

Emotional Intelligence Lessons 1-3

(The lessons can be adapted to your specific grade level)

Read [The Most Magnificent Thing](#). It encourages a growth mindset and grit. I think the little dog helps the kids connect more with the book.

Questions that follow the book:

- Why does the girl collect so many things/supplies?
- How do you think she feels when she decides to start all over again? Why?
- Why do you think the girl chooses not to give up on her creation?

How do you feel when things don't go your way?

This leads us into class strategies of what we can do when we feel frustrated/angry or we just can't think clearly. I bring out the glitter jar (water and glitter) we look through it and see what we can see. Then we shake it up and compare it to when we get frustrated or angry and most make the connection of not being able to see clearly. The students then come up with strategies of what we could do in the class to help us calm down and see clearly.

- We do a little "I can do hard things" activity of something that they feel is hard and how they can practice to help them improve.
- Tinkering in the Maker Space is a great extension as well for grit and growth mindset.

Positive Problem Solving

This activity coaches children to think more about what problems they might be facing and how to overcome them. It can also help them to separate their emotions from their experiences, and instead focus on positive ways to handle challenges.

You will need:

- A print out that you can find [here](#). This can be printed large (A3) and laminated so it is reusable, or multiple smaller charts for use over different scenarios.
- Pens

How to run the activity:

- Once a week or month, sit down with your students and use the print-out chart to explore the 'problems' or challenges that they have come up against. Get them to think about how big or small they felt these challenges were, and how they reacted.
- Make sure you spend time exploring and listening to what your students tell you about their problems. Ask them to describe their reactions, both during the scenario and perhaps a day later. How did they feel? Why do they think they reacted that way? How would they like to react next time?
- For each scenario, get your students to write down what they think the very best way for them to react would be. Create a card or small mood board for each 'problem' with positive words and pictures that represent the best way they could react.
- Keep these somewhere visual so your students can be reminded what a positive reaction to a problem might be. Possibly have problem solving bulletin board.
- Revisit the printout as often as you like, each time exploring and discussing ways to overcome the problems that your students come up against and positive ways to respond.

([Positive Psychology](#))

Physical Coping Strategies to Calm Emotions

Spaghetti Body>

1. Sometimes, your body gets too tight. This happens when you are mad or nervous. Spaghetti Body is something you do to get your body loose. That makes you feel better. Since you are the boss of your body, you can make the tight go away.

2. Have you seen wet spaghetti noodles? They are wiggly, not tight. You can make your body like spaghetti noodles.

3. Okay, this is the cool part. To get your Spaghetti Body, first you have to make your body very tight all over! Let's practice. Scrunch your hands very tight. You can even grunt if that helps. And now, spaghetti your hands very loose. Great job.

4. Stand up now. When I say a body part, you scrunch it very tight. Count to 3. Then make it Spaghetti loose. So you will scrunch, hold for 3, then relax it like a noodle. What will you do? (Have child repeat directions).

5. Scrunch your feet. 1,2,3. Now Spaghetti! Scrunch your legs. 1,2,3. Now Spaghetti! Scrunch your bottom! Laughing is okay, but keep scrunching. 1,2,3. Now Spaghetti. You want to do your bottom again, right? Okay, go ahead. (Repeat for stomach, shoulders, arms, hands, neck, face,

eyes).

6.Great job! You did Spaghetti Body! You should feel pretty loose and wiggly all over. Doing Spaghetti Body helps your body feel less sad or nervous. This means you will feel better.

7.The last thing to know is: You HAVE to practice Spaghetti Body or it won't work. Just like you practice (baseball, piano, reading, tying your shoes), you have to practice Spaghetti Body to get good at it. You should practice it when you feel good and happy. That way, you will be an expert spaghetti kid when you get mad or nervous.

8.Remember, you are the boss of your body. You can feel better by doing Spaghetti Body.

([The Plum Tree](#))

Integrating Emotional Intelligence Character Strength in Writing

First grade teacher Julia Richardson **offers several strategies** including ones to support the strength of **social intelligence** in her Edutopia article "[Integrating SEL Into Writing Instruction](#)".

Here is an excerpt:

"Carefully swapping out books and altering writing prompts while maintaining the structure of literacy skills development (reading comprehension, phonics, writing components), I designed a four-week-long narrative unit to explore emotional awareness.

During our Writer's Workshop block, we read four different picture books from the acclaimed [Trace Moroney's Feelings Series](#) (also available in Spanish) that explore emotions—how to identify our or others' emotions and strategies for changing how we feel. We read *When I'm Feeling Happy*, *When I'm Feeling Sad*, *When I'm Feeling Angry*, and *When I'm Feeling Nervous*. Our week began with a read-aloud and opened into days of discussions, writing, and art. Through those weeks, I watched my students' writing come alive and their relationships blossom."

Remember Your Emotions

Choose an emotion, close your eyes and remember a time when you felt that way. E.G., Happy, sad, excited, disappointed. Have a Think: What color best represents that emotion for you? Where in your body did you feel that emotion? Use crayons or pencils to draw a stick figure of

yourself. Use different colours to show the different emotions you are feeling. Choose whatever color you think best shows the emotion and use that color in the stick figure to show where in your body you feel that emotion.

([Teach PEEC](#))

Why Do We Lose Control of Our Emotions?

Watch this [video](#)

‘Flipping your lid’ is a behaviour that we choose to do in response to an emotion we are feeling. Draw and label a picture about a time when you ‘flipped your lid’. What were the feelings like? What did they do to your body? What other thoughts and actions can you use next time, instead of ‘flipping your lid’? Tick the boxes below and add your own ideas.

- ⊗ Have some alone time
- ⊗ Ask for a hug
- ⊗ Ask someone to listen to you
- ⊗ Take a big, deep breath
- ⊗ _____
- ⊗ _____

([Teach PEEC](#))

I Get Angry

Watch this [video](#)

We all have difficult feelings sometimes. Watch the video and listen for the things some people do when they experience difficult feelings like anger. Which strategies would you like to try today? Add strategies to the list below.

- Count to three
- Take a deep breath
- Cross your arms
- Say ‘stop’ to yourself
- Spend time by yourself

Choose a difficult feeling and create a poster to remind you to use your chosen strategy. Find a good place to display the poster. For example, your desk, bedroom or the fridge. Difficult feelings could include: Anger Frustration Sadness Disappointment

([Teach PEEC](#))

[Emotions Color Wheel](#)- write up a lesson using it--

Emotional Check-Ins

What they are, why they work, and ways to do them

Emotional check-ins are regular opportunities for students (and adults) to identify and evaluate how they are feeling.

Advantages:

- Takes minimal time
- Builds skills in emotional awareness (for self-management)
- Builds skills in empathy (for collaboration)
- Enables teachers to receive a “snapshot” of the emotional climate
- Reduces incidents of emotional outbursts, loneliness, and social conflict
- Increases health, focus, and academic achievement
- Students are able to calm down (regulate their emotions) faster
- Feelings do not need to be interpreted, solved or “fixed”

Why they work:

Emotional arousal hijacks the “thinking brain”, dominating the ability to effectively make decisions and solve problems. Many studies are now showing that the simple act of **labeling emotions** (i.e. giving them a name) has a strong positive effect on the body’s ability to quickly regulate emotions. By practicing this action on a daily or weekly basis, children are gradually shaping their brains and strengthening the connections responsible for increased and more efficient emotional control. As a carry-on effect, children also learn to be aware of the feelings of

others around them. This is the skill **empathy**, which is the prerequisite for healthy friendships and successful collaborative experiences.

Ways to do them:

[An example in Early Childhood \(video\)](#)

[Using emotional check-ins during morning meetings](#)

[Worksheet examples](#)

[Using technology \(Google Forms\) for “digital check-ins”](#)

[Dan Siegel - a method for parents and teachers to explain this concept to children \(video\)](#)

[Morningside Center Lesson on Feelings and Needs](#) Link to Needs and Feelings [Chart](#)

Specific Example:

When students and teachers enter the classroom, backpacks and textbooks aren't the only baggage they bring with them. Everyone enters the room in a different mental, emotional and physical state, which often affects their readiness to learn.

Use the Stop, Breathe & Think app or downloadable posters and worksheets to help students identify specific words to describe how they are feeling mentally, physically and emotionally.

These check-in activities can be used at the beginning of class or as a way to transition from one activity to another.

Script>

We're going to try an activity right now called “check-in,” where we use our inner detective to check in with ourselves the way a good friend or a good listener would. You are going to notice how your mind, body and emotions feel in this moment, not yesterday or tomorrow, but right now.

Place your hand over your heart, and notice what emotions or feelings are there. It is OK if they are simple or complicated; just notice.

Now, choose 3 words from the check-in posters or worksheets to describe how you feel.

Teacher models choosing 3-5 words to describe how they are feeling.

Students can draw or write down how they are feeling to track their everyday emotions. Opportunity for a sharing circle with students.

[\(SBT\)](#)

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([Teach PEEC](#))

Why Do We Lose Control of Our Emotions?

This video might be too difficult to understand for our first graders. You could first read the book [Your Fantastic Elastic Brain](#) and do some activities before watching the video.

Watch this [video](#)

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([Teach PEEC](#))

A Lesson on Feelings for Grades 3-5 (see if adaptable for younger students)

Opening Ceremony

Welcome students to the virtual space by name. Use different feelings words as you do so.

Welcome Angel, I feel happy to see you today. Hello Racquel, I feel excited to see you. Darius,

I feel so fortunate that you joined us. Welcome Ahmed, I feel delight as I look at your beautiful face. Soraya, I feel so grateful that you made it today, welcome, etc.

Other words to consider using, as you welcome your students, are: joyous, overjoyed, exhilarated, over the moon, sunny, blissful, thrilled, electrified, jubilant, elated, pleased, tickled, elated, etc.

Ask students what they noticed as they joined you for class today. What did they notice about the way you welcomed them? Ask them how it made them feel to be welcomed in this way. Invite them to use a range of feelings words while showing what these feelings look like on their faces.

Feelings Guessing Game

Explain to your students that to start today's lesson, you'll show the following video clip [Inside Out: Guessing Feelings](#).

Explain that this clip, based on the 2015 animated movie Inside Out, is broken into five parts. In each part, you'll see a character in action, experiencing a feeling. After each part, you'll see a counter, counting down from 3 to 1 at which point you'll get a chance to guess what the character was feeling. Jot down the feeling you think it is in the chat box, on the whiteboard, or elsewhere (depending on the online platform you're using).

As the teacher you might even hit the pause button after each character's feeling, to give your students a chance to guess and submit the character's feeling.

Drawing Your Personal Experience with Feelings

Invite students to think about a time recently when they felt one of the feelings from the video they just watched. What happened? Give them some time to draw the feeling, then ask them to share out what the feeling was and what brought on the feeling. Encourage students to show their drawing as they share out. Remind them that this is not an art class – their drawings don't need to be perfect, they're just a way to share their feeling.

At the end of the activity, have students hold up their pictures all at the same time.

Acknowledge the various feelings your students are experiencing, no matter what they are.

Explain that we're all likely feeling lots of feelings all the time, especially now that we're away from school and our regular routine of seeing each other. We're going to spend some time with our feelings, in the weeks to come, remembering that no matter what our feelings are, "they're all okay."

Closing Ceremony

Ask students to give you thumbs up, down, or in between to indicate how they're feeling. Or: ask students to give you a thumbs up, down, or in between to indicate how they were feeling at the start of the lesson, then give you a second thumbs up, down, or in between to indicate how they're feeling now. Note if the session helped shift and/or lift students' mood.

Extension Activity: Emotions of Pixar

Show the following clip [Emotions of Pixar](#) clip by Lindsay McCutcheon. Ask students to make connections to how they're feeling these days.



Teacher Dos & Don'ts on Feelings

DO continue to acknowledge student feelings throughout this and subsequent lessons/activities. **DO:**

- Normalize their feelings, e.g. “we all feel sad or lonely sometimes” or “I hear Racquel when she talks of feeling frustrated.” This can reduce stigma and reinforces that feelings are human and okay.
- Name student feelings, e.g. “so several of us feel confused right now” and “I’m noticing feelings of anxiety.” By naming our strong feelings, we can hit the pause button. And rather than having the feelings overwhelm us and take over, naming them can help our students take a step back and regain control. Clinical professor of psychiatry Dan Siegel refers to this approach as “naming to tame it.”
- Name the feelings, don’t label the person, e.g. “I feel frustrated” instead of “I am frustrated” or “Racquel sounds like she feels sad” instead of “Racquel is sad.” This allows us to be more than our feelings and reminds us that, with time and support, we can move through and past them.

DON’T try to fix or sugarcoat things. Don’t tell students things like, “don’t be sad, this will all be over soon” or “it’s not that bad.” Let students have their feelings. Listening, being present, naming, and normalizing student feelings can help them process and move through and past their feelings.

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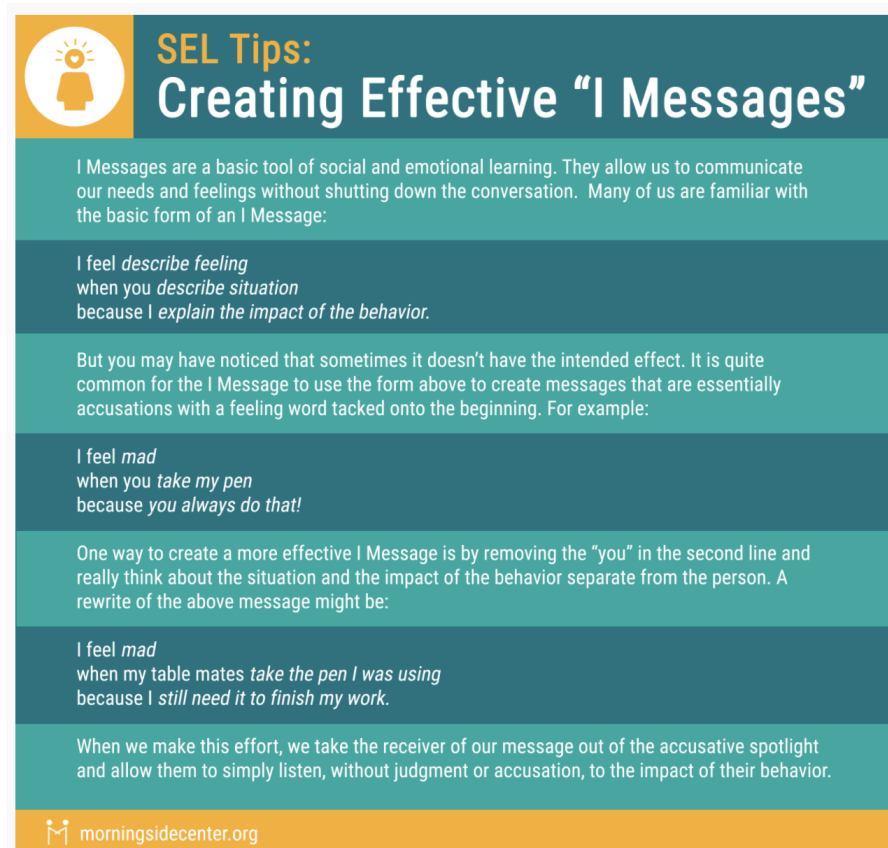
The “I Message” Role Play Video

"I-messages" are a key strategy for being assertive. They allow us to communicate our needs and feelings without shutting down the conversation.

In the [video](#), a third-grade teacher skillfully guides students in understanding - and roleplaying - both "you-messages" and "I-messages." The teacher pauses the action, allowing students to discuss what is happening, what the characters might do differently, and different possible outcomes.

For more on I-messages, assertiveness, and roleplay, see these lessons and tips:

- [I-Messages & The Assertiveness Line](#)
- [SEL Tip: Creating Effective "I Messages"](#)
- [SEL Tip: The "I Need Message"](#)
- [Role-Play as an SEL Teaching Tool](#)
- [Be strong, Be Mean, or Give In?](#)
- [SEL Tip: Be Naturally Assertive](#)



 **SEL Tips:**
Creating Effective "I Messages"

I Messages are a basic tool of social and emotional learning. They allow us to communicate our needs and feelings without shutting down the conversation. Many of us are familiar with the basic form of an I Message:

I feel *describe feeling*
when you *describe situation*
because I *explain the impact of the behavior*.

But you may have noticed that sometimes it doesn't have the intended effect. It is quite common for the I Message to use the form above to create messages that are essentially accusations with a feeling word tacked onto the beginning. For example:

I feel *mad*
when you *take my pen*
because *you always do that!*

One way to create a more effective I Message is by removing the "you" in the second line and really think about the situation and the impact of the behavior separate from the person. A rewrite of the above message might be:

I feel *mad*
when my table mates *take the pen I was using*
because I *still need it to finish my work*.

When we make this effort, we take the receiver of our message out of the accusative spotlight and allow them to simply listen, without judgment or accusation, to the impact of their behavior.

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Adapt the following tip sheets for younger students



SEL Tip

Using Self-Talk to Calm Down

Use generic self-talk to affirm that you are safe & capable.

1 The fight, flight, or freeze stress response is triggered when the reptilian part of our brain (the limbic system) believes our survival is at stake.

"I am good."
"I am safe."
"I can handle this."

Acknowledge your feelings to soothe agitated parts of the brain.

2 Reengage the cortex in a particularly stressful moment & open up choices of how to respond.

"Wow, I feel frustrated."
"I feel annoyed." Or "I feel nervous."
"I'm feeling [x-emotion] because [y-event] happened."

Reframe the narrative in your head

3 Instead of engaging in thoughts that add fuel to an already stressful situation, we want to pivot & reframe things in the positive.

"They're such a jerk!" ⇨ "Maybe they didn't mean it."
"They always do that!" ⇨ "Maybe this isn't about me."
"I can't believe they did it again!" ⇨ "Maybe they don't yet have the skills to ____."

 morningsidecenter.org/teachable-moment/lessons/using-self-talk-calm-down



SEL Tips: We can shape our self-talk

- 1 First, share this definition of self-talk: The act or practice of talking to oneself, either aloud or silently and mentally.
- 2 Let everyone know that we all experience silent self-talk within our minds, unconsciously, during our everyday lives.
- 3 Set a timer and tell students that for the next minute, we'll sit in silent meditation and observe our silent self-talk.
- 4 After the minute has passed, ask students to open their eyes and share. Let them know that there are no right or wrong answers. Chart the students' answers.
- 5 Explain that some of our self-talk is positive or neutral, which usually makes us feel better, and some of it is negative, which usually makes feel worse. See if you and the students can categorize the answers you charted.
- 6 Sometimes our thoughts are focused on a mistake or problem. Negative self-talk about this might include berating ourselves over and over. Positive self-talk could include thinking about how we can address the problem and reminding ourselves that making mistakes is part of life and doesn't make us "bad."
- 7 Let students know that they have the power to change their self-talk. One way to do this is to shift their interpretation of a situation from negative to neutral or positive.