

EC-K Emotional Intelligence Lessons

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

Emotions - Understanding our Feelings and How to Describe Them

Take photos of each child (alone or in pairs) and ask them to express an emotion that they are feeling or have felt. Silly, scared, happy, sad, etc. Print each of the photos out and ask the children to help come up with a word to describe that emotion and write it down underneath the photo. An alternative to this or in addition to this lesson - you can also present the photos to the children on the projector so that the class has a chance to look at all of the images together and discuss them. We also made a book out of the photos and it is in our classroom so that the children can look at the photos whenever they want to. This has been a great way for our class to connect an emotion to their feelings but has also increased their vocabulary. (Elisabeth)

Use any of the [Todd Parr](#) books to open up dialogue with the children about emotions and identity. For example in the book, *It's Okay to Be Different* there are many opportunities for children to relate to the ideas in the book but to also share about what makes them different and special. We used this book in our classroom to talk about what makes us unique and different in our classroom. (Elisabeth)

Identity and Self Image - I use this book, [The Best Part of Me](#) early in the school year to promote positive self esteem and body image among young children. The book is written mostly by children and it focuses on a single part of the body that a child loves about themselves. My class thoroughly enjoyed this activity and it created rich conversations around how we see ourselves and others. What makes us strong, happy, proud and an individual. The children identify one part of their body they love, I photograph that part of them, they sketch that part of their body and then we put everything together with a personal quote from them about their body. (Elisabeth)

The Empathy Game

This one is slightly more in-depth, focusing on developing an understanding of different experiences, and empathetic responses.

You will need:

- Different colored cards, or scrap paper

- Pens, stickers or images if you prefer

How to run the activity:

- You will need three sets of cards: one set will have different scenarios or situations written on them (you can tailor these to be typical of experiences the children might have depending on their age). Another set will have possible responses to the situation, and the final set will have an emotion written on them.
- Once you have all these written up (or you can type them up on a computer and print if easier), present your children with one of the scenario cards. An example could be '*Tom went to school but left his gym kit at home so Tom couldn't play football. How does Tom feel?*' Ask your children to use the response and emotion cards to explain how they think Tom might feel.
- Encourage discussion and communication around why your children have chosen the responses they have. While there should be no hard wrong or right answers, be sure to question responses and encourage empathetic thinking.

([Positive Psychology](#))

Emotional Literacy

Develop activities to bring the language of emotions into your classroom culture. Brené Brown offers her core emotions here:

Anger	Happy
Anxious	Humiliation
Belonging	Hurt
Blame	Jealous
Curious	Joy
Disappointed	Judgment
Disgust	Lonely
Embarrassment	Love
Empathy	Overwhelmed
Excited	Regret
Fear Scared	Sad
Frustrated	Shame
Gratitude	Surprised
Grief	Vulnerability
Guilt	Worried

([Brené Brown](#))

The Way I Feel - [Video](#) book reading by the author, Janan Cain

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 \(video\)](#)

The following were used by teachers during virtual school. They can of course be used in regular school as well. :)

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- We’ve done read alouds and games that fall into SEL learning. Books include:
 - [The Feel Good Book by Todd Parr](#)
 - [A Quiet Place by Douglas Wood](#)
 - [I am Peace by Susan Verde](#)
 - [I am Yoga by Susan Verde](#)
- Sharing physical/mindfulness links and activities each week including:
 - www.gonoodle.com
 - [Insect/Bugs Yoga Poses](#)

- [Cosmic Kids Yoga](#)
- [balance on the lines](#)
- [Yoga movement cards](#)
- [Outdoor Gross Motor Skill cards](#)
- [Dr. Jean's Videos](#)
- [The Learning Station](#)
- [MovetoLearn](#)
- [Debbie Doo - Get up and Move](#)
- [Super Hero Yoga](#)
- [Movement Break](#)
- [Animal Movement Cards](#)
- Staying Connected to Friends
 - Writing letters/cards to friends then sharing it with their friends on seesaw
 - [Friends Memory Game](#)
 - Small group/large group google meets
 - Look to ask the parents what they are doing to nurture both (when possible) physical and digital connection time for their children with their friends.
- Self-reflection
 - [About Me Journal](#)
- Helping families
 - [Conversation Cards](#)
 - Healthy snack recipes
 - Sending a Parent Observation Form on Monday to help families understand their children's social and emotional development.
- [Lessons](#) on Loss and Change (EC-2)

K>

- Lots of social and emotional read alouds, some from our home collection and some from [Epic](#) or [Vooks](#). Each teacher takes a turn posting a read aloud each day of the school week.
- We have a huge collection of [Todd Parr](#)'s books and read those often.
- We also use [Go Noodle](#) for mindfulness and breathing activities as well as just general fun!
- From time to time we send out personal video messages to individual children and their families via Seesaw to check in and say hello.
- The team is currently meeting daily with individual students on Google Meets as well as small groups depending on the need. We have begun a weekly class party every Friday.
- We will be trialing a whole class morning meeting next Monday and potentially continuing until the end of the year.
- We sent a google form for parents to complete; asking specific questions about what would be helpful and supportive for them during this time. We asked for feedback about virtual school, what's working, what isn't, etc.

- We have begun to open up our Monday morning google meets to parents only. This is a time for them to ask us questions or get advice about their child's learning and how they are engaging with Virtual School.
- For two weeks (prior to Spring Break) each teacher shared a wellness post with KG students. We intentionally focused on mental health and wellness by sharing our own ideas and practices at home. One day we might focus on being with our pet, making art, going out in nature, doing yoga or spending time with family. We made a video and posted it to each child's Seesaw account.
- We've just launched an optional weekly activity where children get to be the teachers and share something with their classmates that they want to teach. It is their choice to share whatever they'd like.
- Look to ask the parents what they are doing to nurture both (when possible) physical and digital connection time for their children with their friends.
- [Lessons](#) on Loss and Change (EC-2)
- [Lessons](#) on Feelings (K-2)