

Exploring Emotions in Action

As students begin to understand that their thoughts are linked to their emotions they can begin to reduce their emotions control over their lives and make better choices and decisions.

SEL COMPETENCIES

Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Responsible Decision-Making

SKILLS self-efficacy, impulse control, identifying emotions, self-discipline

MATERIALS

- ✓ Discovering Projectable 2.3.1
- ✓ Connecting Projectable 2.3.2
- ✓ Reflecting Projectable 2.3.3
- ✓ Student Handout: Practicing
- ✓ Family Connection Worksheet

CLASSROOM CONFIGURATION

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

OBJECTIVES

Students will

- ✓ discover how their thoughts are linked to their feelings;
- ✓ practice turning negative thoughts into positive thoughts.

SKILLS Progression

LAST YEAR, students analyzed how situations impact people's emotions differently.

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

NEXT YEAR, students will learn to manage anger through understanding the cycle of emotions, thoughts, and actions.

D DISCOVERING

8 MINUTES



ACTIVITY 1

Tell students that they are going to focus on understanding their emotional responses to difficult situations in order to make better decisions. This year they will build on their emotional literacy to become more aware of what they are thinking when they feel strong emotions and to use their thoughts to respond more positively.

Display **Discovering Projectable 2.3.1**, which asks students to examine the strongest emotion(s) they experienced last week and then to respond as to how their body reacted and what thoughts they were having. Ask for volunteers to share their responses to the questions.

ASK: *How did you respond to the emotion(s)? Did you respond negatively, positively, or neutrally? How might you have responded differently to the emotion?*

SAY: *There is a very strong connection between how we feel about a situation, how we think about it, and how we act on it. To better understand emotions and learn to manage them, we need to peel back the surface of the emotion to identify the thoughts that triggered it.*

2.3.1

DISCOVERING

Group Discussion

Record your answers to the following questions.

- Over the last week, what was the strongest emotion(s) you experienced?
- What thoughts were you having when you experienced this emotion?
- How did you become aware of this feeling?
- Did you recognize the emotion as you were experiencing it?
- Did you become aware of your emotions by your body's reaction, or because of the thoughts you were thinking?

KEEP IN MIND

Tell students that in this class we'll use "emotions" and "feelings" interchangeably.

C CONNECTING

10 MINUTES

INSTRUCTION

SAY: *Thoughts often precede our emotions (our feelings). Thoughts and feelings (emotions) often play a large role in how we behave. Responding negatively to our thoughts and feelings often leads to negative behavior, which can cause problems. Here's an example of a thought vs. a feeling: EXPRESSING A THOUGHT: "I feel like you always want to put me down." EXPRESSING A FEELING: "I feel angry." See how the thought might relate to the feeling.*

Display **Connecting Projectable 2.3.2** which asks students to identify items as either thoughts or feelings and give a reason for their answer. Lead the class through the exercise helping them to understand the difference and connection between thoughts and feelings.

Discuss students' responses

ASK: *Why is it important to think about your thoughts and how they influence your actions? For example, if you're mad and thinking bad thoughts about someone, what can happen if you're not careful?*

ASK: *What are situations that you have been in that might have had different results if you had thought before you acted? Some ways to control your thoughts are: do not react right away; take a deep breath; talk to someone you trust; be aware of the events that trigger negative and positive thoughts; and accept that some things are out of your control. These are just a few techniques that you can use to control your thoughts before taking action. After what we've discussed, what might you have done differently in the situations you described earlier?*

Tell students that non-action is also a choice, and an appropriate response to certain situations, like when someone "baits" you. When we let other people trigger us, we give them control.

P PRACTICING 20 MINUTES

ACTIVITY 2

Practice understanding feelings

Use your creative grouping strategies to organize the students into small groups. Distribute **Student Handout: Practicing** and review the directions with the class. As the students complete the activity ask for volunteers to share some of their responses and discuss the importance of turning negative thoughts about difficult situations into more a more positive response. Help them think through how a positive spin will lead to less negative feelings and actions.

Reflecting

Display **Reflecting Project 2.3.3** Students use their class notebooks to reflect individually and as a class on what they learned in this lesson.

What?	What is the connection between your thoughts, feelings, and actions?
So What?	What can happen when you react to negative situations too quickly without thinking things through?
Now What?	In what area(s) of your life would you like to have more self-control?

2.3.2

CONNECTING

Thoughts or Feelings?
 For each item, indicate whether it is a thought or a feeling. Even though all of the examples begin with "I feel..." some are actually thoughts.
 Be prepared to explain the reason for your choice.

1. I feel that something wonderful is going to happen.	<input type="checkbox"/> THOUGHT	<input type="checkbox"/> FEELING
2. I feel lonely.	<input type="checkbox"/> THOUGHT	<input type="checkbox"/> FEELING
3. I feel like I can never do anything right.	<input type="checkbox"/> THOUGHT	<input type="checkbox"/> FEELING
4. I feel so ashamed.	<input type="checkbox"/> THOUGHT	<input type="checkbox"/> FEELING
5. I feel as though nothing in my life is working.	<input type="checkbox"/> THOUGHT	<input type="checkbox"/> FEELING
6. I feel very upset.	<input type="checkbox"/> THOUGHT	<input type="checkbox"/> FEELING

2.3.2

CONNECTING

Thoughts or Feelings?
 For each item, indicate whether it is a thought or a feeling. Even though all of the examples begin with "I feel..." some are actually thoughts.
 Be prepared to explain the reason for your choice.

7. I feel as if my life will just get better and better.	<input type="checkbox"/> THOUGHT	<input type="checkbox"/> FEELING
8. I feel strong.	<input type="checkbox"/> THOUGHT	<input type="checkbox"/> FEELING
9. I feel nervous.	<input type="checkbox"/> THOUGHT	<input type="checkbox"/> FEELING
10. I feel so worthless.	<input type="checkbox"/> THOUGHT	<input type="checkbox"/> FEELING
11. I feel like I am a burden to my family.	<input type="checkbox"/> THOUGHT	<input type="checkbox"/> FEELING
12. I feel self-conscious.	<input type="checkbox"/> THOUGHT	<input type="checkbox"/> FEELING
13. I feel upset.	<input type="checkbox"/> THOUGHT	<input type="checkbox"/> FEELING
14. I feel that I am a despicable person.	<input type="checkbox"/> THOUGHT	<input type="checkbox"/> FEELING
15. I feel wonderful.	<input type="checkbox"/> THOUGHT	<input type="checkbox"/> FEELING

Community Connection

How do people with stressful jobs manage their emotions? Have students interview someone such as a police officer or fireman to find out how he or she manages emotions at work in order to be able to do their job.

Family Connection

Have students discuss what they've been learning about the connection between thoughts, emotions, and actions. Use the Family Connection Worksheet to help foster a discussion about an issue they or someone they know has been struggling with.

Applying Across the Curriculum

LITERATURE Have students choose characters from a movie or video game that have trouble controlling their emotions. Ask them to write a short paragraph exploring the character's troubles and encourage them to share their paragraph with the class.

HEALTH Ask students to search the library or the internet for ways in which to manage anger. Ask them to create a list of 5 to 10 anger management tools or techniques they find. Instruct the students to investigate each management tool/technique on their list and rank them from most to least helpful. Ask students to share their list and comment on the ones they saw as being most effective.

23 **PRACTICING**

Life is not easy and it's hard not to let bad situations lead to negative thoughts, feelings, and actions. But putting a positive spin on things is an important skill to have so that we can better control our behavior.

In this exercise you can practice putting a positive spin (thought) on a negative situation. Finish the final 2 which are partially completed for you, then complete the final 3 using situations that you or other members of your group have observed or experienced.

SITUATION 1 : I got a C on my geometry test.

NEGATIVE THOUGHT: I'm no good at math. There's no way I can get any better.	POSITIVE THOUGHT:
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SITUATION 2 : Someone made fun of the way I dress on social media.

NEGATIVE THOUGHT: Nobody likes me, they all think I'm weird.	POSITIVE THOUGHT:
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A **APPLYING** 2 MINUTES

Over the next day or two ask students to notice when their thoughts are feeding their emotions in unhelpful ways. Have them use the format from the Practicing Handout to turn negative thoughts into positive thoughts, feeling, and actions. Have them record their responses and assign it as homework or have a short discussion at the beginning of the next lesson.

ASSESSING

PRACTICING (INFORMAL FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT) During the discussion of the Practicing Activity check to determine if students' have a basic understanding how to turn a negative thought into a positive thought.

APPLYING (FORMAL FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT) Review the students' responses to the Applying Activity to assess how well students are able to put a positive spin on a negative situation.

BUILDING SKILLS BEYOND THE LESSON

Draw It!

PRACTICING Have students draw a three or four panel comic strip which illustrates one of the situations from the Practicing Handout and then have them illustrate an additional situation/negative thought/positive spin they've observed or experienced.

Face Disappointment!

APPLYING Read aloud or write this quotation on the board:
When you lose, don't lose the lesson. —H. Jackson Brown Jr.
Ask students what they think the quotation means.

REINFORCEMENT

Discuss It!

APPLYING Reinforce the connection between thoughts, feelings, and actions in situations by having groups review their Practicing Handout experiences and discuss what they felt, what they did, and the result.

Identify It!

PRACTICING Have students identify the one or two situations that seem to occur repeatedly that make them angry or upset. Have them identify positive thoughts they can use to help them deal with these reoccurring experiences.

ENRICHMENT