

Exploring People's Emotions

Our thoughts and emotions often influence our behavior. Helping students see the connection between what they think, what they feel, and what they do leads to a better understanding of the role of emotions in their lives.

SEL COMPETENCIES

Self-Awareness, Self-Management

SKILLS identifying emotions, impulse control, self-discipline

MATERIALS

- ✓ Connecting Projectable 2.3.1
- ✓ Reflecting Projectable 2.3.2
- ✓ Student Handout: Practicing
- ✓ Family Connection Worksheet

CLASSROOM CONFIGURATION

- D** whole class **C** whole class
P small groups **A** individuals

OBJECTIVES

Students will

- ✓ understand the connection between thoughts, emotions (feelings), and actions;
- ✓ identify how thoughts and emotions affect decision making and responsible behavior.

SKILLS Progression

LAST YEAR, students identified ranges of emotions that different people experience in the same situation.

THIS YEAR, students will analyze how thoughts, emotions, and actions are connected and impact people's emotions differently.

NEXT YEAR, students will gain clarity around their emotions and thoughts to build self-control.

D DISCOVERING

8 MINUTES



ACTIVITY 1

Get your class to start thinking about the connection between thoughts, emotions (feelings), and actions (behavior).

SAY: *Class I want you to behave yourself. (Repeat your statement if necessary and let them react).*

ASK: *Now that I've got your attention, what does it mean when I say, "behave yourself?"*

Students will probably reply that it means they're supposed to stop fooling around – to act "good". Tell them, they were acting fine, you just wanted to get them to think about the word "behave" or "behavior".

ASK: *What is our behavior? Is it our actions? What causes our behavior?*

Guide the discussion so that students realize that it's what goes on inside, "in our heads," that often leads to our actions. That the way we act is often a response to our thoughts and our emotions (or feelings).

ASK: *How do you think our thoughts and feelings affect our actions?*

C CONNECTING

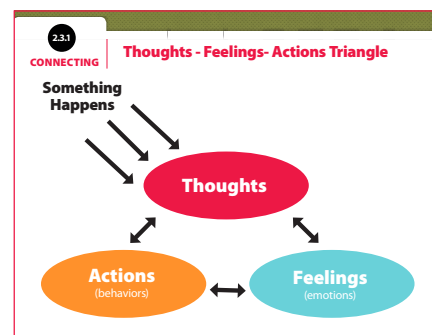
10 MINUTES

INSTRUCTION

Explore how thoughts, emotions, and actions are connected

Display **Connecting Projectable 2.3.1** showing the connection between thoughts, emotions, and actions. Review the triangle and have the students understand that when something happens, they have thoughts and emotions which often lead to an action. Discuss the following questions:

- How are thoughts, emotions, and actions related?
- How can our behavior, our actions, also affect our thoughts and feelings?



ASK: *Are you free to think what you want? Are you free to feel what you want? Are you free to do what you want?*

We can all think what we want, we can all feel what we want, it is only our actions that we are held accountable for. So it's important to understand the role our thoughts and feelings play in our behavior, so that we can learn to respond more positively even when negative things happen to us. We can choose to respond more in line with our values.

SAY: *Let's use the triangle to explore how thoughts, feelings, and actions are interconnected. Can someone share an example, not too dramatic, of something that happened to you recently that caused you to respond. It does not have to be a negative response.*

Select an appropriate example. Remember to try to keep the situations low-key as you walk through – what happened, what they thought, what they felt, and how they acted. If necessary use only positive instances. (You may also explore how their response made them feel).

P PRACTICING 20 MINUTES

ACTIVITY 2

Connecting thoughts, emotions, and actions

Using a creative grouping strategy divide the students into small groups. Distribute **Student Handout: Practicing** and read through the instructions. The goal of the activity is to help students see that their thoughts often guide their emotions and actions. If they choose to use more positive or at least neutral thoughts in response to negative events they will act more responsibly and more in line with their values.

You can complete the activity in one of two ways:

1. Have the groups complete both responses before you have a discussion about the different thoughts they can use to respond more responsibly.
2. Have the groups complete and share their initial response, then as a class discuss alternative responses they can use to act more responsibly.

Reflecting

Display **Reflecting Project 2.3.2**. Students use their class notebooks to reflect individually and as a class on what they learned in this lesson.

What?	How do thoughts and emotions often lead to actions?
So What?	How can you use this knowledge to better understand your own and others' emotions?
Now What?	How can you use your values to think about events differently and act more responsibly?



Community Connection

Students can work with the local library to find resources in developing emotional intelligence. They can research the brain to gain a deeper understanding of the emotion-thought-action connection when they have strong emotions.



Family Connection

Have students use the chart found in the Practicing Handout to help your student and a family member work through a recent event that may have led to negative actions. Distribute the Family Connection Worksheet.



Applying Across the Curriculum

DRAMA Body language is saying things without words. For example, when you are angry, you frown or stand a certain way. In theater and drama, it is used to convey the mood and emotion with subtlety. You'll frequently see characters hear news and take a step back, have their body clench up, or react without saying anything.

TECHNOLOGY Invite students to think about how emotions are portrayed in this technological age. Have students choose emoticons and identify the emotions each portrays. Have students create animated characters portraying various emoticons.



Practicing Resource: Student Handout

23 **PRACTICING**

The Thought, Feelings, Actions Connection

Working with your small group, decide the thoughts and feelings and behaviors you might have in each of the following situations. Record those in the top row. In the bottom row record alternative thoughts that may lead to a less negative emotion and action. Remember, sometimes the most appropriate thing is to take no action at all.

SOMETHING HAPPENS	THOUGHTS	FEELINGS	ACTIONS
1 When crossing the street in front of the school a driver almost hits you.			
2 You are passed over for first string on your team.			
3 You're at a party or school dance and you see someone else talking with a girl or boy you like.			
4 Your closest friend starts to hang around a lot with other people as well as you.			
5 You worked very hard on a school project and only receive a C.			
6 A group of kids walk by and glare at you as they pass.			



APPLYING 2 MINUTES

Have the students use the model from the Practicing Handout to record their thoughts, emotions, and actions in response to 3 events over the coming week. If the students responded negatively have them come up with alternative thoughts that they may have used to respond more responsibly.

ASSESSING

PRACTICING (INFORMAL FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT) Note the students' responses during the discussion of the Practicing Activity to help determine their understanding of how thoughts, emotions, and actions are connected.

APPLYING (FORMAL FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT) Review the students' response to the reflecting activity to assess how well students better understand their own thoughts, emotions, and behaviors and how their thoughts and behaviors are associated with their emotions.

BUILDING SKILLS BEYOND THE LESSON

Analyze It!

REINFORCEMENT

PRACTICING Ask students to pay attention to the connection between others' body language, their emotions, and their actions for the next two days. By watching others' emotions did you respond differently to them and behave more responsibly? How?

Interview!

PRACTICING Actors must use their emotions to create an illusion and become the character they play. Ask students to interview an actor in their class or theater teacher about how he or she is able to portray an emotion so quickly. Do they tap into their own personal experiences for the specific emotions they are asked to portray?

Observe!

ENRICHMENT

PRACTICING Have students watch a TV show or movie and observe how the characters' thoughts lead to the emotions and how the emotions correspond to the actions of the show or movie.

Explore It!

PRACTICING Ask students to explore the notion of a pep talk or speech from a coach before a big game. How does the speech affect the way the athletes play?