*Each class didn't get to use the balls every day like they wanted but everyone got to use them sometimes; they all agreed on the solution and felt okay about it*)

After the kids thought of taking turns with the balls; what did they do to make sure that everyone felt okay with that solution? (*They talked to the principal and the fourth graders to see what they thought about the idea*)

What did the kids have to do when taking turns with the balls didn't work? (*Think of another solution; talk to the fourth graders again*) What happened at the end of the story because they kept thinking of more solutions? (*They thought of a new way to play; they were all able to play together; more kids joined the games*)

## After Reading

Do you think it's fair if only one person gets to decide how to solve a problem? What can make it difficult? (*People want things their way; forget to think about or ask about others' feelings and ideas; feel too upset about the situation to listen to others' ideas; can't think of other solutions*)

How does it help to think of many different ideas to solve a problem? (*Not everyone feels the same way; I can hear many good ideas; I can choose the solution*)

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**Tip:** You may wish to brainstorm what the children would do if they did not have enough playground equipment, highlighting the many solutions.

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## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: PLAN IT TOGETHER

*Children discuss the last two steps in problem-solving (Think, Try), practice generating solutions to problems presented in scenarios, and problem-solve with a peer during a collaborative project.*

### Set the Stage

Review the first two steps in problem-solving and introduce the last two steps, referring to the *Problem Solving* poster.

[STOP, TALK] When you have a problem, the first thing to do is to stop and calm down and then to talk to one another so that you can figure out the problem.

[THINK] Once you have figured out the problem, the next step is to think about what you could do to solve the problem. There can be many different ways to solve a problem, so it is important to listen to everyone's ideas so that you can decide together in a fair way.

Remind the children that finding a solution that makes everyone feel okay may involve *compromise*, or giving up a little and not doing exactly what they want, so that they can all agree on one solution that works for everyone.

[TRY] After you have thought of some different ways to solve the problem, the last step is to choose one and try it out. You can ask yourself three questions to decide what would be a good solution to try. You can ask: *Is it safe? Is it fair? Will everyone feel okay?* If your solution doesn't work, you can THINK and try another solution.

Discuss one to two conflict scenarios, reminding the children that there can be many ways to solve a problem. For each scenario:

- ▶ State the problem in words
- ▶ Discuss two to four possible solutions (including poor solutions)
- ▶ Predict the consequences of one to two of these solutions for each of the characters to determine if the solution could be a good one

### Suggested Scenarios

- ▶ *A classmate said that he would sit with you at lunch, but when you get to the cafeteria, he is already sitting with someone else*
- ▶ *When the teacher asks whose turn it is to use the computer, you and a classmate both say, "It's my turn!" at the same time*
- ▶ *During a kickball game, you think that you kicked the ball right on the line but your classmate thinks that the ball was out*

## Facilitate the Activity

Have the children sit with their buddies. Explain that they will practice being good problem-solvers as they work on a project with their buddy. Distribute one *Plan It Together* activity sheet to each pair, and provide support to them as they decide fairly how to plan their activity together. As they work, provide support and positive reinforcement for any problem-solving efforts, repeating the relevant steps (e.g., *You and your buddy had a problem because you both wanted to choose different things to do. You came up with a good solution and found something that you both like!*). When necessary, remind them that if the solution doesn't work for everyone, they can think of more ways to solve the problem and try another one; guide them in as they work.

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**Tip:** Support buddies in deciding how to "share" their project (e.g., leave it for a classroom display, make a second one, etc.).

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## Wrap It Up

Did you and your buddy have different plans for your activity? How did you solve the problem and decide together? (*Thought about what was fair; compromised*)

How do you know if the solution you decide to try is a good one? (*It is fair; everyone feels okay about it*)

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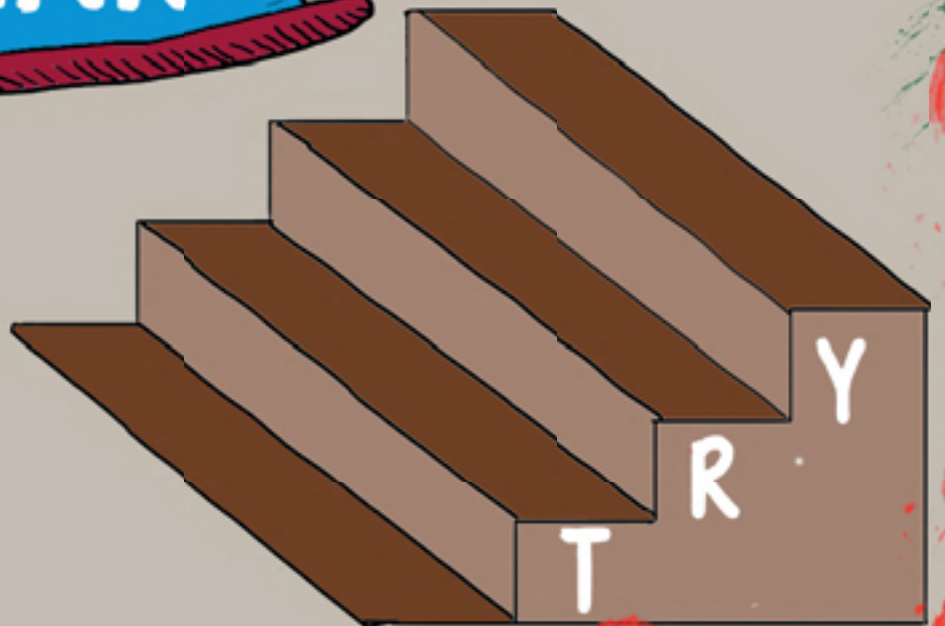
## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

**Choose Your Own Solution:** Read a story in which the characters face a conflict or problem that requires resolution. Have children work with a buddy to write and illustrate an alternate ending.

**Joint Committees:** Consider assigning small groups of children a role in decision-making regarding classroom activities and routines. Small groups are a manageable context in which you can provide support as children practice sharing ideas, listening, negotiating, and compromising. For example, choose three children each day to select the afternoon story or song together. Facilitate this discussion so that they can all participate in the decision.

**Problem-Solving Comic Strip:** Provide a conflict scenario. Have children illustrate and provide captions for (1) the problem; (2) one possible (fair or unfair) solution; (3) the outcome of that solution for the characters involved.







An Afternoon with My Buddy

You and your buddy are going to spend the afternoon together and must decide:

Where we will play:

What we will do:

What we will eat for a snack:



## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *The Rain Forest*

Explore and Practice: Teamwork in Action – Collaborative Creations

## GOALS

This set of activities is designed to:

- ▶ Foster collaborative teamwork skills
- ▶ Promote fairness in playing and working together

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Children will be able to:

- ▶ Name ways to cooperate with others
- ▶ Practice cooperating with peers in a shared activity

## KEY CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

When you work together with someone else, you can think of new ideas and do things that you can't do alone.

*Cooperation* means that you listen to each other's ideas, share, and help each another.

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## MATERIALS

- ▶ *The Rainforest* storybook
  - ▶ Envelopes of colored paper shapes or shape stickers (one per small group)
  - ▶ Large pieces of paper
  - ▶ Glue
-

## RESEARCH AND RELEVANCE

As children develop their abilities to express their feelings and ideas, understand the feelings and perspectives of others, and exhibit self-control by paying attention and inhibiting impulsive behavior, they are better equipped to play and cooperate with others. Cooperative play creates opportunities for children to teach and learn from one another—two (or more) heads are often better than one! It also motivates them to be aware and supportive of mutual group goals, fosters a sense of interdependence, and emphasizes that communication and teamwork are important for success—each person’s contributions are important and valued.

### Think about this...

Do you tend to prefer to work alone or with others? Does that differ at home compared to at work? What do you find challenging and/or helpful about working alone or together?

How often do you plan activities in which the children in your class can work with a partner or small group? What do you find challenging and/or helpful about facilitating group work with children?

Have you considered how you might use the physical space in your classroom to promote teamwork? Are areas and materials set up to bring children into close proximity and encourage cooperation? What changes could you make to achieve those goals while maintaining necessary classroom structures?

### Try this

Promote cooperation, turn-taking, and teamwork by setting up small group activities and centers with limited materials. For example, if four children are able to examine the rocks at the science center, provide only two magnifying glasses, or have children work in pairs to complete a science worksheet as they examine them together. Be mindful of children’s individual developmental levels and their capacity to adapt to this challenge without creating extensive conflict, and be prepared to provide additional support for children’s waiting, asking, and sharing with one another. Notice and specifically acknowledge their cooperative behaviors.

*I see that you have figured out how to share the magnifying glasses with one another—having two children look through the same glass at one time lets more of you examine the rocks and gives you a chance to talk about them together!*

## READ AND DISCUSS: *THE RAINFOREST*

*Children discuss why it can be helpful to work together rather than alone and how to do so fairly and cooperatively.*

### Before Reading

**What is something that you enjoy doing alone? What is something that is harder or less fun to do alone? When you play or work together with other people, what are some things you do to make sure that you are working as a team?**

**In this story, a group of friends have to figure out how to work as team to make a school project. When you work together, it is important that everyone participates and that everyone respects and cooperates with one another.**

**As you listen to the story, listen for times when the characters are not cooperating and what they have to do differently to work as a team.**

### During Reading

What did Jeremy do that prevented the kids from working together as a team?  
*(Planned the project by himself; made all the decisions; told the other kids what to do; didn't listen to their ideas)*

Do you think that Jeremy was trying to be unfair or that he didn't want to work with Kenny and Mia? Why do you think that he planned the project without them?  
*(He was excited; he started planning it at home with his dad; he thought he had some really good ideas)*

If Mia and Kenny hadn't spoken up and told Jeremy that they had some ideas too; how do you think that their rainforest project might have turned out differently?  
*(They wouldn't have used Mia's bugs; wouldn't have been able to fit the tall trees; wouldn't have had fuzzy monkeys)*

Was Mia's idea to make the trees out of clay successful? Why was it a good thing for the other kids to try Mia's idea; even though they didn't think it would work?  
*(It showed respect for her idea; it might have actually worked; they learned that they couldn't make big things with clay)*

Is it okay if people don't do things perfectly or make mistakes when they work together? How did Jeremy show teamwork and respect when Gabriel was having a hard time making the clay monkeys?  
*(He encouraged him to try his best; suggested that he try to make them another way)*

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**Tip:** Be sensitive to family and cultural differences in the emphasis placed on independence versus interdependence when highlighting the positive aspects of cooperation and teamwork.

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## After Reading

How is it helpful to work as a team instead of by yourself? (*I can do things you might not be able to do by myself; I can help one another; I can think of a lot of good ideas together; it can be fun*)

When do you cooperate and work together with your classmates here at school? (*Work on puzzles; play games; clean up*)

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## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: TEAMWORK IN ACTION – COLLABORATIVE CREATION

*Children work together on a collaborative art activity.*

### Set the Stage

As a group, brainstorm ways to show teamwork skills when working together on a project (*Listen to each other's ideas and decide what to do together, share, take turns, include everyone, help each other, encourage each other*) and write children's ideas on the board.

Explain that children will be working together on an activity that requires teamwork skills.

**Today you are going to have a chance to collaborate with some of your classmates and work as a team to create a picture together. It's important that you decide what your picture will be together, so you'll need to listen to each other's ideas. If you have an idea, share it with the others and ask them what they think. They might have some good ideas, too. Remember to cooperate with one another by sharing, taking turns, and helping one another. And because you'll be part of a team, it's important that every person gets to participate and contribute to the project.**

### Facilitate the Activity

Have children sit with buddies or in small groups and distribute containers of materials. As they work together, provide support and positive reinforcement for their cooperative efforts (*I can see you cooperating and figuring out that pattern together!*). If some are not participating or working separately, guide teams in collaborating (*It looks like you are each working on a different part of the picture. How will you connect them? Good idea to talk about that before you keep going!*).

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**Tip:** If supplies are limited, or for additional monitoring, have pairs or small groups of children take turns working at a "team center."

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**Tip:** Give children craft supplies and a large paper bag and have them create a puppet.

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**Tip:** Take photos of each team in action.

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After teams have had a chance to work together, direct their attention back to the teamwork skills listed on the board. Ask children to think about how they and their teammates did in each area—what they did well and what they could do better next time—and give them a moment to discuss this with their teammates. Gather the class to discuss the experience.

## Wrap It Up

Did you have different ideas about what to make? How did you decide together? (*Listened to everyone's ideas; asked each other what to make*)

Was there anything that was difficult about working together? (*Having different ideas; wanting to work on the same thing; everyone wanting to talk*) What would you do differently next time?

What was the best part about working together? (*Had a lot of ideas; got to talk about what we were doing; helped each other*) What did you do really well as a team?

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**Extension:** Have children draw and write about how they cooperated and worked together as a team, and create a display or class book with the reflections and team photos.

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## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

**Paper airplanes:** Have buddy pairs make a paper airplane together with only one hand each (have them hold their other hands together or keep them behind their backs).

**Collaborative Stories:** Give pairs of children two to three random objects and have them think of a short story that incorporates the objects. Have them either write a short summary of the story or create a book cover for the story.

**Team Projects:** Occasionally throughout the year, set up activities that foster teamwork among the class or small groups of children. You might gather large boxes and other recyclable or building materials and encourage them to decide as a group what to create together, set up a simple meal preparation, or involve the entire class in choosing and developing a special activity or display for a Family Night. Breaking up some projects into smaller tasks assigned to “committees” can support teamwork practice in more manageable groups.



## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *The T-shirts*

Explore and Practice: Different Fish in the Bowl

## MATERIALS

- ▶ *The T-shirts* storybook
- ▶ Blocks or manipulatives

## GOALS

This set of activities is designed to:

- ▶ Promote awareness that everyone has different preferences and behavioral styles
- ▶ Promote consideration of the impact of one's behaviors on others
- ▶ Foster self-regulation

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Children will be able to:

- ▶ Predict how having different behavioral styles will impact the ability to work together
- ▶ Generate considerate and fair ways to compromise when working with others

## KEY CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

Everyone is unique in what they prefer and how they like to do things.

Being *considerate* means showing that you care about other people's feelings.

It is important to make sure that what you are doing is *considerate* of those around you.

When you are with others, you might need to *compromise* by changing what you are doing a little bit so you can "make it work for everyone."

## RESEARCH AND RELEVANCE

Every child has a unique temperament, with differences in the ways they experience and express emotions, their preferred activity level, and their ability to self-regulate their attention, emotions, and behaviors. Because all children have a unique set of characteristics, they may find classmates too noisy, active, or overstimulating. Other children may find peers too quiet, passive, or even boring. It is helpful to guide children in figuring out compatible ways to play together while still supporting their expressions of individuality. It is important for them to notice when their behaviors are making it difficult for others to play and adjust what they are doing or where they are doing it. It is also important to know that it's okay to respectfully let others know when their behavior is too much for them to handle. Even when children are different in some ways, they can be supported in finding enjoyable ways to play and learn together.

### Think about this...

How would you characterize your own behavioral tendencies in areas such as “talkativeness” or activity level? How quickly or slowly are you able to change these tendencies in a given situation?

What strategies do you find effective in working with adults or children whose communication or behavioral styles differ from your own?

### Try this

Support children in their daily efforts at self-regulation. Some children may need extra facilitation, reminders, or an intentionally planned space or activity that will reduce other demands and distractions so they can better focus on controlling and adapting their behavior when appropriate. Establishing and using classroom signals (e.g., palms facing up/down to indicate “turn it up” or “turn it down”) can be helpful in providing children with gentle reminders to adjust their behavior without interrupting their activities. Be alert for when children seem overwhelmed and will require your assistance in calming down.

## READ AND DISCUSS: *THE T-SHIRTS*

*Children listen to the story and discuss that it is okay to do things differently, but that it is important to respect the others around them and be willing to compromise.*

### Before Reading

**When is it fun to run around or make a lot of noise? When is it nice to be calm and quiet? Has there ever been a time when you wanted it to be calm, but people around you were being really active or noisy? What was it like?**

**It's okay to do things differently, but it's important to make sure that what you're doing works for everyone. Sometimes, you will have to compromise and change what you're doing a little bit. That way, everyone can feel respected and good about being together.**

**In this story, a group of friends is working on a project together, and they each like doing things very differently.**

**As you listen to the story, pay attention to how one child is affected by his friend's behaviors and what they do to compromise and make it work for everyone.**

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**Tip:** Discuss scenarios such as playing at the playground, cheering at a baseball game, or being in a bounce house versus reading a book, going to sleep, or talking to a friend.

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### During Reading

What was the problem when the kids were mixing the paints? (*Jordan wanted to follow the directions but Kayla didn't want to bother with that*). What do you think might have happened if Kayla had decided not to measure the paint? How would Jordan have felt? (*She might have ruined it; Jordan could have been worried/angry/upset; Jordan could have felt that Kayla didn't listen to him or that his ideas weren't important*)

Being *considerate* means showing that you care about others' feelings. Were Gabriel and Kayla being considerate of Jordan when they started chasing each other? How did their chasing game affect Jordan? (*It made it hard for Jordan to concentrate; he was worried that his shirt might get ruined*)

What do you think might have happened if Kayla and Gabriel had continued to play near Jordan? (*They might have ruined Jordan's shirt; Jordan might have felt angry/upset/disappointed/that his friends didn't care; Jordan might not have been able to finish his shirt*)

What compromise did Kayla and Gabriel make in order to “make it work for everyone?” *(They decided to play chase on the other side of the tree)* Why was that a good compromise? *(Kayla and Gabriel still got to play; Jordan had a quiet space to work; they showed respect for Jordan; it worked for everyone)*

What could Jordan have done earlier in the story to help the kids work together better? *(Told his friends how he felt; suggested a compromise)*

## After Reading

If you and another person have different ways of doing things, should you avoid playing or working together? What are some reasons that it might be good to work with people who don’t do things just the same as you do? *(You could learn or try a new way of doing something; you learn how to compromise; it’s interesting to work with all different kinds of people)*

What could you do or say if what is going on with others isn’t working for you? *(Say how you feel; suggest a compromise)* What could you do to be considerate if you notice that someone seems bothered by what is going on around them? *(Ask how they feel; think of ways to compromise)*

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## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: DIFFERENT FISH IN THE BOWL

*Children observe a “fishbowl\*” and discuss what can happen when people with different behavioral styles work together, and then practice compromising when working together on a task.*

*\*A “fishbowl” is when children sit in a circle and observe two to six people participate in an activity, and then they discuss their observations and experiences as a class. In this fishbowl, two Actors will demonstrate different behavioral styles as they work separately on a task. Actor 1 builds a tower as quickly as possible and Actor 2 builds a tower very slowly and carefully.*

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**Tip:** You may wish to be one of the “actors” in the fishbowl or preselect two children for these roles and explain the instructions to them ahead of time.

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**Tip:** Take photos of each team in action.

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## Set the Stage

Ask children to raise their hand to indicate their own preferences for a variety of behaviors.

- When you are asleep, do you like a nightlight on or darkness?*
- When you are outside, do you like to be barefoot or have shoes on?*
- Would you rather have a hot drink or a cold drink?*
- Would you rather be high in a treehouse or on the ground?*
- Do you like to touch gooey/slimy things or not?*

Emphasize that everyone likes and does different things, and that the class will now be observing people who are doing things in different ways. Explain the concept of a fishbowl—that sometimes sitting back and watching others can give you a good understanding of what’s going on—just like being outside and looking into a fishbowl.

## Facilitate the Activity

Call the two Actors into the fishbowl and assign the rest of the class as Researchers. Ask the Actors to sit back-to-back and quietly remind them of their assigned roles, but do not tell the class.

Tell the Researchers to pay close attention to each Actor as they build with blocks. Signal for the Actors to begin (“Action!”) and allow them to work for at least 30 seconds before stopping (“Cut!”). Have the Actors join their classmates and discuss with the entire class:

- ▶ Differences observed in how each child completed the task
- ▶ What worked well or didn’t work well with each approach?
- ▶ What might happen if these two children were to work on the task together—how would they feel, benefits, and challenges?
- ▶ How the two children could compromise to work as a team

Explain that it is okay to like different things or do things differently, but sometimes it is necessary to compromise.

**It is okay to have our own way of doing things, and one way is not better than another. In fact, we can learn from people who have different styles and preferences. However, what we do affects those around us, so there may be times when doing things very differently might cause some difficulties when you are working together. It’s important to be *considerate* of others, so sometimes you may need to compromise in order to get along and work together well.**

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**Extension:** Have the children draw and write about how they cooperated and worked together as a team, and create a display or class book with the reflections and team photos.

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As a class, discuss (or role-play) one to two scenarios of children who prefer to do things differently but who are working together on a task. Identify the problem and brainstorm compromises, having the children consider whether the solutions would be *considerate* and *fair* to each person involved.

- ▶ *One child is trying to read a book, but she is distracted by a nearby classmate who likes say the words out loud as he reads*
- ▶ *Two buddies are sitting at a table working on a puzzle together. One child likes to walk around the table to look at the puzzle from different sides, but this is bothering his buddy*
- ▶ *One child is standing quietly in line, but the classmate behind him is excited to go outside for recess, and she keeps bumping into him*

## Wrap It Up

Why is it important to pay attention to the people around you and make sure that you are not making things hard for them? (*We can play and learn; I am being considerate*)

What does it mean to compromise? (*Giving up a little of what I want in order to make it work for everyone*) Should only one person compromise or could both people compromise? (*Sometimes only one person changes what they are doing; sometimes both people have to change a little*)

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## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

**Fast/Slow and Loud/Quiet Counting:** To practice self-regulation skills, establish a counting pattern (e.g., count by 5's slowly to 50 and then quickly to 100, then reverse the pattern) and have the children practice adjusting their speed or volume of speaking as they count.

**Fast and Slow Movement:** To practice self-regulation skills, have children alternately do jumping jacks, march, etc. quickly and then slowly according to the speed of your counting. After practice, have buddies do this activity with a partner and have the buddy adjust the counting rate.



**How I Make It Work for Everyone:** Have the children think about a specific time when they work or play with others at school (e.g., partner reading, games on the playground) and discuss some of the things that can make it hard to work together. Have them draw or write a plan for one to two things they can do to make sure they are being respectful of their partner or group. Provide a prompt, such as, *Sometimes I \_\_\_\_\_, so I will try to \_\_\_\_\_.* Encourage children to remember to try these strategies the next time they are in that situation.





# Peer Relationships





## OVERVIEW

Unit 5 focuses on promoting attitudes and behaviors that are critical for maintaining positive and supportive peer relationships. Unit 5 also provides a review of children's experiences and learning throughout the year and creates an opportunity for connection with future growth.

## GOALS

This unit is designed to help children:

- ▶ Develop a caring, prosocial orientation
- ▶ Learn inclusive attitudes and behaviors
- ▶ Take responsibility for their actions and make amends
- ▶ Develop a forgiving attitude
- ▶ Review areas of individual and group growth and change
- ▶ Gain a sense of closure regarding their experiences together this year

## ACTIVITIES

### 5.1 Caring for Others

*Children discuss the importance of being caring toward others, practice doing something kind, and give compliments to peers.*

### 5.2 Being Inclusive

*Children discuss the importance of making sure that everyone feels welcomed and included, consider the causes and consequences of exclusionary behaviors in scenarios, and brainstorm ways to help everyone feel included.*

### 5.3 Making Amends and Forgiving

*Children discuss the importance of being forgiving and letting go of negative feelings toward others.*

### 5.4 Reflecting and Connecting

*Children discuss feelings and memories at the end of the school year and create a yearbook of their favorite class memories.*



### 5.1 Caring for Others

*Suggested information to share with families in the classroom newsletter:*

Our class is discussing the many ways we can show caring toward others, and how doing and saying kind things can make both us and others feel good.

*You may wish to:*

- ▶ Ask your child about ways that they have helped a classmate “have a good day”
- ▶ “Catch” your child being kind to someone and point out how good it must have made the person feel
- ▶ Model small acts of kindness during your daily activities and talk with your child specifically about how and why the act may have benefited the person
- ▶ Brainstorm ways your family could do kind things for others in your neighborhood or community, or participate in a community service project as a family

### 5.2 Being Inclusive

*Suggested information to share with families in the classroom newsletter:*

Our class is discussing the reasons why we sometimes have a hard time including one another and the ways we can welcome and include others when we play to make sure that no one feels left out.

*You may wish to:*

- ▶ Ask your child about a time when someone invited them to play, and how that made them feel
- ▶ Ask your child if they invited anyone to play with them this week, and what they did together

## 5.3 Making Amends and Forgiving

*Suggested information to share with families in the classroom newsletter:*

Our class is discussing that even friends make mistakes, don't get along, or hurt one another's feelings. We are learning how it can be helpful to be a *fast forgiver*, and we are talking about ways we can make an *apology in action* (*Say your part ~ Speak from the heart ~ Fix what's been broken apart*) when we have hurt someone or made a mistake.

*You may wish to:*

- ▶ Ask your child how they make an apology in action
- ▶ Help your child think about how to “fix what's been broken apart”—how to take action in making things better with a family member or friend when your child has been hurtful to them in some way (e.g., give a hug, draw a picture or write a note to them, do something kind for them, fix something they have ruined)

## 5.4 Reflecting and Connecting

*Suggested information to share with families in the classroom newsletter:*

Our class is remembering special times and events this past year to reflect on how everyone has grown as an individual and as a classroom community and creating some hopes and goals for the future.

*You may wish to:*

Ask your child to share with you some of their favorite memories:

- ▶ Something they accomplished that makes them proud
- ▶ Something they learned from their classmates
- ▶ Something they helped their classmates learn
- ▶ Their favorite part of the day at school this year
- ▶ Something that happened at school this year that they will never forget
- ▶ Friendships they would like to continue



## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *The Very Good Day*

Explore and Practice: Compliment Collages

## GOALS

This set of activities is designed to:

- ▶ Promote a caring, prosocial orientation toward others
- ▶ Foster gratitude for others' kindnesses

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Children will be able to:

- ▶ Name ways to show kindness to others
- ▶ Practice giving compliments and receiving compliments with gratitude

## KEY CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

Being kind and caring makes both you and others feel good.

You can show caring toward others by:

- ▶ Helping
- ▶ Being generous with your time, talent, or treasures
- ▶ Giving compliments, affection, and encouragement

*Gratitude* means appreciation or thankfulness.

Showing gratitude when others are kind to us makes them feel appreciated.

A *compliment* is something kind or affectionate that you say to someone.

## MATERIALS

- ▶ *The Very Good Day* storybook
- ▶ A paper for each child with the words "(Name) is...."
- ▶ Art supplies

## RESEARCH AND RELEVANCE

Prosocial behaviors are intended to benefit others, such as helping, comforting, saying kind things, and sharing. These behaviors are motivated by a desire to care for others rather than to please someone or earn a reward. Children who have sensitive and nurturing adults in their lives learn what it is like to have caring, respectful, and compassionate relationships with others. Feeling valued, responded to, and cared for helps children develop caring and empathy for others. In addition, when children feel connected to others—whether in close relationships and friendships or as being part of a community in which they feel acceptance and belonging—they develop concern for others and a sense of social responsibility toward them. Fostering children’s prosociality in a group setting can promote a positive and caring emotional climate within the whole classroom.

### Think about this...

How easy or challenging is it for you to think about and find time to intentionally do kind things for others? Do you tend to do so spontaneously, or in response to a need or request?

Is it easier to do kind things for some people and not others? What are some things that can make it difficult?

How easy or challenging is it for you to show gratitude when others do kind things for you or give you compliments?

### Try this today...

Rather than exclusively focusing on children’s prosocial actions (e.g., *That was really nice sharing!*), reinforce the child’s prosocial disposition (e.g., *You are really someone who likes to help others!*) or on the positive consequences of their actions (e.g., *When you gave Katie a turn with the tetherball, it made her really happy.*). If possible, invite the other child to share their feelings (e.g., *Marissa, I noticed that Kendall shared the rest of his stickers with you. Why don’t you tell him how that made you feel?*).

## READ AND DISCUSS: THE VERY GOOD DAY

*Children listen to the story and discuss how doing kind acts and showing caring and understanding can really impact another person's day and mood.*

### Before Reading

**What is something kind that a friend did for you unexpectedly? How did it make you feel?**

**There are many ways to show kindness and caring for others, such as sharing, helping, or saying something nice or encouraging. Knowing that you have made others feel cared for and special can make you feel good too.**

**In this story, a group of friends discover that doing something kind for someone else can help them have a good day and can encourage them to do kind things for others.**

**As you listen to the story, pay attention to how the characters feel when their friends show kindness toward them.**

### During Reading

Why did Gabriel bring Kayla a cinnamon roll? *(His dad had made rolls; he thought she might like one)* How did that unexpected kindness make Kayla feel? *(Happy; surprised; special because he was thinking about her; grateful)*

What did Gabriel and Kayla do to show Kim they cared about what she was trying to do? *(Cheered for her; encouraged her)* How did that make Kim feel? *(Less nervous; she could do it; her friends cared)*

Why didn't Kim feel annoyed when Jeremy cut in front of her? *(She was in a good mood; she was happy)*

How did Jeremy's friends show him kindness and caring after he cut in front of them? *(They gave him a break; they let him stay at the front so he could get to class faster; they showed empathy when he said he hadn't finished his work)*

Having *gratitude* means showing that you are thankful to someone who has been kind to you. How did Jeremy show gratitude to his friends for being understanding? *(Said thanks; made them cards)* Why is it important to show gratitude to others? *(It makes them feel appreciated; it lets them know that what they did helped me or made me feel good; it shows that this was special to me and that I don't take their kindness for granted)*

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**Tip:** Have buddies turn and say something nice to each other (e.g., *I think you are\_\_\_\_\_.*) and then reply *thank you.*

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## After Reading

**Why can doing something kind for someone else make you feel good?** (*I see them happy; I know that I helped someone*)

**How might feeling happy help you treat other people kindly?** (*I might want others to feel happy too; it's easier to pay attention to others; I might not get annoyed or upset as easily*)

**What are some ways that you could change someone's day for the better?** (*Say something kind to them; ask how they feel and listen to them; invite them to talk or play; do something unexpectedly nice for them*)

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## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: COMPLIMENT COLLAGE

*Children write compliments to their classmates.*

### Set the Stage

Explain that the children will be practicing being kind and caring by giving compliments to one another.

Say something kind about the class (e.g., *I love how everyone in our class helped one another at centers today!*) and explain that this was a compliment.

A *compliment* is something kind or affectionate you say about someone. You might compliment someone about the kind of person that they are or about something they do.

Emphasize that it makes people feel very special when they notice what kind of person they are or what they have done (rather than their appearance or belongings), and provide a few examples (e.g., *I like how Crystal always says hello to everyone. Darren always works hard and helps everyone in his math group. Erika is a good friend because she is always fair during games at recess.*).

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**Tip:** To help children focus on others' positive traits and behaviors, prompt them to begin compliments with "You are..." or "I like how you..."

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### Facilitate the Activity

Have the children sit in small groups and explain that they will be making Compliment Collages for their classmates. Encourage children to be specific, try to look past the obvious, and perhaps even surprise the person with what they have noticed about them.

Hand out the collage papers to the children randomly and have them finish the prompt and write a compliment about the child named. Encourage children to add decorations to the collage as well. After a designated time, children should pass the collage around the table to the next person in their small group so that another compliment and decorations can be added. Repeat until everyone in the group has written a compliment on each card.

Gather the cards and distribute them to the appropriate children. As you are distributing the cards, have groups brainstorm one thing that they could say or do to be kind to each of the classmates for whom they made cards and encourage them to follow through with their ideas that week.

## Wrap It Up

How did you feel when your classmate gave you a compliment? (*Happy; special; grateful*)

How does it help our class when people show kindness toward one another? (*Everyone has a good day; everyone feels happy; everyone cares about each other; we get along*)

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**Extension:** Establish a permanent space with materials for children (or teachers) to create:

- ▶ Compliment cards
  - ▶ Thank you notes
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## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

**Caring Catchers:** Encourage the class to “catch” one another being kind and caring. For a week, have them keep a journal of the kind things that classmates have done or said to them and have them share with the class. Or, invite them to write some of these caring acts on paper cutouts and create an ongoing classroom display with them (e.g., paper petals forming flowers in a garden). Discuss how their kind acts benefit one another and the classroom community.

**Circle of Kindness:** Have the children sit in a circle and randomly draw a classmate’s name from a cup to whom they will give a compliment. Go around the circle with each child in turn being the receiver of a compliment (so that they can anticipate when it will be their turn to give their compliment).

**Classroom Caring Project:** Discuss and choose an activity that the entire class can do together showing caring toward others (e.g., cleaning up an area on the shared school playground, making cards to give to patients in a local hospital). As you facilitate this project, emphasize how it will benefit others and how each child in the class is making a contribution.



## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *The Game of Tag*

Explore and Practice: Being Welcoming and Inclusive

## GOALS

This set of activities is designed to:

- ▶ Promote inclusive attitudes and behaviors
- ▶ Foster empathy and kindness

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Children will be able to:

- ▶ Describe how it feels to be excluded
- ▶ Identify ways to include others in peer experiences

## KEY CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

Being welcomed and included feels good.

Being left out feels hurtful.

It is important to find ways to ensure that everyone feels welcomed and included.

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## MATERIALS

- ▶ *The Game of Tag* storybook
  - ▶ Objects ("Hot Potato") to pass around
  - ▶ Inclusion Scenarios (copy and cut into cards for buddy work)
-

## RESEARCH AND RELEVANCE

A positive classroom climate is supported when all children feel accepted and welcomed by everyone. Unfortunately, there can be a number of reasons why children choose to explicitly or subtly exclude their peers:

- ▶ Situational constraints (e.g., *There's no more room at our table*)
- ▶ Past peer behavior (e.g., *She's bossy when we play together*)
- ▶ Peer qualifications (e.g., *He doesn't know how to play the game we're playing*)
- ▶ Peer group biases (e.g., *The jungle gym is only for the girls today!*)
- ▶ Peer pressure to exclude (e.g., *My other friends don't want to play with him*)
- ▶ Concerns unrelated to the peer (e.g., *I just need to talk to my other friend for a few minutes*)
- ▶ The need to be alone or with just one or two peers (e.g., *When children need to take a break or aren't ready to interact with multiple people*)

No matter the reason, being excluded or feeling unwelcomed is hurtful. When children are guided in considering their reasons for exclusion (some of which may be legitimate), they can then take ownership of their actions and become actively involved in finding a solution. Even though it is not always possible for all children to play or work together all the time, helping children think about the perspective and feelings of the excluded child can motivate them to figure out alternatives that ensure that no one feels left out or unwelcomed.

### Think about this...

As a child or an adult, have you ever been excluded from a group or activity? How did that make you feel?

Have you ever felt uncomfortable or unable to join in a conversation or activity with others? Is there something that someone else could have done to make it easier for you?

### Try this today...

Promote and reinforce welcoming and inclusive play, and point out how good it makes others feel.

*I heard you say hello to the new student in our class. I think that must have made him feel very welcome!*

*I saw that you changed the rules for your kickball game at recess to include more players—that must have been a lot of fun to play in a different way!*

*It looks like Ronnie really appreciated that you made room for him to sit with you at lunchtime.*

Set clear classroom expectations about exclusion, and do not allow exclusion based on gender or any other social category.

*It's not okay to say that only the girls can play in the sand area this morning—everything on the playground is for everyone. If there's not enough room in that area right now for others to play, let's think together and figure out a way to make sure that everyone can have a turn.*



## READ AND DISCUSS: *THE GAME OF TAG*

*Children discuss what it is like to be included and excluded, and the importance of figuring out ways to make sure that everyone feels welcome.*

### Before Reading

**Has there ever been a time when you were left out of something? How did you feel?**

**Being left out hurts. Although everyone can't play together all of the time, it is important to be kind and try your best to help everyone feel included.**

**In this story, a child does not want to invite someone else to play, but he and his friends later discover what it feels like to be excluded by others.**

**As you listen to the story, think about of what the characters might be thinking and feeling when they are the ones left out and also when they are the ones who are excluding others.**

### During Reading

Why didn't Jordan want to ask Kenny to join him and Annie? (*He thought that Kenny was just waiting for a friend; he wanted to just play with Annie alone; he didn't know Kenny was lonely*). How would Kenny have felt if they hadn't included him? (*Lonely; sad; others didn't want to include him*) How did he feel when they invited him to play? (*Happy; relieved; included*)

What were reasons that the red-haired kid did not want Jordan and his friends to play at the playground? (*She and her friends had already started a game; she didn't know them; they were from a different school*)

After the red-haired kid agreed to let Annie, Jordan and Kenny join the game of tag; why did the kids still feel "unwelcomed?" (*She didn't try to chase them at all*) When children are playing or working together; what can they sometimes do that makes other kids feel unwelcomed? (*Not look at them; not talk or listen to them; not let them participate in the whole activity*)

After all the kids were playing together for a while; what did they find out about each other? (*They had a lot in common; it was fun to play together*)

At the end of the story; why was Jordan just going to watch the other kids play the new game? (*Because it wasn't possible for him to play; he wouldn't be able to hear*). How was he able to be included in the new game? (*They thought of a way to change the game to include him; the red-haired kid was his buddy*)

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**Tip:** Emphasize that even though kids might have a legitimate reason for not including a peer, that child's feelings can still be hurt.

---

### After Reading

Is it okay to sometimes want to play alone or with just one or two friends? What are some times when it might seem impossible for everyone to be included in an activity? (*Not enough room at a table; not enough materials for the activity; someone doesn't know how to play a game*) In those situations; what can you do so that other kids don't feel left out? (*Explain that you want some time alone; ask them to play later; think of something else to play*)

What things can you do to make other kids feel welcomed when you play or work with them? (*Look at them; smile; talk and listen to them; make sure they can join in*)

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**Tip:** Emphasize that it is kind to include others when possible, and encourage the children to ask an adult for help in figuring out how to do this (or how to say *no* kindly when it is not possible).

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## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: BEING WELCOMING AND INCLUSIVE

*Children discuss peer exclusion scenarios, consider the perspectives of those who are excluding and those being excluded, and generate alternative inclusionary scenarios.*

### Set the Stage

Have the children sit in a circle and play a brief game of “Hot Potato,” repeating until all have been excluded from the game. Gather them together and invite them to share how it felt to be excluded from the game and only watch, or to remain in the game when classmates were no longer able to play.

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**Tip:** Hot Potato— Pass one or more objects around the circle while playing music or singing; when the music stops, the children holding the “potatoes” must move back out of the circle.

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### Facilitate the Activity

Explain that you will be discussing different situations that might happen among children and ways to be welcoming and inclusive. Read one of the *Inclusion Scenarios* and, as a group, discuss the following concepts:

- ▶ **Behavior:** Is the behavior an example of exclusion or leaving someone out? (*All scenarios are examples of these, no matter the reason*)
- ▶ **Reason:** What is the perspective of the person who is excluding the other child? Is their reason for wanting to exclude legitimate? (*Sometimes the person has legitimate concerns or reasons*)

- ▶ **Consequences:** Even if the reason is legitimate, how would the excluded child feel? How could this affect the children's relationship with one another?
- ▶ **Alternatives:** What could be done instead to show more acceptance, welcoming, or inclusiveness toward the child? Would this be a fair alternative for everyone?

Continue discussing one to two additional scenarios as an entire group. Or, give each pair of buddies a scenario card and have them discuss what they could do to be more inclusive. Then, gather them to discuss the scenarios in the same manner as above, and invite buddies to share or role play their ideas for inclusive alternatives.

## Wrap It Up

Why is it important to think of ways you could try to include others or find another fair way to play? (*Everyone deserves to be treated fairly and kindly; I could think of ways to do things differently; they will know that I care enough to try and include them*)

What could you do if you see or hear someone excluding another child? (*Remind them that it hurts to feel left out; help them think of other ways to play together; offer to play with the excluded child*)

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## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

**Opposite Musical Chairs:** Using a circle of chairs (or carpet squares) that is equal to the number of children, play music and have the children march around the circle until the music stops, at which time they are each to sit on a chair. Have them stand again, remove one chair, and repeat the process. Continue in this manner for as long as possible. Because no child can be excluded from the game, they will need to figure out creative ways to share chairs as the number of chairs decreases.



*You decide not to invite someone in your class to your birthday party because she always runs around and gets really loud.*

*How can you help everyone feel included?*

*You accidentally invited two friends to your house on the same day. You really just want to play with one person, so you tell one friend that you can't play.*

*How can you help everyone feel included?*

*You and your soccer team are getting ice cream after practice when you see some friends there. You decide not to ask them to sit with you because it is a "team" treat.*

*How can you help everyone feel included?*

*You see someone sitting alone while you are playing chase with your friends at the park. You decide not to invite him to join because he doesn't like those kinds of games.*

*How can you help everyone feel included?*

*Someone asks if he could play soccer with you and your friends at recess. He isn't very good at sports so you tell him that you don't need any more players.*

*How can you help everyone feel included?*

*Someone asks if she can join your partner in a freeze tag game, but there isn't a partner for her so you tell her no.*

*How can you help everyone feel included?*



## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *The Lima Bean Plant*

Explore and Practice: Being a Fast Forgiver

## MATERIALS

- ▶ *The Lima Bean Plant* storybook
- ▶ Scrap paper (one piece per child)

## GOALS

This set of activities is designed to:

- ▶ Promote an awareness of taking responsibility for one's actions
- ▶ Foster motivation and skills for making sincere and reparative amends
- ▶ Promote a forgiving attitude toward others

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Children will be able to:

- ▶ Describe the benefits of forgiving

## KEY CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

To *make amends* means to accept responsibility for doing something that hurts someone else and try to make things better.

When you *make amends*, you:

- ▶ Say your part
- ▶ Speak from the heart
- ▶ Fix what's been broken apart

To *forgive* means to let go of your angry feelings at someone who has hurt you.

Being a fast forgiver can help everyone feel better and focus on making the situation better.

## RESEARCH AND RELEVANCE

Children (and adults) often make mistakes and do things that are insensitive, careless, or misguided, and this can result in hurt feelings, broken belongings, and damaged relationships. Learning how to stay calm, taking steps to repair these situations, maintaining good feelings toward one another are important relationship skills.

### Making Amends

Meaningful amends are more than simply saying the words “I’m sorry” (and it is not beneficial to force children to verbally apologize, especially when they are not ready or do not recognize the harm that their actions have caused). Sincere amends are heartfelt and involve showing concern for the hurt person, taking responsibility for one’s role in what happened, and trying to make restitution for the harm that was caused. Even when the offense was accidental, explaining one’s part in what happened is important in clarifying the situation to the hurt person and can make them less likely to assume that others have hostile or aggressive intentions toward them. Making amends provides a way for children to show caring to someone they have hurt, which can also ease any guilt about their role in what happened.

### Forgiving

Being able to forgive plays an important role in maintaining positive relationships. Forgiveness does not mean that what the other person did is okay and forgotten. Forgiveness is a change (for the better) in the way that one thinks and feels about the person who has hurt or harmed them and involves a number of complex skills, including emotional regulation, perspective-taking, and empathy. Being able to forgive someone and “let go” of negative feelings toward them can help children avoid aggressive tendencies and other negative social behaviors and to maintain their relationships despite the conflicts that will inevitably occur.

### Think about this...

When you are upset or in a conflict with someone, what strategies do you use to stay calm?

How easy or challenging is it for you to admit to others when you have made mistakes or poor choices, or when you have hurt someone?

Are you a “fast forgiver” or do you tend to stay angry or upset at others?

### Try this today...

Be accepting of children’s strong emotions—even negative ones—because everyone has a right to feel angry or upset or hurt on the inside. Providing caring support to children during these times and making it clear that it is not okay to act upon these feelings in unkind ways can help them remain calm, develop self-control, and become ready to forgive or make amends. Offer empathy and acceptance (rather than confrontation) when children make mistakes, while encouraging concern for others and taking responsibility for their actions.



## READ AND DISCUSS: *THE LIMA BEAN PLANT*

*Children listen to the story and discuss the importance of taking responsibility for causing hurt or harm to others, learning ways to repair a situation, and the reasons why it is helpful to be forgiving.*

### Before Reading

**Have your feelings ever been hurt by something someone did? What would have made the situation better for you? Have you ever done something that was hurtful to a friend? What did you do to fix your friendship?**

**Sometimes friends don't get along or do things that are hurtful to one another. When that happens, it is important to stay calm and talk about what happened so you can figure out how to make things better for both of you.**

**In this story, one child makes a mistake that is hurtful to her friend, and they have to figure out a way to forgive and fix their friendship.**

**As you listen to the story, think about what each of the characters might be thinking and feeling and what would make the situation better for each of them.**

### During Reading

Why did Kayla blame Kenny instead of taking responsibility and admitting that she forgot to take care of the plant? *(She didn't want Kenny to be mad at her; she didn't do it on purpose; she felt bad about what happened)*

Why did Kayla eventually take responsibility and explain what happened? *(She wanted Kenny to know what happened; she knew that she had made a mistake; she felt guilty; she wanted him to feel better)*

How do you think Kenny felt after Kayla explained her mistake and showed that she cared about what happened? *(Relieved; less upset; less angry; understood what happened)*

To *forgive* someone means that you stop being angry at what they have done to hurt you. When you forgive someone; it doesn't mean that what they did was okay. It means you let go of your angry feelings so that you can work on making things better. What did Kenny do or think to help him become a fast forgiver? *(Stayed calm; thought about how Kayla was probably feeling; had empathy for Kayla; remembered that she didn't do it on purpose)*

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**Extension:** Have children turn to their buddies and practice saying words of forgiveness (e.g., *I forgive you; I'm still your friend; I'm not angry at you anymore.*).

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What could have happened if Kenny had gotten very angry and hadn't forgiven Kayla? *(They would have both been upset; they may not have stayed friends; they would not have worked together to make a new gift for Kenny's dad)*

To *make amends* means to take responsibility for what you did and to try to make the situation better. What did Kayla do to fix the situation with Kenny? *(Helped Kenny make a new gift; gave him something that was important to her)* After you hurt someone—even if it is an accident—why is it important to do something that will make the situation better? *(It is fair to try and fix or replace what was damaged; it will help the other person feel better; it shows that you care)*

## After Reading

If you have done something that has hurt someone; is it okay to blame other people; make excuses; or try and cover up what happened? Why is it important to take responsibility and say your part in what happened? *(It is honest; it is fair; it helps the other person understand what happened; it lets them know that you care about what happened)*

Why do you think it can be helpful to be a fast forgiver? *(I start feeling better; sometimes it is hard to think of solutions when I am angry; the person who has hurt me can start feeling better)*

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## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: BEING A FAST FORGIVER

*Children discuss the elements of making amends and the reasons for being a “fast forgiver.”*

### Set the Stage

Invite the class to imagine being really angry or upset at someone.

Let's pretend that a friend borrowed your brand new soccer ball, left it at the park, and it was gone. How would that make you feel? *(Angry; sad; upset)* How would being angry make you feel on the inside? *(hot; bubbly; squished up; tight; shaky).*

How do you think your friend feels after losing your ball? *(Upset; sad about losing the ball; sad about upsetting me)*

Crunch up a piece of paper into a ball.

Sometimes when you are angry or upset at someone, you can feel just like this paper ball—all crunched and squished up inside—and the other person might feel that way too. It is important to be able to *make amends* and to *forgive* one another so that you can both start to feel better.

## Facilitate the Activity

Explain each of the elements of making amends.

### Say your part

If you have done something that hurts someone else, it is important to *make amends*, even if what you did was an accident. You first *say your part* and calmly explain what happened. Being honest and taking responsibility for what you did helps the other person understand what happened, and that can make them feel better. If you lost the new soccer ball, how would you *say your part*? (*I lost it; I can't find it; I forgot to bring it back home*)

### Speak from the heart

To *speak from the heart* means that you say something kind to let the other person know that you care about what happened. What could you say to *speak from the heart* to the friend whose ball you lost? (*I wish your ball wasn't lost; I wish you weren't sad*)

### Fix what's been broken apart

To *fix what's broken apart* means that you find a way to make things better and help that person feel good again. When you have disagreements or make mistakes; things could get broken or ruined; such as spilling paint on someone's homework; or someone's feelings have been hurt or damaged. You can make things better by helping to fix something that is ruined or clean up a mess; or you can make someone feel good again. If you lost someone's ball; what could you do to *fix what's broken apart*? (*Help them look for it; offer to share my ball; write a kind note to them*)

Next; distribute a piece of paper to each child.

I'm going to describe some things that might happen among friends; and if it is something that would make you angry or upset; I want you to crunch up your paper and squeeze it tightly.

Describe several scenarios, ask the class if this would upset them, and encourage them to keep squeezing their ball more and more tightly.

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**Tip:** Remind children of classroom guidelines for expressing angry feelings (e.g., *It's okay to be angry and talk about it, but it isn't okay to hurt people or property*).

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**Tip:** Emphasize that taking responsibility should begin with "I" (e.g., *I forgot that I had already invited someone else over to play this afternoon. I didn't see your paper there.*).

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**Tip:** Children who have been hurt may need time and support before they are ready to forgive and accept an apology or be ready to play together again. Establish a safe space for children to take a break when upset.

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### Suggested Scenarios

- ▶ *A classmate won't give you a turn on the swing, and then recess is over*
- ▶ *When you win a game, a classmate accuses you of cheating*
- ▶ *A friend borrows your new jacket and gives it back later with paint all over it*
- ▶ *A classmate tells you that your drawing of a bear looks silly*
- ▶ *A classmate is being careless and bumps into the board game you are playing, and scatters the pieces everywhere*

Have the children continue squeezing as tightly as possible, and ask them how their hands and bodies are feeling (*Tight; hard; want to let go*). After a minute or two; have children let go of their balls.

How did it feel to finally let go of your ball? (*Relieved; relaxed; loose; calm*)

What do you think would have happened if you had to walk around squeezing that ball for the rest of the day? (*Would have gotten tired; wouldn't have been able to do anything else*)

What do you think it would be like if you had to walk around all day feeling really angry at someone who had ruined your things or hurt your feelings? (*Wouldn't feel good; would get tired of being angry; wouldn't be able to pay attention to other things*)

How do you think the other person would feel; knowing that you were still so angry at them? (*Sad about what they had done; sad that they made me upset*)

If you have been hurt by something a friend has done; it is okay to feel upset at first; but it is important to have *forgiveness*. To *forgive* someone means that you stop being angry or upset at them. It doesn't mean that what they did was okay; just that you have let go of the angry feelings squeezed up inside of you. Being a "fast forgiver" can help you both start feeling good again and work on making things better with one another.

### Wrap It Up

How can being a "fast forgiver" help your friendships? (*I don't stay angry at one another; I can work on being good friends again*)

If a friend has broken something of yours or hurt your feelings; what can make it hard to forgive them? (*I am really upset about what happened; they haven't made amends*) What can you do to help you be forgiving? (*Take some deep breaths or think about something positive to help you calm down; take a break until I am ready; think about how my friend might be feeling; ask an adult for help*)

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**Tip:** Make it clear that children can ask an adult for help in managing their emotions and finding the right words to make amends or forgive.

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## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

**Calming Down:** Teach children a calming activity such as taking deep breaths, counting slowly, or picturing something beautiful. Guide them in practicing this activity when they are physically alert (e.g., after coming in from recess) and encourage them to try it when they are feeling upset at someone.

**Fast Forgiver Poster:** Have buddies work together to make a poster about why it is good to be a “fast forgiver.”

**Making Amends Comic Strip:** Choose a conflict scenario and have them write and illustrate a comic strip showing the three elements of making amends.

**Making Amends Role-Play:** Discuss some mistake scenarios and invite children to think about how the person could feel, role-play the scenario, and demonstrate each part of making amends. Have other children respond by role-playing forgiveness.

- ▶ *You accidentally spill your drink on your classmate’s drawing*
- ▶ *You have been waiting a really long time to play with the jump rope, so you take it away from your friend*
- ▶ *You tell your classmate that his clay volcano looks silly*



## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *The Last Day of School*

Explore and Practice: Classroom Yearbook

## GOALS

This set of activities is designed to:

- ▶ Provide a review of what children have learned and experienced throughout the year
- ▶ Provide an opportunity for children to consider how they have grown and changed
- ▶ Encourage thinking and planning for the future

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Children will be able to:

- ▶ Recall memories from the school year
- ▶ Identify ways that they have changed and grown
- ▶ Describe their feelings about the school year coming to an end

## KEY CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

This year we have learned about:

- ▶ Ourselves
- ▶ Each other
- ▶ How to be a community

We have grown and changed in many ways.

We will keep learning and growing.

## MATERIALS

- ▶ *The Last Day of School* storybook
- ▶ Construction paper and art supplies

## RESEARCH AND RELEVANCE

The end of the school year can bring a mix of emotions as children (and adults) prepare to transition away from familiar routines and structures and say goodbye to many of those with whom they have developed relationships throughout the year. Taking time at the end of the school year to reflect upon significant events, accomplishments, relationships, and growth can provide opportunities to:

- ▶ Feel a sense of belonging and connection as they remember shared experiences
- ▶ Feel valued as they recognize their importance and contributions to the class
- ▶ Feel a sense of pride as they celebrate the accomplishments of individuals and the class as a whole
- ▶ Gain a deeper understanding of themselves as they consider how they have grown, learned, and changed
- ▶ Take ownership of their learning and growth as they make plans for the future

### Think about this...

What is something that was particularly frustrating, challenging, or stressful for you this year? What are you proud of accomplishing with your class this year?

How have you grown professionally this year? How has this impacted your work this year and in the future?

What will you remember most about the group of children in your class this year? What is something that you hope they remember about you or about their experiences in your classroom?

### Try this today...

Take time to individually share some specific messages with each child of how you have seen them grow, what you will remember about them, or how they have made a positive impact on you, their classmates, or the classroom community.



## READ AND DISCUSS: *THE LAST DAY OF*

*Children listen to the story and discuss how it can feel to come to the end of an important part of their lives, why it is important to remember time spent together, and think about how they have changed and grown.*

### Before Reading

**How do you think you are going to feel when the school year comes to an end?**

**There are a lot of things that come to an end, such as a vacation, a team season, or a school year. You may have to say goodbye to friends, leave familiar places, or be unsure of what will happen in the future. It's okay to have different kinds of feelings about this, and it's important to take some time and think about the memories you have and the ways you have grown.**

**In this story, a group of kids just like you have just finished their last day of school and are remembering some things that have happened throughout the year.**

**As you listen to the story, pay attention to how the characters feel while thinking back on their time together.**

### During Reading

How did Mia and Jeremy each feel at the beginning of the school year? (*Nervous; shy; excited; eager*) How did you feel when you started school and met your classmates this year?

What were some of the happy memories the kids had together? (*Making new friends; having sleep unders; making a rainforest project; Kayla's Show and Tell*) Why is it nice to think about things that you did together with friends? (*Makes me happy; remember the fun we had together; see how we have changed since then*)

What were some of the not-so-happy memories? (*When two friends were angry at one another; when the park was ruined by a thunderstorm*) How can remembering when things haven't gone so well help you in the future? (*I can think about how you have gotten through difficulties; think about how I will do things differently now; try not to make the same mistakes*)

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**Tip:** Have children share their feelings with their buddy and compare whether they felt the same or different.

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### After Reading

How have your feelings stayed the same or changed since the beginning of the year? Why? (*Got to know classmates; learned and had fun; got used to classroom activities; learned where things are and what to do; made friends*)

Why is it nice to think about things you did together with friends? (*Makes me happy; I remember the fun we had together; see how we have changed since then*)

How can thinking about what has happened in the past help you get ready for the future? (*I can see how I have been in similar situations or had similar feelings in the past; I see how I have changed and how I will keep changing*)

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**Variation:** Give each group a set of photos taken throughout the school year and have them write captions.

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## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: CLASSROOM YEARBOOK

*Children reflect on memories from the past year and work cooperatively to create a representation of those memories.*

### Set the Stage

Explain that the children will be creating a yearbook that represents some of the memories they share from their time together as a classroom community, and discuss the importance of reflecting on the past and thinking about the future.

**Today we are going to create a classroom yearbook that shows the things we remember about being part of (class name). When you come to the end of an important part of your life, like this school year, it is important to take some time to remember the experiences that you have had together. This gives you a chance to talk about your memories as a class, to recognize how each of you and our classroom community has grown and changed over the year, and to think about how these things will matter for you in the future as you continue to learn and grow.**

Guide the children in building a narrative of their school year by inviting them to share some of their favorite memories, providing prompts as necessary (e.g., *things that we learned, classroom events or trips, people who visited*). Write the memories on a timeline and encourage classmates to express similar or differing feelings, ideas, and memories. Point out when they share similar experiences (e.g., *It sounds like many of you remember things that were hard for you at the beginning of the year but became easier over time.*).

## Facilitate the Activity

Have children work in small groups and give each group a different memory topic to discuss. After they have come up with a variety of memories, have each child write and illustrate one of them.

### Possible Memory Topics

- Best Part of the School Day*
- Games We Played*
- Class Surprises*
- Team Projects*
- Things That Were Hard*
- Things We Learned*
- Ways We Were a Community*

Gather the class to discuss their memories. Create a classroom yearbook (or a set of memory books) with the children's work.

## Wrap It Up

What are some memories your classmates shared that you remember as well?

How does sharing memories make you feel about being part of this class? (*Happy; included; sad to say goodbye*)

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**Tip:** Make copies of the yearbook to send home with each child at the end of the year.

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## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

**Classmate Appreciation:** For each classmate, have the children complete a prompt, writing these in each classmate's personal journal or on a slip of paper that is placed into a personal "mailbox" for each child.

- What I liked about having you as a classmate was \_\_\_\_\_.*
- This year, thank you for \_\_\_\_\_.*
- What I will miss about you is \_\_\_\_\_.*

**Cross-Grade Scramble-Up:** Arrange a day when the class can spend a lunch period with those from the next grade (e.g., buddy children with an older peer, or partner small groups of children with small groups of children from the upper grade). Prior to the lunch, help them prepare by brainstorming as a class some things they could talk about or would like to ask the older students (e.g., *How did you feel on the first day of school? What is the best part of being in your grade? What was the coolest thing you learned this year?*).

**My Future Me:** Have children create a short letter to their future self that describes at least two hopes or goals for themselves during the next school year. Encourage children to think about what they might like to continue or what they might like to do differently next year. Review a model letter (e.g., one you have written to your future self) or provide a written prompt (e.g., *Dear (own name), Next year, I hope that \_\_\_\_\_*). Invite several children to share their hopes and goals with the class, and mail the letters to them at home prior to the beginning of the next school year.

**School Year Reflections, Hopes, and Goals:** Throughout the last weeks of school, take time to guide the children in reflecting on memories of the past school year and hopes and goals for the future.

- ▶ *What is something that you/our class accomplished this year that makes you proud?*
- ▶ *What will you miss most about being in our class?*
- ▶ *What was hard about this year?*
- ▶ *What is the nicest thing a classmate did for you this year?*
- ▶ *What is one way you have become a kinder person or a better friend this year?*
- ▶ *What is something you are looking forward to about next year?*
- ▶ *What is one thing you hope doesn't change next year?*
- ▶ *What is one thing you think will be harder/easier next year?*
- ▶ *What is something you would like to teach your new class next year?*
- ▶ *What is something you want to do over the break that will help you get ready for next year?*



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