

# **Sanford Harmony Pre-K Lessons**







# Diversity and Inclusion

Unit 1





### 1.1 Getting to Know One Another

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

Our class is discussing what it means to be a friend and why it is important to get to know all of our classmates. We are playing games to share about and learn about one another.

*You may want to:*

- ▶ Ask your child if they greeted anyone when they got to school today and what was said to each other.
- ▶ Ask your child if they played with anyone new today and what they did together.

### 1.2 Discovering Commonalities

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

Our class is discussing what we have in common with one another. It is easy to see what is on the outside, but to get to know one another better, we need to discover how we are the same on the inside.

*You may want to:*

Have a conversation with your child about ways that your 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 (chose 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 discussing the many ways each person in our class has unique characteristics and strengths and how we can learn and try many new things with one another.

*You may want to:*

- ▶ Ask your child what diversity means.
- ▶ Ask your child what they are good at doing or makes them proud
- ▶ Ask your child what 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 discussing what it means to belong to a community and how community members treat and work with one another.

*You may want to:*

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

## OVERVIEW

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

## GOALS

This unit is designed to help students:

- ▶ Get to know one another.
- ▶ Become comfortable interacting with unfamiliar peers.
- ▶ Discover and appreciate commonalities.
- ▶ Appreciate and learn from diversity.
- ▶ Develop an attitude of inclusion.
- ▶ Embrace a shared classroom identity.
- ▶ Feel valued as an individual and as a member of the group.

## ACTIVITIES

### 1.1 Getting to Know One Another

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

### 1.2 Discovering Commonalities

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

### 1.3 Learning from Diversity

Students discuss how everyone is different in some ways, which makes each person unique and interesting, and how diversity allows everyone to learn with and from one another.

### 1.4 Building Community

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





# Me and Z

PreK

We want everyone in our class to learn more about one another, and your child is bringing Z home this week. Your child can help Z “learn” about your family members, pets, favorite meals or books, or activities your child loves to do at home.

In the space below, have your child draw or attach photos, or you can help write a note about some of the things Z learns about your child. Next week, please return this paper, along with Z, so that your child can share with the class and everyone can learn more about all the things that make your child special!





## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *Meet Z*

Explore and Practice: Get to Know You Ball

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## MATERIALS

- ▶ *Meet Z* storybook
  - ▶ Get to Know You Ball
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## GOALS

This set of activities is designed to:

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

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- ▶ Share information about themselves with the class
- ▶ Recall information they learned about their peers

## KEY CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

Friends are important!

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

## RESEARCH AND RELEVANCE

Beginnings are important. The start of a new school year is a time when students 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 ensure students are introduced (and introduce themselves) to each and every one of their classmates can help them become engaged and comfortable interacting with their peers. This establishes a norm that *all* students in the classroom are important to one another and lays the foundation for relationships and learning.

### 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 students in your classroom who are easier or more challenging to get to know?

### Try this today...

Today (and every day), try to make a personal connection with as many students in your classroom as possible — greet a student individually and ask what he/she is looking forward to that day. Notice what a student is doing and ask him/her a specific question about it, or remember and follow up on something shared earlier.

## READ AND DISCUSS: MEET Z

*Students listen to the story and discuss what it means to be a friend and what it is like to get to know someone new.*

### Before Reading

Have you ever met a new friend? What do you like about having friends?

In this story, some students just like you meet a new friend — a very special alien named Z. Z isn't a he or a she — just a Z! The students decide to help Z learn about children on Earth and about friendship!

As you listen to the story, pay attention to what the characters say and how they feel when they meet new friends.

### During Reading

Z didn't know what a friend was. What would you tell Z? (*Someone I play with; someone I like to spend time with; someone I get along with*)

How did the students and Z feel when they met each other? (*Happy; excited; nervous*) How do you feel when you meet someone new?

When Z got to the tree house, everyone greeted Z. To *greet* someone means to say hello or introduce yourself. How do you think that made Z feel? (*Happy; welcomed; comfortable*)

### After Reading

What could you say to a new friend at school? (*Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_; do you want to play?*)

What can you can do with friends at school? (*Talk; play games; ride bikes; read books*)

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

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## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: GET TO KNOW YOU

*Students share information about themselves as they pass around a ball.*

### Set the Stage

Gather students in a circle and share something interesting about yourself (e.g., a pet or hobby) they are unlikely to know. Allow the class to ask one to two questions, and then ask students 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 good about being together. Getting to know one another is important because it helps us understand one another better and get along. We'll be doing a lot together so that we can really get to know each and every person in our class.

### Facilitate the Activity

Explain that everyone will get to know one another better by sharing something about themselves with the class and listening to what their classmates share. Roll a ball to a student and ask a question (e.g., *Jaden, what is your favorite animal?*). After the student answers, instruct her to pass the ball to a classmate, addressing the peer by name and asking the same question. Continue this process with several students, and then announce a new question before continuing again.

#### Suggested Get-to-Know-You Questions

- ▶ *What do you like to play outside?*
- ▶ *What is your favorite book?*
- ▶ *What is your favorite belonging?*
- ▶ *What is your favorite dessert?*
- ▶ *What game do you like to play?*

### Wrap It Up

How did you feel when your classmates listened to you? (*Happy, important, good*)

What is something new you learned about a classmate today?

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**Tip:** Have students clasp their hands in their laps after answering so that students know when to pass the ball.

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**Extension:** Have buddies pair up and pass a ball back and forth as they answer get-to-know-you questions that you announce.

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## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

**Me and Z:** Invite one or two students each week to bring home a Z figure and a *Me and Z* family letter, instructing them to keep Z with them as they go about their normal activities at home. Families can choose to help them draw, write, or photograph the things that Z “learned” about the student and family. After they return Z and their Me and Z letter, invite them to share their experiences with the class and guide classmates in asking questions.

You can (1) send home the *Get to Know Me* activity sheet for families to help the student complete it (with words, drawings, or photos), or (2) cut a copy of the sheet into six cards (setting aside the name and age sections) for use during the activity.

**Learning about My Buddy:** At the end of the week, invite students to draw and/or share what they learned about their buddies (e.g., provide a prompt if necessary, such as something my buddy likes, something my buddy likes to do).

**Personal Treasure Days:** Ask families ahead of time to help students choose a small item — a personal “treasure” (i.e., photo, drawing, or short description) to share with the class. Invite them to share their treasures (over the course of a few days as necessary), and allow time for questions. Extend the idea by having themed “Personal Treasure Days” throughout the year (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*).

**Share Your Square:** Lay carpet squares or hand towels in a circle on the floor, with one square for each buddy pair. Play music or sing, and have students march around or dance in the middle of the circle. When the music stops, students stand on a square (two share a square). Announce a get-to-know-you question and have buddies share their answers. Repeat with additional rounds as time allows.









## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *Finding Things in Common*

Explore and Practice: How Are We the Same? Hunt

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## MATERIALS

- ▶ *Finding Things in Common* storybook
  - ▶ Bucket or container (one per buddy pair; optional)
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## GOALS

This set of activities is designed to:

- ▶ Promote awareness of commonalities with others
- ▶ Encourage and practice being comfortable in sharing about oneself
- ▶ Foster openness toward learning about others

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- ▶ Identify things they have in common with peers

## KEY CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

Having things *in common* means there are things the same about us.

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

## 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 “like them” and less comfortable interacting with those who seem “different” from them. Sometimes decisions of whether someone is similar to oneself are based on simple — and often visual — cues of similarity, such as gender or race. Helping children discover what they have in common can help them feel a sense of connection and provides new, shared foundations for conversations and play. This encourages children to talk and play with a wider range of their peers, broadening their social and learning experiences.

### Think about this...

Think about your own close relationships. Which qualities are important, and what 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 are most important or most prevalent in children’s close friendships — interests, temperaments, gender, social skills, other qualities?

### Try this today...

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

## READ AND DISCUSS: *FINDING THINGS IN COMMON*

*Students listen to the story and discuss how talking and getting to know others helps them discover commonalities, even with those who seem very different.*

### Before Reading

Have you ever played with someone you didn't know very well? How did you feel? What did you do together?

In this story, Z feels nervous about playing with new friends and doesn't know what they can do together. The friends help Z learn that even if someone seems new or different, they can discover things they have *in common*—things that are the same about both of them.

As you listen to the story, pay attention to what the characters have in common, or ways they are the same.

### During Reading

How did Z feel when seeing the new kids? (*Nervous; scared; shy*) How could you tell? (*Acted shy; stayed across the room; whispered*)

Why did Z feel this way? (*Z was new; didn't know the kids very well; didn't know what they liked to play; felt different*)

If Mia hadn't asked what Z liked to do, would they have discovered they enjoyed playing the same game? Why is it important to talk and try to get to know each other? (*We can learn things we didn't know; we can find things we have in common*)

### After Reading

Z was worried the kids wouldn't like Z and wouldn't want to play because they were different. Did that happen? What happened instead? (*They talked; found things they had in common; had fun playing together*)

If you wanted to play with someone new, how could you find out what you both like to play? (*Talk to them; ask them what they like to do*)

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**Extension:** Have students turn to their buddies and practice asking what they like to play (e.g., *What do you like to play outside?*), and compare if their answers are different or the same.

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## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: HOW ARE WE THE SAME? HUNT

*Students practice identifying things they have in common with classmates and then search the classroom for interests they share with their buddies.*

### Set the Stage

Gather students in a circle. Review what it means to have something *in common* (you're the same or similar in that way), providing a few examples (e.g., *Jack and Annie both have on red shirts — wearing red shirts is something they have in common.*).

Next, ask a question (e.g., *Who has a pet at home?*) and have students step into the middle of the circle if it is true of them. Point out that the students in the circle have something *in common* and are the same in that way. Have them rejoin the circle and then repeat with additional questions.

### Facilitate the Activity

Explain that students will play a game to discover what they have in common with their buddies. Give each buddy pair a container to hold items from the hunt. Set a time limit, and instruct each buddy pair to hunt in the classroom and find two items they both like to play with or do at school. Remind buddies that they must talk to each other to ensure that the items are things they both enjoy.

After the hunt, gather students and invite them to share their items and what they have in common.

### Wrap It Up

Did you and your buddy discover things you have in common?

What did you learn about your buddy that you didn't know before?

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**Tip:** Ask about skills (*swimming*), preferences (*funny movies*), experience (*has been to a baseball game*), and personal history (*has a sister*). Be sensitive in choosing questions so that students do not feel singled out.

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**Extension:** Allow buddies to play together with their selections for a designated time.

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## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

**Similarities Simon Says:** Play a version of Simon Says in which students follow movement commands if they have the designated commonality (e.g., *Simon Says if you have pet, put your finger on your nose*). During the game, have the class look at their classmates and notice which students share those characteristics in common. Ask follow-up questions or give additional commands (e.g., *All of the students standing on one leg have pets. Simon Says if your pet is a dog, start hopping on one leg*). End the game and have students sit down in one group by giving a command that uses something shared by everyone (e.g., *a birthday; have ever felt happy*).

**What We Like Collages:** Using pictures in old magazines, have buddies create a collage of things they both like.



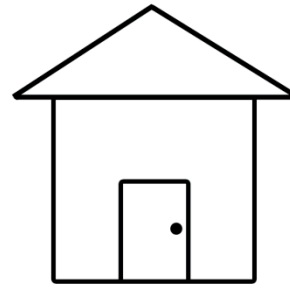


What if...



You had to play with the same kind of toy every day?

What if...



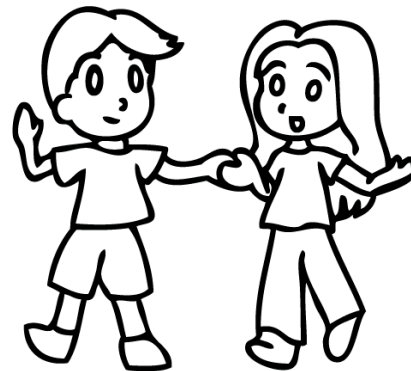
You lived in the same kind of house as everyone else?

What if...



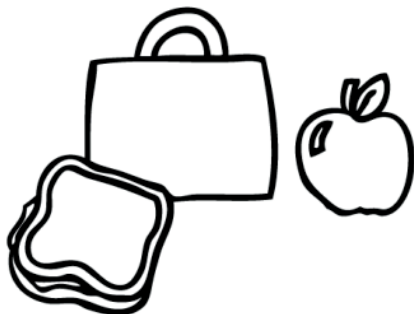
There was only one flavor of ice cream?

What if...



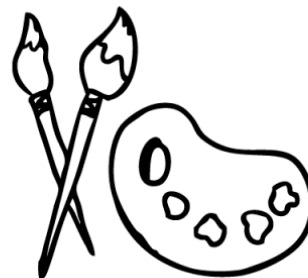
You could only play with the same person every day?

What if...



You had to eat the same lunch every day?

What if...



Everything was the same color?



## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *Celebrating Diversity*

Explore and Practice: Being Different Is Awesome

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## MATERIALS

- ▶ *Celebrating Diversity* storybook
  - ▶ *What If* cards
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## GOALS

This set of activities is designed to:

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

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- ▶ Name reasons why diversity is beneficial

## KEY CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

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

Diversity makes everyone unique and interesting.

We can learn new things from one another.

Having *respect* for someone means we think good things about them and treat them kindly.

## RESEARCH AND RELEVANCE

Each person brings to their interactions and relationships a unique set of experiences, interests, abilities, heritage, and temperamental qualities. Children can sometimes find these differences interesting and other times *very different*. Respecting and appreciating what makes each person unique can foster understanding, empathy, and a positive attitude toward others. These skills support children's ability to live in a diverse world and have friendships and relationships with all kinds of people. They 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...

Who do you tend to make friends with first at your workplace, in your neighborhood, or at social gatherings?

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

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 students toward a peer who can provide information or assistance, emphasizing their particular knowledge, experiences, or skills.

*That was a great book we just read about reptiles. I know you have a pet lizard at home, Max — can we ask you questions about what it's like to take care of a reptile?*

## READ AND DISCUSS: CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

*Students listen to the story and discuss diversity, respect, and how they can learn new things from others who are different in some ways.*

### Before Reading

Has anyone ever taught you how to do something new that you'd never tried before? What did you learn that was new and different?

In this story, Z doesn't understand why one of the kids likes to do something different from what Z likes. They help Z learn that it's okay for friends to be different. *Diversity* means that everyone is a little bit different, and no one is exactly the same. Because everyone is different, we can learn new and interesting things from one another.

As you listen to the story, pay attention for a time when Z learns something new from a friend who likes something different.

### During Reading

Why did Z think Kenny should stop working in the garden? (*Gardening was different from what Z liked; Z thought gardening looked boring; Z had never tried gardening*)

How would Kenny feel if he had to stop gardening like Z said? (*Sad; he would miss gardening*)

What did Z learn from Kenny at the end of the story? (*How to take care of the plant; how to work in the garden*) If Z hadn't been willing to try something new with Kenny and learn about plants, what could have happened? (*The plant would've died; Kenny's feelings would've been hurt; Z wouldn't have learned something new*)

### After Reading

Having *respect* for someone means that we think good things about them and that you treat them kindly. Is it important to show respect to everyone, even if they do things differently from you? How can you show respect to someone who does things differently? (*Listen to them; be polite; say kind things to them*)

Can you still get along and play with someone if you each like different things?  
How can you do that? (*Learn what the other likes; try playing something new together; find something we both have in common*)

**Extension:** Have students tell their buddies something they like to play, and compare to see if they like the same or different things.

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## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: BEING DIFFERENT IS AWESOME

*Students predict what it would be like if everything was exactly the same and discuss the value of diversity.*

### Set the Stage

Ask a question (e.g., *What do students like to eat for dinner? What do students like to play outside?*) and choose a student to respond. Next, invite several students to share a *different* answer, pointing out the diversity of those answers.

People can be the same or different in many ways — in how they look or feel or what they like to do. Diversity means that everyone is a little bit different, and that's what makes each one of us interesting and unique!

### Facilitate the Activity

Explain that the class will be imagining what it would be like if there was no diversity and everyone and everything was the same. Invite a volunteer to choose a *What If* card, read the scenario, and challenge the class to imagine doing the same thing, in the same way, all the time. (e.g., *Who likes to play ball? What if we ONLY played with balls on the playground this year? Balls would be the only things on the playground, and we would all play with balls every single day, every time we went outside. What would that be like?*)

Brainstorm the pros and cons of the situation, and have the class vote (thumbs-up/-down) whether they want it to be the same all the time. Emphasize the benefits of having diversity (e.g., *Isn't it AWESOME that we have a lot of different choices in what to do on the playground?*). Repeat with additional *What If* scenarios.

Discuss how differences allow people to learn new things with and from others.

It's fun to discover things we have in common, but if everyone was *exactly* the same — looked the same, sounded the same, did the same things — things would get pretty boring. Diversity makes our class and the world a more interesting place, and because we're all different, we can learn and do a lot of new things with one another.

## Wrap It Up

What would it be like if everyone in our class was exactly the same? (*Boring; not very much fun; would never get to do anything new*)

Why is it good to have and play with lots of different classmates? (*We can try new things; we can learn about one another; we can be the same or different in many ways*)

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## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

**Diversity Displays:** Choose a topic (e.g., something the students like to play; what their bed looks like) for the class to illustrate. As a group, compare their illustrations and discuss similarities and differences. Create a display and emphasize how it shows their diversity.

**What Makes Me Proud:** Gather the class in a circle and have them think of what makes them feel good about themselves or feel proud (provide examples). Go around the circle and invite students to share with the class; have a few at a time enter the center to dance or wave pom-poms as the class chants a “hooray” cheer

**What We Like Collages:** Using pictures in old magazines, have buddies create a collage of things they both like. Encourage them to discover what they like that are different or the same.





## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *Belonging Together*

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

Students 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.

Everyone in the class belongs to the classroom community.

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## MATERIALS

- ▶ *Belonging Together* storybook
- ▶ Butcher paper and art supplies
- ▶ Photos of children (optional)

*If you haven't already done so, consider establishing a name for your classroom community (e.g., the Shining Stars, the Room B3 Kids, etc.).*

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## RESEARCH AND RELEVANCE

Children learn and grow best when they have a sense of belonging and feel welcomed, 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 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 other. When the classroom community joins in celebrating the uniqueness of each individual child, as well as the qualities and accomplishments of the group, they can develop a 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 have a sense of comfort and connection within these groups? How does having or not having this 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, using the classroom name when possible.

*All our Panda Bears really worked together to clean up the outside toys very quickly! Now we'll have time to hear an extra story together before lunch.*

*Maria, it was really kind of you to give some of the markers to Jeremy. Sharing with each other helps everyone have a chance to draw.*

## READ AND DISCUSS: BELONGING TOGETHER

*Students listen to the story and discuss what it means to belong to a community and how they all belong to the classroom community.*

### Before Reading

People can be a part of many different kinds of groups, such as a family, team, and community. What are some groups you belong to?

In this story, Z worries that it's time to leave the tree house and the kids. The kids help Z understand that Z belongs with them. When you *belong*, you are a part of a group with other people. Everyone who belongs is important to one another.

As you listen to the story, pay attention to how Z feels about belonging together.

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

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### During Reading

Z didn't understand about *belonging* and thought it was time to leave the tree house. How would you explain what it means to belong? (*To be part of a group; to be together with others; to be part of a community*)

Why did Z feel happy to belong with the kids at the tree house? (*Z liked them; Z felt they cared; Z liked to be at the tree house*)

### After Reading

A community is a group of people who have something in common or do things with one another. When you're part of a community, how should you treat one another? (*Do things together; care about them; respect them*)

What do we do together that makes our class a community? (*Learn and play; care about one another; eat together; take care of the classroom together*)

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**Extension:** Have students turn to "someone in their classroom community and give them a high-five."

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## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: OUR CLASSROOM COMMUNITY

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

### Set the Stage

Ask students to raise their hands 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 what they like about being part of their class community (e.g., *What's great about being a [class name]?*).

### Facilitate the Activity

Explain that the students will create a representation of their classroom community together.

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

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

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

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**Variation:** Have buddies trace or paint each other's hands on one large banner.

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### Wrap It Up

Why was it important for everyone to work 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? *(Helped one another; shared things; cooperated)*

How do you feel when you look at what our class made together? (*Happy; we belong; proud; included*)

**Tip:** Frequently using the class name reinforces the common identity students share and fosters a sense of connection with classmates (e.g., *Okay, Busy Bees, it's time to come to the circle!*).

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## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

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

**Hooray Song:** Choose an energetic song or chant and sing it together as a group. During each round of the song, choose one or more students to dance in the middle of the circle or shake pom-poms, while the rest of the class sings, claps, and cheers for them. End the song by calling the classroom name and having everyone stand to dance and cheer.

**Our Many Communities:** Using magazine pictures or photographs gathered from families, show students images of different types of groups or communities and invite them to guess what they are. Discuss what they have in common (e.g., people working together).

**Pass around pictures:** Give each small group a piece of paper. Have one student draw for a short time and then pass the paper to the next person in the group until everyone has drawn on the paper. Display the drawings together and emphasize how they were made.

**Z Sing-Along CD:** Have a class discussion about activities that are more fun or successful to do with a friend or a group (rather than alone), and then sing and dance to *We're Better Together*.





# Empathy and Critical Thinking



Unit 2





## 2.1 Recognizing Feelings

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

Our class is learning about different emotions and how they change the way our bodies look and sound on the outside and feel on the inside.

*Suggested activities:*

- ▶ Play *Feelings Charades*, taking turns guessing the emotion the other person demonstrates or describes. Use your entire body and/or tone of voice to demonstrate the emotion, or describe the physical sensations you experience.
- ▶ Use a variety of emotion words to help your child name how they feel and to describe how their body feels inside (e.g., stomach in knots; hot cheeks; butterflies in the stomach).
- ▶ Play music and dance to feel a certain emotion, and then switch to another emotion. Or, play different types of music (e.g., upbeat; slow tempo), and ask your child how it makes them feel.

## 2.2 Predicting Feelings

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

Our class is learning that emotions are one way we react to things and situations, and that we can *think ahead* to try and predict, or guess, how someone feels after something happens.

*Suggested activities:*

- ▶ When reading books together, pause after story events occur and invite your child to *think ahead* and predict how the character will feel next.
- ▶ Talk about ways people react emotionally to different situations. For example, discuss how each of you (or other family members) would feel in scenarios, such as the following, and why your feelings are the same or different.
  - You are about to take off down the runway in an airplane.
  - You have nothing to do for the next hour.
  - You've just finished a really difficult puzzle.
  - A neighbor's dog comes over and licks you.
  - Someone tells you that you did a great job.

### 2.3 Explaining Feelings

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

Our class is learning that, to understand someone's feelings, we can look for clues in the situation or we can *think back* to what happened first.

*Suggested activities:*

- ▶ Ask your child what it means to be a *feelings detective*.
- ▶ When reading books together, pause after the characters express feelings and *think back* to which events or thoughts explain why they have those feelings.
- ▶ Help your child notice clues about why someone feels a certain way by pointing it out in the story (e.g., *That child's parent is helping him down from the top of the tall slide. Why do you think he's crying?*).

### 2.4 Having Empathy

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

Our class is learning what it means to understand and feel what someone else is feeling — to have *empathy* for them — and how it helps us show kindness, generosity, and caring toward others.

*Suggested activities:*

- ▶ Model empathy by showing an awareness and understanding of your child's feelings, even if you don't share or agree (e.g., *I see you're angry because you have to stop playing, but it's time to clean up and get ready for bed.*).
- ▶ Explain your own feelings (both positive and negative) to help your child understand how others feel, and why (e.g., *It makes me happy to see you being kind to your sister when you share your crayons with her.*).
- ▶ Discuss the consequences for actions both positive and negative; e.g., *How do you think your friend felt when you said she couldn't come to your birthday party? That probably hurt her feelings and made her feel very left out.*).

## 2.5 Understanding Stereotypes about People

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

Our class is discussing stereotypes — that everyone in a group is the same. People can be the same or different in many ways, and we can only know what each person is really like by talking and spending time with them. We are learning to be flexible thinkers and to watch out for words like *all*, *none*, and *only*.

*Suggested activities:*

- ▶ Ask your child what a stereotype is.
- ▶ Ask your child what they would say to someone who said that ALL (fill in the blank: children, grandparents, teenagers, etc.) (fill in the blank: *eat cereal for breakfast, like to watch movies, etc.*).
- ▶ Ask what they can do instead of making guesses about people.

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

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

Our class is discussing how everyone makes choices, and that toys, activities, and roles are for everyone. We'll practice how to respond to stereotypes.

*Suggested activities:*

- ▶ Discuss why people choose or have the jobs they have.
- ▶ Encourage your child's involvement in a diverse range of activities based on their personal preferences, strengths, or areas where they can learn and grow.
- ▶ Describe different kinds of activities and occupations in similarly positive terms to demonstrate they are equally valued.

## 2.7 Understanding That People Can Change

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

Our class discussing how everyone can change, and we'll have opportunities to grow, learn, and try new things.

*Suggested activities:*

- ▶ Ask your child one way they have changed this year
- ▶ Focus on “process rather than product” — praise your child for their efforts rather than what they accomplish (e.g., *I see you are really working hard at trying to tie your own shoes!*)

## 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) thinking

## ACTIVITIES

### 2.1 Recognizing Feelings

*Children learn to identify and demonstrate the physical signs of different emotions.*

*Children discuss how various emotions look, sound, and feel, and then practice demonstrating different emotions in a game.*

### 2.2 Predicting Feelings

*Children discuss how to think ahead and predict emotions that might result from a given situation, and then practice predicting how they might feel in different situations.*

### 2.3 Explaining Feelings

*Children discuss how you can think back to what happened first or looking for situational cues in order to understand reasons for someone's feelings, and brainstorm reasons that people can have different feelings.*

### 2.4 Having Empathy

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

### 2.5 Understanding Stereotypes about People

*Children discuss how not everyone in a group is just the same, and practice a way to respond to stereotypes, emphasizing that "some do, some don't."*

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

*Children discuss how everyone can make choices and that toys, activities, and roles can be for everyone, and practice a way to respond to stereotypes.*

### 2.7 Understanding That People Can Change

*Children discuss the potential for growth, learning, and change in themselves and others and identify how they have changed.*



## 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
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 heart
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 heart Jumpy





## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *Feelings on the Outside, Feelings on the Inside*

Explore and Practice: The Feeling Train

## GOALS

This set of activities is designed to:

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

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students 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 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
- ▶ People can feel and show their emotions differently

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### MATERIALS

- ▶ *Feelings on the Outside, Feelings on the Inside* storybook
  - ▶ Whiteboard
  - ▶ *Emotion Cues* chart (teacher reference)
-

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

## READ AND DISCUSS: *FEELINGS ON THE OUTSIDE, FEELINGS ON THE INSIDE*

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

### Before Reading

How do you *feel* right now — happy; sad; excited; tired?

In this story, Z doesn't know what it means to have feelings, such as happy, sad, or afraid. The kids help Z learn that everyone has feelings, or *emotions*, and that they can change how they look and sound on the outside and how they feel on the inside.

As you listen, pay attention to the different emotions that Z and the kids have and how those feelings change the way they look and sound on the outside and feel on the inside.

### During Reading

How did Z feel on the inside when the kids were coming to the tree house? (*Tingly inside; excited*) How could the kids tell that Z was feeling excited to see them? (*Z was smiling; had a cheerful voice*)

How did Jeremy look on the outside when he was mad? (*Frowned; squeezed his hands and crossed his arms*) How did Z feel on the inside when mad? (*Hot and bubbly*) How do you look, sound, and feel when you're mad?

What did Z want the kids to do when Z felt afraid? (*Wanted the kids to sit close*) What do you do to feel better when you have feelings or emotions you don't like? (*Think about something happy; talk to someone; hug someone*)

What did Z look like when Z started feeling sad? (*Frowning; looking down*) What did the kids do when they figured out Z was sad? (*Said that they were coming back the next day; helped Z feel better*)

---

**Extension:** Have children turn to their buddies and show how they look when they are mad.

---

### After Reading

What are feelings or emotions? (*How my body looks and sounds on the outside and feels on the inside when something happens*) Does everyone have feelings?

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

## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: THE FEELING TRAIN

*Children describe internal and external emotion cues, and demonstrate different emotions during a movement game.*

### Set the Stage

Discuss how different emotions, or feelings, change how people look and sound on the outside and how they feel on the inside.

*Emotions* are feelings, such as happiness, sadness, or anger. They can change the way we feel inside our bodies. Emotions also change how we look and sound on the outside, such as how our face looks, the way we move our bodies, or the sound of our voices. Everyone shows their emotions in different ways, but we can pay attention to how someone looks and sounds to figure out how they're feeling.

Demonstrate an emotion using your entire body (refer to the *Emotion Cues* chart), and describe any internal physical sensations experienced and external cues, focusing on different body parts one at a time (e.g., *When I'm feeling afraid or scared, I look like this. My eyes open wide and my eyebrows go up like this, and you can see my teeth because my mouth is pulled back. Sometimes I hold my arms in close to my body, like this, when I'm scared, and my toes curl up, and I feel shaky inside. It makes my voice quivery, like you're hearing now.*).

Have students turn to their buddies and demonstrate the emotion, encouraging them to show the emotion with their faces and bodies and state how they feel (e.g., *I'm scared!*) using a voice that matches the emotion.

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**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

Explain that the students will be playing a game called *The Feeling Train* in which the passengers need to show different emotions in order to come aboard the train.

Have the class stand up in a circle. As the train "conductor, name and demonstrate an emotion with your face, body, and voice, and ask students to describe how you look and sound. Have them turn to their buddies and demonstrate then emotion. Using an appropriate emotional tone, invite them onto the train behind you (e.g., *Okay, passengers, all aboard the Happy Train!*). Walk around the room (or in a circle) and have students follow you as everyone continues to demonstrate the emotion. Point out how the passengers are showing their feelings (e.g., *We're all on the Sad Train so we're walking slowly and droopily!*).

---

**Tip:** Provide a prompt (e.g., *Show each other how you look when you're afraid of a big dog barking across the street.*).

---

“Stop” the train at a “station” and repeat with an additional emotion demonstration, discussion, and *Feeling Train* as time allows. End on a calm emotion so that you can gather the class in a quiet circle for discussion.

## Wrap It Up

How were you feeling inside when you were on the (*Emotion*) *Train*?

What can you do to figure out how someone else is feeling? (*Look at their faces and bodies; listen to their voice; ask them how they feel*)

---

## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITY

**Feeling Faces:** Have students choose an emotion and illustrate, verbalize, and/or write what they feel, look, and sound like when they experience an emotion.

**Feelings Collage:** Have students work with buddies and give each pair a large piece of paper divided into two or more sections, each labeled with an emotion (face and/or name). Have them look through magazines to find pictures of people who are displaying those emotions, and sort and glue them onto the different sections of the collage.

**Feelings Picture Walk:** Have buddies pair up to select an illustrated book. Ask them to look through the books together, finding and discussing examples of feelings. Students can also describe feelings illustrated in their book to their buddy and ask them to guess the emotion.

**If You're Happy and You Know It:** Lead students in singing and acting out verses of *If You're Happy and You Know It*, choosing actions that reflect the corresponding emotion (e.g., “If you're sad and you know it, make a frown.”).



How would you feel if...



You were at the top of a tall slide?

How would you feel if...



You saw a big dog?

How would you feel if...



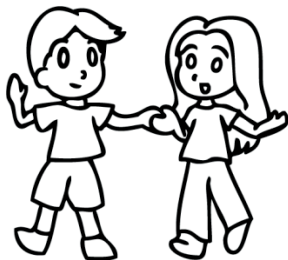
You dropped your ice cream cone?

How would you feel if...



Someone said something mean to you?

How would you feel if...



Someone asked you to play?

How would you feel if...



It was your birthday?





## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *Predicting Feelings*

Explore and Practice: Back-to-Back predictions

## GOALS

This set of activities is designed to:

- ▶ Increase understanding of emotional consequences in situations
- ▶ Foster awareness that people can feel different emotions about the same situation

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Children will be able to:

- ▶ Predict emotions based on situational cues

## KEY CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

One way we react to things that happen is with our feelings.

To *predict* means to make a guess what happens next.

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

People can have different feelings about the same situation.

---

### MATERIALS

- ▶ *Predicting Feelings* storybook
  - ▶ *How Would You Feel* scenario cards
-

## 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, and the recognition that people can have different thoughts and feelings about the same situation. Understanding this variability in cognitive and emotional reactions allows children to understand the perspectives of others, an important relationship skill.

### Think about this...

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

Has your emotional response greatly differed from someone else's who was involved in the same situation? What was that like for you?

### Try this today...

When reading books aloud, pause after story events occur and invite students to predict how the character feels next. If characters react in a surprising way, discuss why.

## READ AND DISCUSS: PREDICTING

*Children listen to the story and discuss what is happening in order to guess or predict how someone is feeling.*

### Before Reading

If you saw someone get hurt, how would you guess their feelings? How would someone feel after they got a fun birthday present?

In this story, the kids help Z learn how to predict people's feelings, or guess how people feel after different things happen. Thinking of how someone feels can help you understand them and get along.

As you listen to the story, pay attention when Z or the kids predict or make a guess about how someone is feeling.

---

**Tip:** Show students the cover illustration and invite them to “predict” or guess what the story is about.

---

### During Reading

How would you predict or guess how Annie feels when she learns the clay is dry and hard? (*Sad; disappointed; angry*) Why would she feel this way? (*She really wanted to play with the clay*)

How would you predict or guess how Annie feels when she finds out there's another bucket of clay? (*Happy; glad; excited*)

How does Gabriel feel when his clay snakes keep breaking? (*Frustrated; mad; disappointed*) What did Annie and Z do to find out how Gabriel was feeling? (*Asked how he felt*)

Why did Z think Gabriel would be afraid of Annie's clay bug? (*Z was scared so Z thought Gabriel would be scared, too*) Was Z's prediction right? Why was Z's guess wrong? (*Gabriel thought bugs were cool; people can feel differently about the same thing*)

---

**Tip:** As different situations occur, have children think about how the characters might be feeling before continuing the story to find out.

---

### After Reading

What does it mean to *predict* how someone feels? (*Guess how they feel; think about what's going on so we can figure out how they feel*)

Why is it okay to feel differently about the same thing? (*Everyone is different; people can have different ideas and feelings*)

## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: BACK-TO-BACK PREDICTIONS

*Students predict how they feel in various situations.*

### Set the Stage

Choose a situation likely to elicit a strong emotional reaction, and ask the students to imagine how they would feel in that situation (e.g., *How would you feel if a fire truck was going to visit our school today?*). Invite a few to share their reactions, and ask if anyone has a different feeling, emphasizing that sometimes people feel differently about the same thing. Summarize how the situation makes the class feel (e.g., *If a fire truck came to our school, most of you would be really excited and a couple of you would feel a little nervous.*).

### Facilitate the Activity

Describe how to predict someone's feelings based on the situation that has happened.

When things happen, we react with our feelings. Different situations make us happy, angry, scared, or sad. When you know what's happening, you can try to *predict* how someone feels. To *predict* means to *think ahead and guess* someone's feelings.

Play a game to practice predicting how the class feels when different things happen and determining if they feel the same as their buddy.

Choose a *How Would You Feel* scenario and guide two buddy volunteers in modeling a back-to-back prediction. Have buddies stand with their backs to each other and read the scenario out loud. Ask whether they feel happy, sad, angry, or scared and to make the face that shows the emotion. Count to three and have them turn around to see each other's expressions.

Have the class stand back-to-back with their buddies and continue the game. Discuss whether they feel the same or different in various situations, and why.

### Wrap It Up

If you know something happened to someone, how would you guess? (*How they feel; what they do next*)

How can you figure out if your prediction or guess is correct? (*ask; look for clues in how they look and sound*)

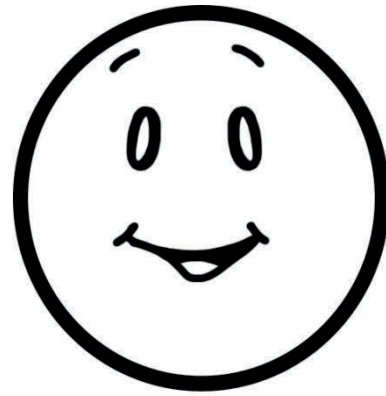
## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

**Peek-a-Boo Predictions:** Read a *How Would You Feel* scenario and have a volunteer silently think of how they feel. Have the class quietly share their predictions with their buddies and then close their eyes. Ask the volunteer to demonstrate the emotion; have the class open their eyes to see if their predictions were correct.





**Afraid**



**Happy**



**Mad**



**Sad**





## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *Being a Feelings Detective*

Explore and Practice: Reasons for Feelings

## GOALS

This set of activities is designed to:

- ▶ Increase understanding of causes of emotions
- ▶ Promote an awareness of behavioral and situational cues in understanding emotions

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- ▶ Identify reasons for emotions based on situational cues
- ▶ Generate reasons for different emotions

## KEY CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

There can be many different reasons for someone's feelings.

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

- ▶ *Being a Feelings Detective* storybook
  - ▶ Reasons for Feelings scenario pictures
  - ▶ Feeling Face cards
-

## RESEARCH AND RELEVANCE

In addition to predicting how someone responds to a situation (feelings as consequences), emotion understanding includes recognizing situations that may result in a given feeling (causes or explanations of feelings). Children with greater emotion understanding tend to do better in school, both socially and academically.

### Think about this...

Have you ever noticed that a student 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...

When reading books aloud, pause after characters exhibit emotional reactions, and invite students to *think back* to identify events or thoughts that explain why they have those feelings.

## READ AND DISCUSS: BEING A FEELINGS DETECTIVE

*Students listen to the story and discuss how to understand someone's feelings by looking for clues and thinking back to what happened first.*

### Before Reading

Have you ever noticed someone looking sad, but weren't sure why? What did you do?

In this story, Z has to figure out why one of the kids is feeling sad. The rest of the kids help Z learn how to be a "feelings detective" by looking for clues and thinking back to what happened first to understand why their friend feels sad.

As you listen to the story, pay attention to what Z has to think about to figure out why one of the children is feeling sad.

### During Reading

How was Kenny feeling when he found his friends painting? (*Happy; excited*) Why do you think he was feeling happy? (*He loves to paint; he wanted to paint with his favorite color*)

How do you think Kenny was feeling when he sat down next to the puzzle box? (*Sad, disappointed*) Which clues revealed he was sad? (*He sighed; put his head in his hand; didn't play with the puzzle; frowned*)

Thinking back, what happened right before Kenny started looking sad? (*Z said there wouldn't be any purple paint left*) Why do you think Kenny was sad? (*He wasn't going to be able to use the purple paint; Z didn't share the paint with him*)

How was it helpful for Z and the kids to figure out why Kenny was sad? (*They understood how he felt; they were able to do something to help him*)

### After Reading

How can you figure out why someone feels certain way? (*Ask them; look for clues; think back to what happened first; guess how someone feels in that situation*)

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

## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: REASONS FOR FEELINGS

*Students generate possible reasons for various feelings.*

### Set the Stage

Show the class the first Reasons for Feelings picture. Ask them to guess the boy's emotion (*angry; mad*) and how they can tell he feels that way (*frowning; arms crossed; stomping foot*), and then brainstorm possible reasons.

Why would he be angry? (*He can't find a toy he wants; he doesn't want to stop playing; someone has the toy he wants*)

Next, show the second picture. Have students be "feeling detectives" and identify the clue and the reason why the boy is angry (*his block tower fell over*). Explain that to figure out why someone is feeling a certain way, they can think back to what happened or look for clues about what happened.

People have different feelings, and there are many reasons why. To figure out *why*, you can *think back* to what happened first or look for clues of what was going on or what they were doing at that moment. Figuring out why helps us understand them.

### Facilitate the Activity

Explain that the class will think of reasons why people have different feelings. Invite a volunteer to draw a Feeling Face card and identify the feeling. Have the class think of reasons why they too would feel that way at school (e.g., *What can make you happy at school?*), and share their answers with their buddies. Have the volunteer share the reason and, when applicable (when there are clear clues), ask the class how they know when someone is feeling that way for that reason (e.g., *How would you know if someone was sad when they fall down — what clues would you see? They would be crying and rubbing the knee; I might see them fall; they can tell me what happened.*). Invite two to three other students to share their own reasons, highlighting similarities and differences. Repeat with additional feelings.

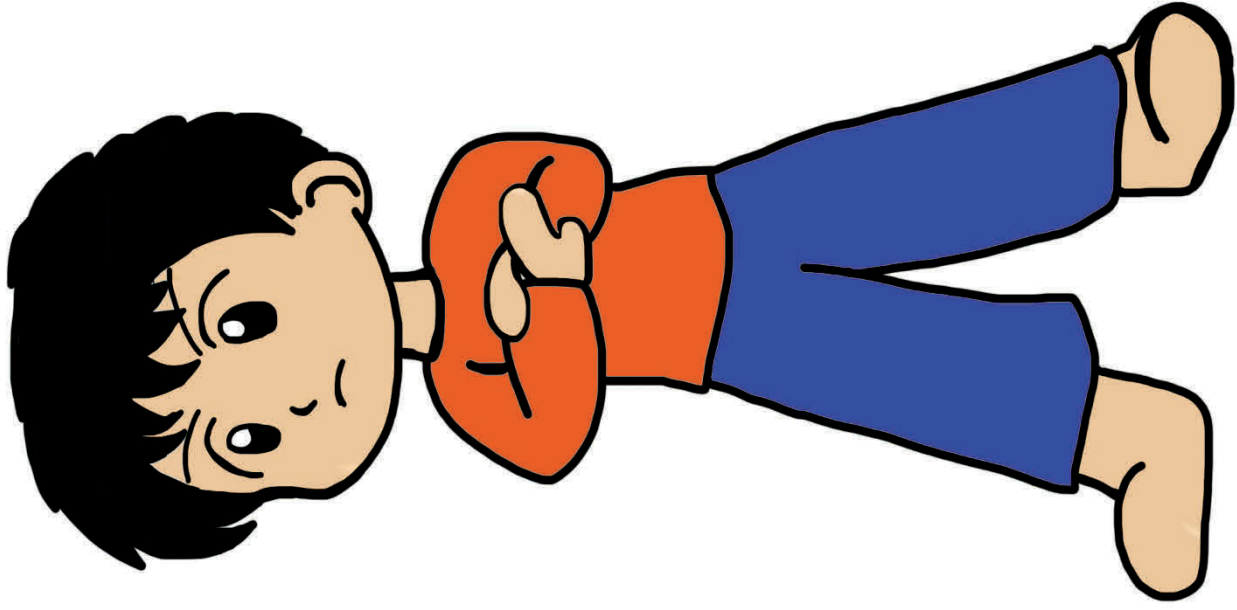
### Wrap It Up

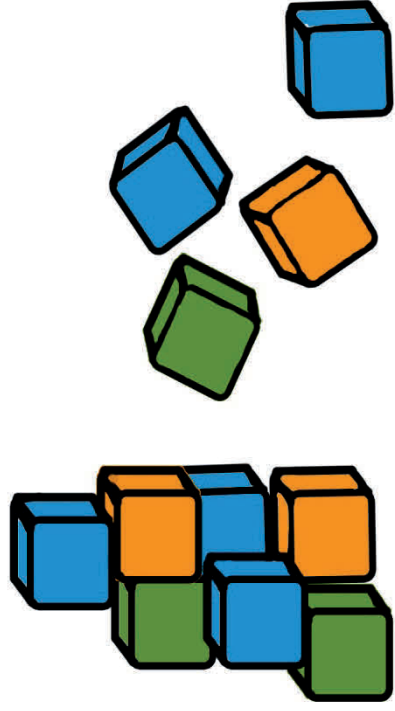
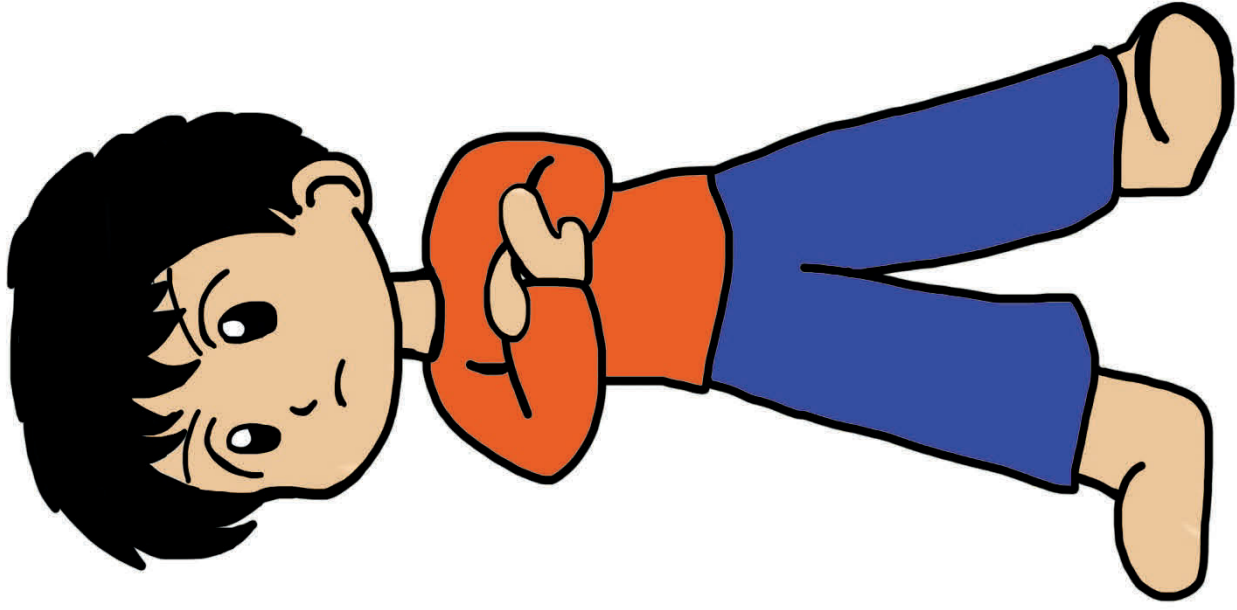
When we see someone who looks (emotion), what can we do to figure out why? (*Think back to what happened first; look for clues; ask them*)

### SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

**Reasons for My Feelings:** Have students choose an emotion and write/dictate and illustrate what makes them feel that way. Ask them to share the many reasons for different feelings, highlighting similarities and differences.









## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *Knowing Just How Someone Feels*

Explore and Practice: If Your Buddy's Feeling Happy

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## MATERIALS

- ▶ *Knowing Just How Someone Feels* storybook
- 

## 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

## KEY CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

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

Understanding how someone feels helps us be good friends to them.

## 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. To act upon empathy and show caring for another's feelings, children must be able to consider those feelings and determine which actions or responses are appropriate. Children with greater empathy behave more prosocially toward others.

### Think about this...

Have you ever been misunderstood because someone didn't share or understand your feelings?

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

Which factors make it difficult to respond empathically to someone?

### Try this today...

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

## READ AND DISCUSS: *KNOWING JUST HOW SOMEONE FEELS*

*Children listen to the story and discuss how empathy and understanding how someone feels, perhaps because they have felt that way, too, can help them respond in caring ways.*

---

**Tip:** Show children the cover illustration and invite them to “predict” or guess what the story might about.

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### Before Reading

Have you ever felt sad and someone did something nice for you? How did it feel to have someone think of your feelings and be caring toward you?

In this story, Z tries to understand how the kids are feeling and realizes that sometimes Z has felt the same way. The kids help Z learn that *empathy* means feeling and understanding someone’s feelings, and that can help a person be a good friend.

As you listen to the story, pay attention to when Z knows how the children are feeling.

### During Reading

When Kim tripped on a ball and bumped her knee, why did Z think she was sad or mad? (*That was how Z felt when hurt*)

When Z understood how Kim felt, how did Z show empathy and caring toward her? (*Patted her on the back; picked up the toys so no one would trip on them*)

How did Jordan look after his picture was ruined by the paint? (*Sad*) How did Z show empathy and caring for Jordan? (*Z shared the last paper*)

Why was bringing Jordan a blanket a good way to show empathy and caring? (*Jordan was tired and needed a blanket*)

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**Tip:** As different situations occur, have students think of how the characters feel before continuing the story.

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### After Reading

When you see someone angry or sad, how can you understand how they feel? (*Think of a time when I felt that way; determine what they want or need*)

How does understanding help you be a good friend? (*I’ll know what to say or do to show I care; I’ll understand them better*)

## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: IF YOUR BUDDY IS FEELING HAPPY

*Children sing a song to describe ways to show empathy and caring toward a buddy.*

### Set the Stage

Ask the students to remember when they saw someone sad or hurt and if they did something kind to show they cared. Invite several students to share their experiences and ask how the person felt afterward.

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

When you have *empathy* and understand someone's feelings, you can figure out what to say or do to show you care.

### Facilitate the Activity

Describe or role-play an empathy scenario (suggested below). Have students talk with their buddies to decide how to show empathy and concern for someone in the scenario, and then invite one buddy to share the idea. Lead them in singing a verse of *If Your Buddy's Feeling (Happy)*, using the suggested caring response.

*If your buddy's feeling happy, give a high-five [clap, clap]  
If your buddy's feeling happy, give a high-five [clap, clap]  
If your buddy's feeling happy and you want to show you care  
If your buddy's feeling happy, give a high-five [clap, clap]*

When applicable, have students turn to their buddies and act out the empathic response. Repeat verses with students' additional ideas to show caring, or try a different scenario.

#### Empathy Scenarios

What could you do if your buddy is...

**Sad** because he fell down?

**Excited** because it's her birthday?

**Afraid** to climb on the jungle gym?

**Mad** because her tower of blocks fell down?

**Disappointed** there are no balls left?

**Happy** because he just finished a puzzle?

### Wrap It Up

Why is it important to show others we care? *(It's kind; it makes them feel good; they know we care)*

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

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### SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

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



## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *Some Do, Some Don't*

Explore and Practice: *Some Do, Some Don't*

## MATERIALS

- ▶ *Some Do, Some Don't* storybook

## 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:

- ▶ Describe limitations and problems associated with stereotypes and overgeneralizations.
- ▶ Demonstrate ways to challenge stereotypes.

## KEY CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

A *stereotype* means thinking everyone in a group is just the same.

Stereotypes are just guesses and aren't always true.

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

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

*Some do, some don't.*

*Some are, some aren't.*

*Sometimes you do, sometimes you don't.*

## RESEARCH AND RELEVANCE

Children are natural “sorters” — they tend to group people and things into simple categories 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

*But also results in tendencies to:*

- ▶ View members of the same group as much more similar than they actually are
- ▶ Exaggerate differences between members of different groups
- ▶ Use essentialist thinking, or the belief that an underlying “essence” (e.g., “boyness”) 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 behavior, and are reflected in overgeneralizations such as *NO boys \_\_\_\_\_* or *ONLY babies can \_\_\_\_\_* or *ALL teenagers like \_\_\_\_\_*. The use of stereotypes also sends the message that children should think, feel, or behave a certain way as those in the same “group” to which they belong. 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...

Has 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 it make you feel?

Have you made assumptions about others based on their social group before getting to know them? What strategies do you use to avoid this?

Have you made overgeneralized statements about the interests, temperaments, or abilities of students who belong to a particular social group? What strategies do you use to avoid this?

Do you ever unintentionally draw attention to social categories in your classroom such as addressing (e.g., *Good morning, boys and girls!*) or organizing (e.g., boys' and girls' lines) by social group? How can this impact students' attitudes about and interactions with one another? Would you use social categories other than gender (e.g., race) to address or organize students?

### Try this today...

Highlighting gender in unnecessary ways reinforces its importance and separates students.

- ▶ Avoid using gender to organize classroom areas (e.g., seating boy–girl–boy–girl; boy/girl lines) or activities and routines (e.g., *Let's have the boys wipe the tables and the girls straighten the art area. It's the girls' turn this morning.*)
- ▶ Also refrain from using gender as a label (e.g., *Line up, boys and girls!* or *The boys in the block area are getting too loud.*) Instead, address students in a way that allows them to focus on their identity as a student and as part of the classroom community (e.g., *Good morning, Panda Bears!* or *The students playing over there with the blocks are getting a little too loud.*)
- ▶ Try to group and regroup students several times each day based on a random characteristics to promote their recognition of the many different groups to which they belong.

## READ AND DISCUSS: SOME DO, SOME DON'T

*Students listen to the story, discuss how people differ, even when they have some things in common or may be part of the same group, and identify problems associated with stereotypes and overgeneralizations.*

### Before Reading

What do we have in common as a group? What's different about each person here? Although we're in the same group and have things in common, we're different in many ways, too.

In this story, Z thinks all students are the same. The kids help Z learn that everyone is different, and that getting to know one another is how we learn what each person is really like.

As you listen to the story, pay attention to what Z thinks they like to play and if the guess is correct or incorrect.

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**Tip:** Class commonalities include: *Same classroom, teacher, and city.*

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### During Reading

Why did Z think that Kim wanted to draw with chalk? (*Z thought she liked the same thing as the other kids*) Was Z right? (*No, she wanted to build sandcastles*)

Having a stereotype means thinking everyone in the same group is the same. Did Z have a stereotype about kids? What did Z think of them? (*They like to play the same thing*)

Do ALL kids like the same things? (*Some do and some don't*)

Do you think they have to like or do the same things all the time? (*Sometimes they do and sometimes they don't*)

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**Tip:** Prompt with examples, but to avoid introducing or reinforcing typical stereotypes (e.g., *Do all girls like pink?*) choose other examples (e.g., *Do all 5-year-olds love the rain?*). When students bring up stereotypes they have heard, address them accordingly.

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### After Reading

What can happen if you guess instead of asking someone what they like or like to do? (*I can think the wrong thing; I won't know what they're really like*)

What can you do instead of making guesses or thinking someone is the same as others? (*Talk to them; ask them what they like to do; get to know them*)

## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: SOME DO, SOME DON'T

*Students discuss problems associated with stereotypes and overgeneralizations and practice strategies for challenging them by emphasizing “some do, some don’t.”*

### Set the Stage

Ask a volunteer to share a personal preference or routine (e.g., *What’s your favorite breakfast? What time do you go to bed?*). Make the assumption that all students share this in common, exaggerating your reaction (e.g., *Oh, so I guess that ALL of you like cereal the best! You probably ALL eat cereal EVERY SINGLE DAY for breakfast. You sure must like cereal to eat it that often! Maybe we should start eating it at school too since ALL of you like it so much.*). Give students time to protest (prompt if necessary), and then repeat your claim, pointing out how they are all in the same group (e.g., *But you’re all students/Busy Bees/, so you must ALL like the same breakfast, right?*).

Ask them why they think your assumption isn’t true (*we don’t have to like the same thing; Joey likes cereal but Ariel likes pancakes; no one is exactly the same; everyone is different*). Summarize the responses (e.g., *Oh, so even though you’re all students/Busy Bees, you don’t like ALL the same things!*).

Explain the problems associated with overgeneralizations and stereotypes.

When people think everyone in a group is exactly the same, or likes or doesn’t like the same things; it’s called a *stereotype*. But stereotypes are just guesses, and they’re often wrong! We don’t know what someone is really like unless we ask them or get to know them.

### Facilitate the Activity

Provide examples of overgeneralizations and stereotypes (see below) and guide students in practicing the phrases “some do, some don’t” or “some are, some aren’t.” Divide the circle in half and have the class practice so that half chant “Some kids do” and the other half responds with “And some kids don’t!”

- ▶ Provide an example of a stereotyped group of people (e.g., boys; girls; teenagers; grandparents; people with brown hair; athletes). To avoid unintentional reinforcement of stereotypes, do not use “traditional” types as examples (i.e., do not choose *boys are good at sports* or *older people can't hear well*). Rather, use generalized characteristics (e.g., *I heard someone say that adults don't like bugs*.)
- ▶ Ask students if they think the statement is true, and guide them in discussing why it is not (e.g., *What do you think about that? Do you think NO adults like bugs?*), emphasizing that “some do, some don't.” Invite students to share counter-stereotypical examples (e.g., *Does anyone know an adult who likes bugs?*)
- ▶ Explain that the statement was a stereotype, and invite students to challenge it (e.g., *What if you heard someone say that adults don't like bugs?*).
- ▶ Have the class practice the “some do, some don't” chant (e.g., *Some adults do, and some adults don't!*).

Repeat with two to three additional examples, guiding them through the process and practicing the chant for each.

## Wrap It Up

Is it fair to stereotype people and think they're all the same? Why is it a problem? (*Stereotypes are guesses; it could be wrong; everyone is different; no one is exactly the same*)

Instead of guessing, what can you do? (*Ask; talk to them; spend time with them*)

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**Tip:** Add movements by having the class clap [clap, clap, clap] or stomp [stomp, stomp, stomp] as they chant the words.

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## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

**Diversity Displays:** Choose a topic (e.g., something the class likes to play; a favorite book) for students to illustrate. As a group, compare their illustrations and discuss similarities and differences. Create a display of the work and emphasize how it shows the diversity within the class.

**Stereotype Catchers:** Teach students a hand signal (e.g., palm out in front, showing “stop”) to use when they hear a stereotype. Read a story to the class, inserting overgeneralized statements as you read (*One morning, Suzy went to the library with her mother. They went because all parents like the library. When they got there...*). When students signal a stereotype (prompt if necessary), stop and have them challenge it, repeating the response for the class (e.g., *Oh, so some parents like the library, and some parents don't.*).

## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *Things Can Be for Everyone*

Explore and Practice: Things Can Be 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

Students will be able to:

- ▶ Describe 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 (as long as it is safe and fair).

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

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### MATERIALS

- ▶ *Things Can Be for Everyone* storybook
  - ▶ Object, activity, and role props (e.g., toys, apparel, pictures)
-

## RESEARCH AND RELEVANCE

Students are quick to recognize recurrent associations among things (e.g., *Long hair is for moms, but not for 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 what is appropriate for males and what is appropriate for females — how they should look, dress, and act, what they are like, and what they should do (e.g., *I see only boys in 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 sources of stereotypes. (Cognitive schema form in the same way for other social categories.)

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 with toys, clothing, and roles in the classroom. These messages are limiting for students and can make them feel uncomfortable or ashamed of their own individual interests and preferences. Students often claim to like or dislike things based on whether they think it is appropriate for their own gender, regardless of whether or not they actually choose to play with these things.

*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 students' engagement in a variety of activities and roles, including those traditionally gender-typed for their own as well as the other gender, supports the development of a broad range of interests and skills that increases successful learning. This doesn't mean they should avoid “stereotyped” activities for their own gender if they enjoy them, and it also doesn't mean they *should* like or do everything, either. However, they should feel they *can* if they want to.

### 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 it feel? What response have you received from others? Have you ever been reluctant or discouraged to engage in activities that cross “gender norms?”

### Try this today...

Be mindful of the subtle messages students receive about what is appropriate or not appropriate for their gender.

Describe gender-typed activities and occupations with similarly positive terms to demonstrate they are equally valued.

- ▶ Encourage 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 classroom jobs based on gender.
- ▶ Review classroom literature, posters, and other materials for 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's wearing the crown. Crowns are for everyone, and everyone gets to choose for themselves what they want to wear or play.*

## READ AND DISCUSS: *THINGS CAN BE FOR EVERYONE*

*Children discuss fairness and the idea that different toys, activities, and roles can be for everyone.*

### Before Reading

What do you really like to play? How would you feel if someone told you that those were for other students and not for you?

In this story, Z wonders who can play with certain toys or do certain things. The kids help Z learn that things aren't ONLY for some kids and not for others — it wouldn't be fair, because things can be for everyone!

As you listen to the story, pay attention to what the kids tell Z about who can play with which toys and who can do which activities.

### During Reading

When things are fair, everyone is treated the same way and has the chance to do the same things. Do you think it would be fair if some toys or activities were only for some of the students in our class? Who are the toys in our classroom for? (*Everyone*)

What if you really wanted to be a chef, a firefighter, a dancer, or a superhero, and someone told you that only some kids could do it, but not you? How would you feel? (*Disappointed; sad; frustrated*) Do you think it would be fair? Who can do those things? (*Everyone*)

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**Tip:** To avoid introducing and reinforcing stereotypes, have students bring up stereotypes they have personally encountered and address them accordingly.

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### After Reading

Is it fair for someone to say that only some kids can play with certain toys or do certain activities? What would you say to someone who said that? (*Things can be for everyone; kids can choose what they like to play; there are all kinds of kids who like to do those things*)

Is there anything that's not for all kids? (*Dangerous things; 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: THINGS CAN BE FOR EVERYONE

*Students identify limitations and problems associated with stereotypes about objects, activities, and roles and practice strategies for challenging stereotypes.*

### Set the Stage

Encourage students to consider what it feels like to be treated unfairly and limited in what they could do. Give kids one to two absurd examples and discuss out how silly and unfair they are (avoid using personal characteristics such as gender, hair color, etc. as examples):

Who ate peanut butter and jelly (PB&J) for lunch today? What if I said, *Today ONLY students who had PB&J for lunch can play with the bikes. Bikes are just for PB&J kids, so those who ate something else can't play with them.*

Everyone sitting on one of the red carpet squares raise your hand. What if I said, *Today, we're going to have Water Day outside, but if you're sitting on a blue square, you can't play. If you're sitting on a blue square, you'll have to play something else.*

For each example, discuss how it makes each group of students (e.g., PB&J versus non-PB&J) feel and whether it's fair to everyone.

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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 respecting cultural values and focusing on highlighting children's strengths and positive characteristics as you talk with them.

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### Facilitate the Activity

Explain that it is not fair that only some students can play with certain toys or be certain things.

Sometimes we hear people say that certain clothes, toys, games, or jobs are only for some people and not for others. But that's fair. Things can be for everyone, and we each get to make our own choices about how we look, what we like, and what we do.

Choose two to four play activities, objects (e.g., toys or clothing), or roles (e.g., jobs). For each, show students a prop and discuss reasons for wanting to do/have/be it, who can do it, and how to challenge stereotypes about it, using the example below as a guide.

1) (Show a set of crayons.). What are these for? (*Drawing; coloring*) Why would someone want to draw? (*they like to draw; are good at drawing; wants to learn how to draw better*)

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**Tip:** Avoid bringing up "typical" stereotypes. If children themselves raise these kinds of stereotypes, address them accordingly. If they are gender-based, remind them that *"there are no boys' things or girls' things — they're for everyone."*

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2) Can anyone like drawing? Students, grandparents, teachers; students in our Panda Bears class? (Yes) Is drawing only for some people, or is it for everyone? (*Everyone*)

3) What if you really liked drawing and someone told you it was just for toddlers. Is that fair? What could you say to someone who said that? (*Drawing can be for everyone; people can choose what they like to do*)

4) Turn to your buddy and practice saying, “*Drawing can be for everyone!*”

Repeat with several examples, allowing the class to suggest examples as well. If some insist that stereotypes are true (e.g., *Flowers aren’t for everyone; just girls!*), gently guide the class through the process again and help them think about fairness, kindness, and counter-stereotypical examples (e.g., *What if someone in our class really liked flowers and students told him he shouldn’t have a flower backpack? How do you think he would feel? Would that be fair? Is it okay to hurt someone’s feelings by saying what they’re doing or wearing is wrong? Have you ever seen a boy wear a flower shirt or backpack with a flower on it?*).

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**Tip:** If students make stereotyped comments, turn the discussion toward a general example before continuing to avoid singling out or shaming any individual students.

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## Wrap It Up

How do you know that things in our classroom are for everyone? (*Everyone can play with everything; we can choose what to play with*)

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## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

**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 both genders with the same occupation to visit at the same time. Ask them to share reasons 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 involve the entire class.

**Someday I’d Like To:** Lead a class discussion on various activities or occupations, emphasizing that they can be for everyone. Have students illustrate and write about what they want to learn or do someday. Have the class share their work. As they share, ask if any have similar interests.

**Challenging Stereotypes:** Model and then have students practice responses that challenge stereotyped statements using examples such as the following (you may want to include a variety of known classroom favorites or points of disagreement):

What if someone said...

Who can play with trucks and cars?

*Everyone!*

Teachers can't play superheroes.

*That's not true — things can be for everyone, so everyone can play superheroes.*

Who can be a doctor?

*Everyone!*

The dolls are only for us.

*Things can be for everyone, and dolls are for those who want to play with them.*

**Z Sing-Along CD: *You Can Be Anything*:** Listen to the song and discuss the many things the students would like to play, try, or be.



## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *Growing, Learning, and Changing*

Explore and Practice: How We Change

## 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:

- ▶ Describe ways they have changed or will change

## 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

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## MATERIALS

- ▶ *Growing, Learning, and Changing* storybook
  - ▶ Paper and writing materials
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## 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...

Have your feelings or opinions about a matter of importance changed over time? Do you think 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 learned/socialized and malleable? How do your views on these characteristics impact your beliefs, expectations, and interactions with the students 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: GROWING, LEARNING, AND CHANGING

*Children discuss how everyone can change by learning new things, and the importance of persistence in working at learning something new.*

### Before Reading

What is something new you learned this year? Was it easy or hard for you to learn?

In this story, Z has a hard time doing something and feels Z will never, ever be able to learn how to do it. The kids help Z learn that everyone is always growing and changing in many ways, and that by working and trying hard, we can learn a lot of new things.

As you listen to the story, pay attention to how Z feels about trying to learn something new that's hard.

### During Reading

Why was Z excited to try and write Z's name? *(Z wanted to learn something new; wanted to write like Kenny; had never tried it before)*

Why do you think Z was no good at writing? *(It was hard; the crayons were breaking; Z couldn't write a "Z" very well)*

Do you think Z was really no good at writing? What did Z need to do instead? *(Keep trying; practice; calm down; try a different way)*

What happened after Z kept practicing? *(Z was able to write a Z; Z was happy to learn how to do it)*

What do you think would have happened if Z had stopped trying? *(Z would have felt sad; wouldn't have been able to write Z's name; would not have tried writing anything else)*

### After Reading

Why is it important to keep trying, even when things are hard? *(I can learn how to do it; I can get better at it; I can figure out a new way to do it)*

What would happen if you gave up trying something new every time it seemed hard? *(I wouldn't learn new things; I would feel bad if I couldn't do some things)*

## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: HOW WE CHANGE

*Students discuss the ways and reasons people can change in what they like, feel, and do, and describe and draw one way they have changed.*

### Set the Stage

Discuss the concept of change.

Point out a variety of things in and around the classroom (e.g., *a chair; the classroom pet; a tree outside the window*) and discuss whether each stays the same or changes and why they change (e.g., *grow bigger; leaves change with the seasons*).

### Facilitate the Activity

Next, ask the class if they think people can change, and discuss some examples.

Think about what you were like as a baby. How are you different now? (*Learned how to talk and walk; can eat all kinds of foods; have younger brothers and sisters*).

Think back to the beginning of the school year. How have you changed since then? (*Grew taller; made new friends; learned how to ride a bike*).

Summarize the idea of change in people.

Everyone changes in many ways because everyone has the ability to grow and learn new things. You can also change because you decide you want to be different. You can decide to change your mind about what you like or how you feel about something or what you like to do.

Have students sit with their buddies and briefly review some of the ways they have changed. Guide them in thinking how they will change in the next year (e.g., *What is something new you want to try? What is something you think you will learn? What do you think you will look like when you are five?*). Have them draw and dictate/write about one way they think they will change. Encourage buddies to compare their work with one another, and then gather them to discuss with the class.

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**Tip:** If students generate “creative” answers about change in inanimate objects, guide their understanding by asking if those objects could change “all by themselves.”

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### Wrap It Up

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

What would happen if you thought 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

**Changing Role-Play:** Have children role-play an activity (e.g., eating; swinging a baseball bat; marching) or emotion, and then ask them to think of a different activity or emotion and change their action or expression to it. Invite the class to guess the new action.





# Communication



Unit 3



### 3.1 Listening to Others

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

Our class is discussing how to be a good listener (eyes looking, ears listening, mouth quiet, and body still) and how this is respectful and shows we care what others are saying.

*You may want to:*

- ▶ Ask your child how they use their entire body to be a careful listener
- ▶ Brainstorm to create a special signal to remind or reinforce family members regarding good listening
- ▶ Tell your child when you notice him/her demonstrating good listening skills

### 3.2 Talking Together

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

Our class is learning about conversation and practicing ways to contribute to a conversation, including listening thoughtfully and making relevant comments and questions.

*You may want to:*

- ▶ Ask your child to share some examples of “conversation makers” and “conversation breakers”
- ▶ Choose a topic that is interesting to both of you, note the time, and see how long you can continue a conversation with each other

### 3.3 Being Assertive

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

Our class is learning that it is important to speak assertively to share our ideas and feelings or ask for help, and we are practicing how to *Speak Up and Speak Kindly*.

*You may want to:*

- ▶ Ask your child what kind of voice you use when you speak up
- ▶ Ask your child what kind of words you use when you speak up
- ▶ Tell your child when you notice him/her using a strong, respectful voice and kind words to speak up



## 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 students:

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

## ACTIVITIES

### 3.1 Listening to Others

*Students discuss the importance of being thoughtful and careful listeners and practice how to use whole-body listening skills (eyes looking, ears listening, mouth quiet, body still) during a game.*

### 3.2 Responding to Others

*Students discuss the importance of reciprocal communication and practice “talking back and forth” with a peer.*

### 3.3 Being Assertive

*Students discuss the importance of speaking up in a respectful way and practice how to Speak Up and Speak Kindly.*





## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *Being a Good Listener*

Explore and Practice: If You're Listening and You Know It

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## MATERIALS

- ▶ *Being a Good Listener* storybook
  - ▶ *Whole Body Listening* cards
- 

## GOALS

This set of activities is designed to:

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

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- ▶ Describe and demonstrate attentive listening
- ▶ Identify examples of attentive listening

## KEY CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

Listening to others is important because:

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

To be a good listener:

- ▶ Look at the person who is speaking
- ▶ Listen with your ears
- ▶ Keep your voice quiet
- ▶ Keep your body still

If you don't hear or understand what others say, you can ask questions.

## 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.

### Think about this...

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

How do you model respectful listening with the students in your classroom?

### Try this today...

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

*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.*

*Gina, would you please scoot a little to the left of where you’re sitting? I want to make sure we can all see one another while we’re talking.*

## READ AND DISCUSS: BEING A GOOD

*Children listen to the story, discuss why it is important to listen to others, and how to listen carefully using their body.*

### Before Reading

When is it important to be a good listener? When can it be difficult to be a good listener?

In this story, Z has a hard time listening. The kids help Z learn that it is important to be a good listener and to use the entire body when listening. Pay attention with the eyes and ears, and keep the voice quiet and the body still.

As you listen to the story, pay attention to times when Z forgets how to listen and for times when Z listens well.

### During Reading

What should Z have done instead of interrupting Jeremy? (*Waited for Jeremy to finish talking; listened to Jeremy's story*)

If you wanted to say something while someone else was talking, what could you do instead of interrupting them? (*Cross your fingers to remember what you want to say; find something to do while you wait; say "Excuse me" if it is something that can't wait*)

How do you think Kim felt when Z wasn't listening to her? (*Sad; frustrated; ignored*)  
How do you think she felt later when Z did listen to her? (*Happy; respected; Z cared what she was saying*)

What are some ways Z learned to use the whole body to listen carefully to others? (*Look at the person, listen to what they are saying, keep voice quiet, and keep the body still*)

### After Reading

Why is it important to take turns talking and listening to others? (*It's fair; it gives everyone a chance to talk and listen; it gives everyone a chance to ask questions; I can hear everyone's ideas and stories*)

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

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What could happen if you weren't listening very well to what others were saying? *(They would think I don't care about what they're saying; I would miss out on something fun; I wouldn't hear directions; I won't learn things)*

What can you do if you forget to listen or can't hear what someone is saying? *(Ask them to repeat what they said; ask questions)*

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## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: IF YOU'RE LISTENING AND YOU KNOW IT

*Children discuss how to pay attention and listen using eyes, ears, mouth, and body and then practice listening during a game.*

### Set the Stage

Explain that the class will be talking about good listening, and that you need a volunteer to help you demonstrate how to be a good listener. Invite a volunteer to stand next to you, and ask them a question that requires more than a brief answer (e.g., *What happened in the story we just read?*). As they reply, demonstrate poor listening in a silly, exaggerated manner (e.g., look around the room; hum loudly; turn and say hello to another child; walk around the volunteer; put your head down).

When finished, thank the class for listening to the volunteer, and ask them how you did at being a good listener and how you could have listened better.

### Facilitate the Activity

Discuss why it is important to listen to others and how to be a careful listener using the entire body.

Listening to others shows we care what others are saying and helps us learn and understand things. When we're paying attention and listening carefully to someone:

- ▶ Our eyes are looking at them
- ▶ Our ears are listening to what they are saying
- ▶ Our mouths are quiet
- ▶ And our bodies are still

Show the *Whole Body Listening* cards one at a time. Have the class repeat them and then demonstrate good listening using their bodies.

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

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Ask the class to listen carefully as you share two to four listening scenarios (refer to suggested scenarios below), and have them decide if the buddy is listening with their whole body or could listen better. If the buddy could listen better, invite a volunteer to select the *Whole Body Listening* card that represents what the buddy needs to improve and why.

### Suggested Scenarios:

- ▶ *When you talk with your buddy, she turns to look at you.*
- ▶ *When you ask your buddy for a crayon, she keeps looking down at her paper and coloring.*
- ▶ *While you're telling your buddy what you did last night, he stops listening and thinks about what he did last night.*
- ▶ *During circle time, your buddy sits still and listens to a classmate talk about his new puppy.*
- ▶ *When you're talking about a new movie you saw, your buddy interrupts to say she wants to see that movie, too.*
- ▶ *Your buddy starts coloring while the teacher is still explaining what to do.*

Next, have students stand and explain that you will be singing a song they will need to be good listeners to know what to do next in the song. Practice several verses of *If You're Listening and You Know It* with the class, singing and performing the movements instructed in the song.

*If You're Listening and You Know It*  
*If you're listening and you know it, clap your hands*  
*If you're listening and you know it, clap your hands*  
*If you're listening and you know it*  
*Then you'll really want to show it*  
*If you're listening and you know it, clap your hands*

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### Variations:

*Stomp your feet*  
*Wiggle your fingers*  
*Snap your fingers*  
*Stretch up high*  
*Touch your toes*  
*Make a smile*

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## Wrap It Up

What are four ways we use our whole body to be a careful listener? (*Listen with our ears, look with our eyes, keep our mouth quiet, and body still*)

How does it help our class when everyone is a good listener? (*We can hear one another; we know what to do next; we show that we care what the speaker is saying; we can learn things*) When can we practice being good listeners to one another?

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**Extension:** Have children draw and write/dictate how they will be good listeners at school.

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## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

**If You're Listening (with Your Whole Body) and You Know It:** Sing and act out the song, but add challenges by including both verbal and nonverbal instructions (first demonstrate with a volunteer). For each verse, alternate between verbally naming or silently demonstrating the movements so that students have to use their eyes and ears to follow the instructions.

**Listen and Guess:** Have students close their eyes. Make various sounds (e.g., shake a water bottle; drum your fingernails; turn the pages of a book) one at a time and have students guess the sound.

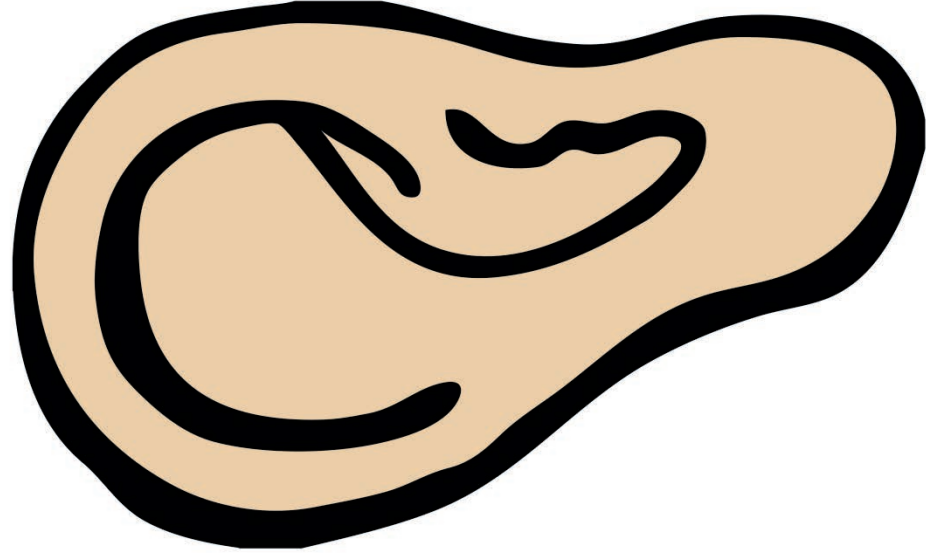
**Listen and Match:** As you name each of the four body parts associated with good listening, ask students to name and demonstrate the corresponding listening skill. Try varying the volume or tone of your voice when naming each body part, and have students name the skill in the matching volume/tone.

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

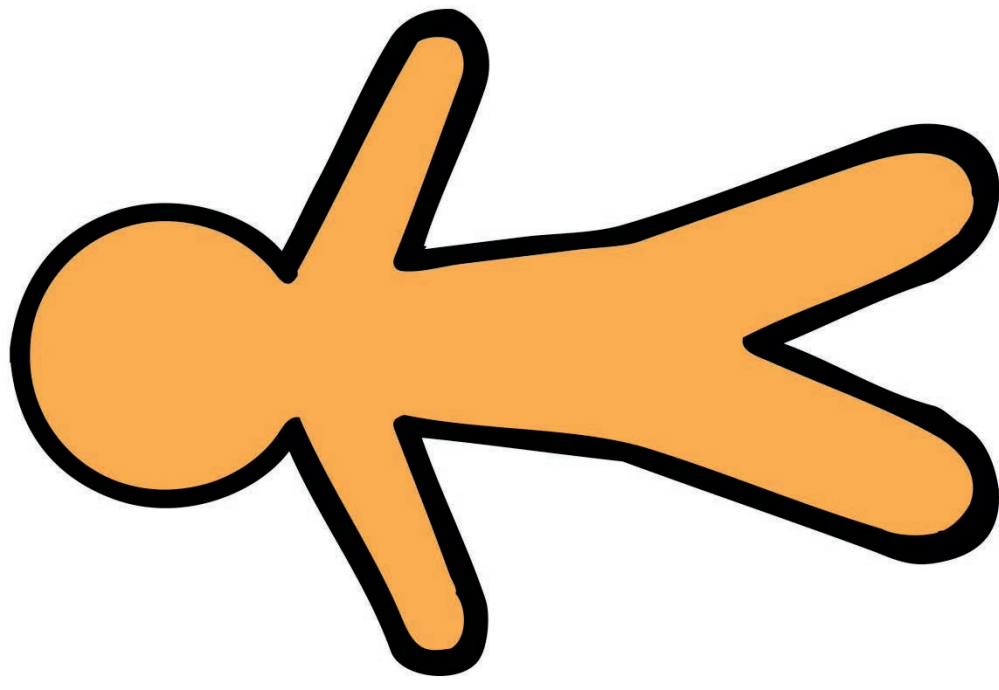
**The Waiting Game:** Discuss why they have to wait before speaking to someone (e.g., *When the other person is already talking; when it is not your turn to speak; when the person is talking or listening to someone else; when the person is busy and can't listen to you*) and how it can be difficult to listen and think about what someone is saying because they are thinking of what *they* want to say. Brainstorm strategies for waiting to talk. Ask students a question (e.g., *Where would you like to visit on vacation?*) and encourage them to listen carefully to your own answer while they wait to share theirs. Have students listen for 5 or 10 seconds as you answer, and then have them turn to their buddy and share their answers. Do this a few more times, lengthening the waiting period.

**Z Sing-Along CD: *Good Listener*.** Listen (like a good listener!) to the song and discuss how to be a good listener to everyone you meet.

# Ears Listening

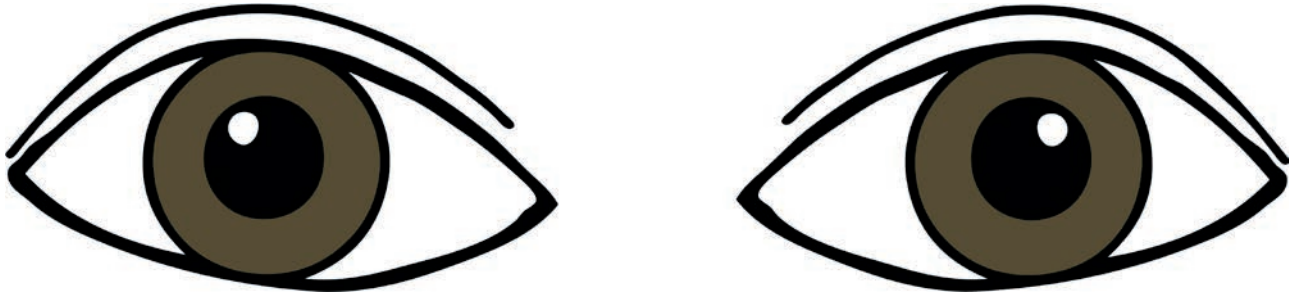


# Body Still



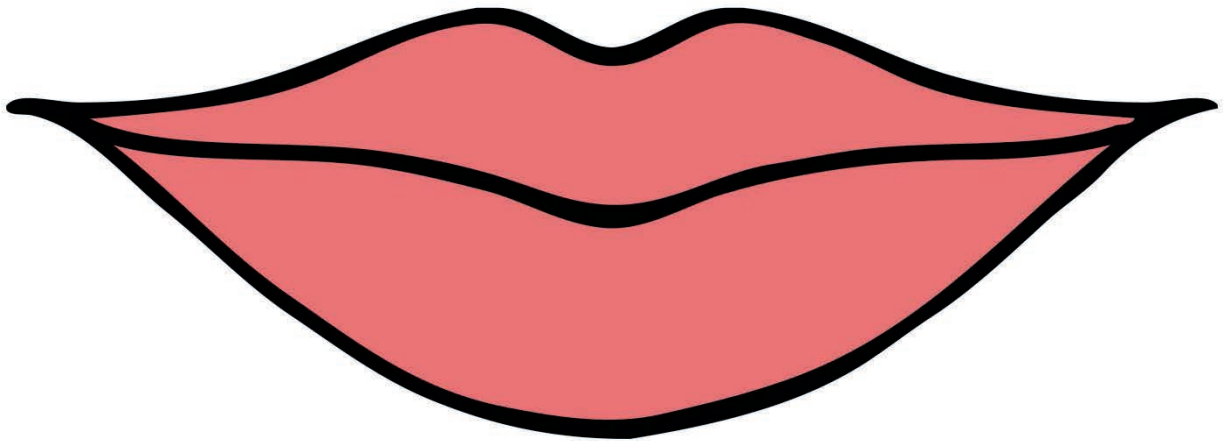
3.1 Whole Body Listening Cards  
(PreK)

# Eyes Looking



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# Mouth Quiet





## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *Talking Back and Forth*

Explore and Practice: Back and Forth Buddies

## GOALS

This set of activities is designed to:

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

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- ▶ Demonstrate taking turns listening and talking with a partner

## KEY CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

It is important to *listen* carefully, *think* about what the person is saying, and *respond* to them.

To *respond* means to answer someone by saying or doing something after they speak to you.

Responding to others is important because it lets the person know:

- ▶ That you listened to them
- ▶ That you thought about what they said

It is fair to take turns speaking and listening.

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## MATERIALS

- ▶ *Talking Back and Forth* storybook
  - ▶ Balls or small objects to pass (e.g., beanbags, talking sticks; one per buddy pair)
-

## RESEARCH AND RELEVANCE

Responding to others can be an often-overlooked communication skill. In addition to listening attentively, it is important for students to understand that it is considerate to acknowledge that someone has spoken to them by responding verbally or physically. Being able to engage in reciprocal, “back and forth” communication is critical for being able to maintain conversations 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?

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

How do you model appropriate responding with the students in your classroom?

### Try this today...

Be explicit in reinforcing children when they use reciprocal communication skills such as responding to one another and talking in turns.

*I noticed that when Ginger said ‘hello’ to you, you turned to her and said ‘hi’ right back. I’ll bet that made her feel good that you answered her.*

*I hear everyone at the blue table sharing some really great stories about your favorite place to go on vacation. Because you’re all listening so carefully, everyone is getting a turn to tell their story.*

## READ AND DISCUSS: TALKING BACK AND FORTH

*Children listen to the story and discuss why it is important to respond to others and to take turns speaking and listening.*

### Before Reading

If you were talking with a friend, what would happen if you both wanted to talk at the same time, all the time?

In this story, Z doesn't understand how to go back and forth when talking to someone. The kids help Z learn how to listen and then respond and how to take turns talking.

As you listen to the story, pay attention to what happens when Z is talking with the kids and forgets to take turns.

### During Reading

To *respond* means to answer someone by saying or doing something after they speak to you. How do you think the kids felt when they talked to Z and Z didn't respond? (*Sad; ignored; didn't know if Z heard them*) Why is it important to respond when someone speaks to you? (*They know I was listening; they know I care about what they said*)

Was it fair for Z to keep talking about animals instead of letting the kids speak? If Z didn't give the kids a turn, how do they feel? (*Sad; bored; wouldn't want to talk to Z anymore*)

### After Reading

Why is it important to take turns talking and listening? (*It's fair; it gives everyone a chance to talk and listen; it gives everyone a chance to ask questions; we can hear everyone's ideas and stories*)

When someone talks to you, what are some ways you can respond to let them know you heard and thought about what they said? (*Answer with words; nod; shake my head; smile at them; do what the person asked*)

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**Tip:** Provide a prompt if necessary (e.g., *How could you respond if someone said hello to you?*)

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## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: BACK AND FORTH BUDDIES

*Children practice taking turns listening and speaking as they talk with a buddy.*

### Set the Stage

Gather students in a circle with their buddies. Explain that they are going to take turns going back and forth saying a rhyme together and that they should listen carefully and think about what you are saying. When you point to them, they should respond with the word that comes next. Recite a familiar rhyme or chant, stopping and pointing to students so they can respond by filling in key words.

*Twinkle, twinkle, little [point]  
How I wonder what you [point]  
Up above the world so [point]  
Like a diamond in the [point]  
Twinkle, twinkle, little [point]  
How I wonder what you [point]*

Ask if it would have been difficult to respond if they hadn't been listening and thinking of what you were saying.

### Facilitate the Activity

Review the importance of taking turns speaking, listening, thinking, and responding.

When you are talking with someone, it's important to go back and forth and take turns speaking and listening. That's fair because everyone has a chance to say things and listen to what the other has to say. When it's your turn, listen carefully, think about what the person is saying, and respond.

Explain that they will be talking with their buddies. With a volunteer, model passing a ball back and forth as you take turns talking (e.g., *What they had for breakfast*). Ask the volunteer to pay attention and alert you if you forget to take a turn. "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 a good listener when you are speaking.

Have students sit and face their buddies, and give each pair a ball. Have the buddies demonstrate how they will look when they are being good listeners with each other. Explain that the child holding the ball should speak and then roll the ball to their buddy. When their buddy receives the ball, it is their turn to speak and then roll it back.

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.

Have buddies face the group again and invite them to share with the class things they learned about their buddy.

## Wrap It Up

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

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

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**Tip:** Let children know when they can each have one more turn and pass of the ball before time ends.

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## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

**Back and Forth Chants:** Split the class into two groups facing each other and lead them in a familiar chant, with half the class beginning the chant and the other half (1) repeating the words or (2) saying the next part of the chant.

**Z Sing-Along CD: *Good Listener*:** Listen to the song and discuss how to take turns and “talk about you, talk about me.”



## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *Our Words Are Important*

Explore and Practice: Speak Up, Speak Kindly

## MATERIALS

- ▶ *Our Words Are Important* storybook

## GOALS

This set of activities is designed to:

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

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students 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

If someone doesn't hear or understand you, you can try again or try a different way.

## 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 are quiet, timid, or passive and need support developing self-confidence to assertively express themselves. Others are loud, boisterous, or aggressive and need support speaking respectfully so that others will listen. There can also be a mismatch in communication styles. Some may be more direct in their expressions (e.g., *I need that red crayon you have, or, Please hand me that red crayon*), whereas others may have an indirect manner (e.g., *Can I please use that red crayon?* or *I don't have a red crayon to use*). Students could find that their communication attempts are successful with some peers but less effective with those who have different expressive styles.

Students need to feel that their words and ideas are important. Self-confidence in speaking up is enhanced when 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 — listening thoughtfully, waiting to share your own ideas, speaking up with your ideas? What contexts make these behaviors more difficult?

### Try this today...

Reinforce students for 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: OUR WORDS ARE

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

### Before Reading

Have you had a great idea that you wanted to tell someone? What did you do?

In this story, Z doesn't want to tell the kids of an idea because Z is feeling shy and it doesn't seem as if anyone is listening. The kids help Z learn that it's okay to speak up, because everyone has important things to say.

As you listen to the story, pay attention to what Z does when Z has an idea, and if things worked or didn't work.

### During Reading

What happened when Z pointed at the green button? *(The kids didn't know what Z was trying to say)* What happened when Z whispered about the green button? *(The kids didn't hear)*

Is it okay to speak up with an idea, even if it doesn't work or isn't the best idea? Why? *(Everyone's ideas are important; everyone should get a chance to share their ideas and feelings)*

What did Z finally do so that the kids heard the idea about the green button? *(Spoke up; used a strong voice)*

What if Z hadn't spoken up about the green button — what could have happened? *(They wouldn't have known how to fix the bubble machine; Z would have felt bad; they wouldn't have played with the bubbles)*

### After Reading

When would you need to speak up to someone? *(When I need help; when I want something; when I have an idea; when I want to play with someone)*

What could you do if you tried to speak up and no one heard you? *(Say it again; say it in a louder, respectful voice; say the person's name; wave or tap someone softly to get their attention; ask an adult for help speaking up)*

Is it okay to speak up and say anything at all? What types of words should you use when you speak up? (*Kind words; respectful words*)

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

## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: SPEAK UP, SPEAK

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

### Set the Stage

Tell the class that you have something fun you want to talk about with them (e.g., a book or activity to be introduced later in the day). Quietly pause and wait for them to question you, prompting them if they do not respond (*Do you think I should tell you?*). Next, whisper or mumble what you have to say, or speak with your head down. Wait, and prompt if necessary (*Could you hear what I said to you?*). Discuss why it is important to speak up when someone have something to share (*They can tell their ideas; others will know what they want to say*).

### Facilitate the Activity

Discuss why it is important to *Speak Up, Speak Kindly*.

Everyone has things to say, and it's important to know that you can speak up and tell others what you think, feel, or need. When you speak up, it's important to speak kindly. That way you can share your thoughts and feelings with others, but you also respect their thoughts and feelings.

Have children face their buddies and practice each skill as you describe and model each aspect of *Speak Up, Speak Kindly*.

Stand tall.

- ▶ Standing tall helps you speak clearly
- ▶ Stand (or sit) with your heads up and shoulders back

Look at the person.

- ▶ It's important to look at your buddy so they know you're speaking to them
- ▶ Stand tall and look at each other

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

### √ Use a strong, friendly voice.

- ▶ It's important to use a clear, strong, and friendly tone of voice
- ▶ Demonstrate speaking in different tones, and ask each other to decide if your voice is not strong enough or too strong
- ▶ Stand tall, look at each other, and practice speaking with a strong, clear voice (e.g., *Hi, buddy!*)

### √ Use kind words.

- ▶ It is okay to speak up when they have an idea, want something, or need help, but that it is *not* okay to say things that are hurtful to others
- ▶ Stand tall, look at each other, use a strong voice, and say something kind (e.g., *I think you're great because \_\_\_\_\_*). Remind partners to respond (e.g., *Thank you.*)

Have buddies face the group in a circle.

You are going to have a chance to Speak Up and Speak Kindly to the whole class, just like you did with your buddy. When your classmates are speaking, listen carefully and think about what the person is saying.

Share a "speaking up" scenario (see suggestions below), and ask the class if it is okay to speak up in that situation. If so, go around the circle and have several students demonstrate what they would say in a clear, strong, kind, voice (if not okay, discuss why). Choose additional scenarios and continue around the circle so that each student has an opportunity to practice speaking up.

### Speaking Up Scenarios

*You want to play with a classmate.*

*You don't like your friend's drawing. (Not okay)*

*You like your friend's drawing.*

*You need help opening the glue.*

*You didn't hear what you're supposed to do next.*

*You think it's silly that your classmate is afraid of dogs. (Not okay)*

*You see a classmate get hurt on the playground.*

*You would like a turn on the swings.*

---

**Tip:** Establish a system for which buddy will speak first.

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## Wrap It Up

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

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

## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

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



# Problem Solving



Unit 4



## 4.1 Identifying Problems

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

Our class is learning that it's okay to have different feelings or ideas about the same thing or the same situation, and how we can disagree with one another respectfully. We are learning that it is important to talk to each other so that we know how everyone feels and thinks and can understand the problem.

*When you have a problem or disagreement, we can:*

- ▶ **STOP** and calm down
- ▶ **TALK** about each person's perspective so we understand the problem
- ▶ **THINK** of possible solutions
- ▶ **TRY** a solution and see how it works for everyone

*You may want to:*

- Talk with your child about the first two steps to solving a problem (**Stop, Talk**).
- Encourage your child to use calming strategies (e.g., taking deep breaths; counting slowly; thinking of something beautiful; hugging a stuffed animal) when they are upset or overexcited.
- Take opportunities, when reading stories or watching videos that involve conflict or differences of opinion, to guide your child in recognizing each person's perspective and use words to label the problem (e.g., *She wants to pull her friend in the wagon, but he is excited to ride bikes, so it seems the problem is they don't want to do the same thing*). This gives children practice in developing empathy and identifying problems in situations in which they are not involved (and possibly already feeling upset).

## 4.2 Solving Problems

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

Our class is learning that it's okay to have different ideas about how to solve a problem. We are learning that it is fair to listen to everyone's ideas and work together to choose a solution that makes everyone feel okay.

*When you have a problem or disagreement, we can:*

- ▶ **STOP** and calm down
- ▶ **TALK** about each person's perspective so we understand the problem
- ▶ **THINK** of possible solutions
- ▶ **TRY** a solution and see how it works for everyone

*You may want to:*

- Talk with your child about the last two steps to solving a problem (**Think, Try**).
- Ask your child what it means to *compromise*.
- Take opportunities, when reading stories or watching videos that involve a conflict or differences of opinion, to ask your child to think of as many possible solutions to the problem as they can (e.g., *What if...?*). Guide your child in thinking of the consequences of these possibilities for each person involved (e.g., *If they decided to play restaurant in the upstairs loft, most would be happy, but what about the child who is afraid to climb the ladder? What would he do?*).

### 4.3 Cooperating

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

Our class is learning what it means to be fair and to cooperate when playing or working with others, and we are participating in activities that give everyone a chance to work as a team.

*You may want to:*

- ▶ Ask your child some of the things that are important to do when you work together (e.g., include everyone; listen and cooperate; use kind words).
- ▶ Talk with your child about the ways your family cooperates with one another (e.g., making dinner; washing the car; putting together a puzzle, etc.), and discuss how much fun it can be to work together and how everyone helps to get the job completed.
- ▶ Tell your child when you notice him/her using teamwork skills and point out how it is helpful (e.g., *I saw how carefully you were listening to Grandma explain how to pat the soil down around the plant, and the garden looks great after all your hard work today!*).

### 4.4 Being Considerate

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

Our class is discussing how we are sometimes very excited and active and other times very calm and still. We are learning ways to change our behavior when necessary so we can respect and get along with others around us.

*You may want to:*

- ▶ Ask your child what it means to “have the ziggles” and how to turn them up or down.
- ▶ Play games that help your child practice self-regulation, or change their behavior on purpose:
  - Alternate between counting to 10 very quickly and then very slowly.
  - Play music and dance excitedly, and then begin to dance more slowly as you turn down the volume.
- ▶ Brainstorm to create a special signal (e.g., palms facing up/down to indicate “turn it up” or “turn it down”) that provides your child with a gentle reminder to adjust their behavior (e.g., “pump it up” or “calm it down”), and help them practice doing this.
- ▶ Tell your child when you notice him/her intentionally calming down, and talk about how it feels.



## OVERVIEW

Unit 4 focuses on fostering student's ability to resolve conflict and work cooperatively and compatibly with others.

## GOALS

This unit is designed to help students:

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

## ACTIVITIES

### 4.1 Identifying Problems

*Students discuss the first two steps in problem-solving (Stop, Talk), and practice identifying and stating problems presented in scenarios.*

### 4.2 Solving Problems

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

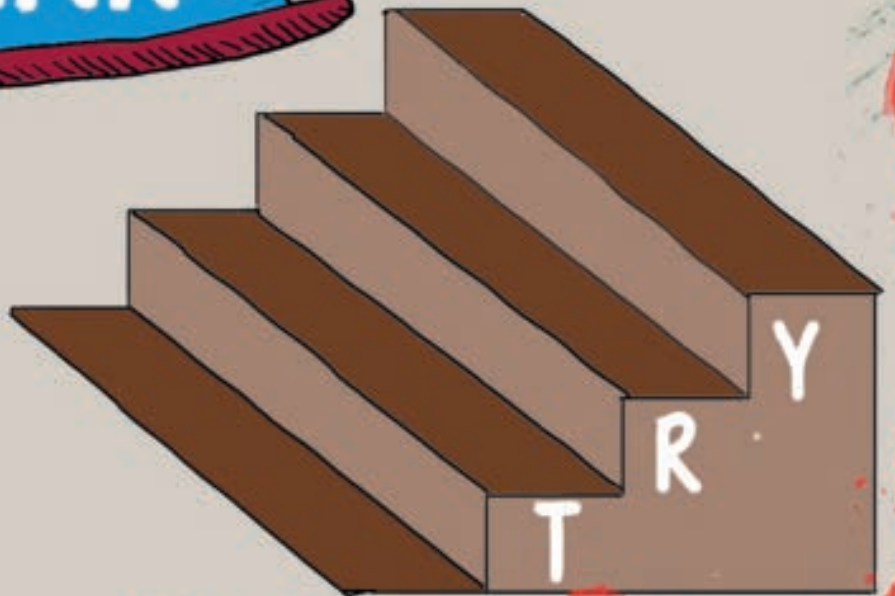
### 4.3 Cooperating

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

### 4.4 Being Considerate

*Students discuss being considerate of others and practice strategies for self-regulation during a song.*













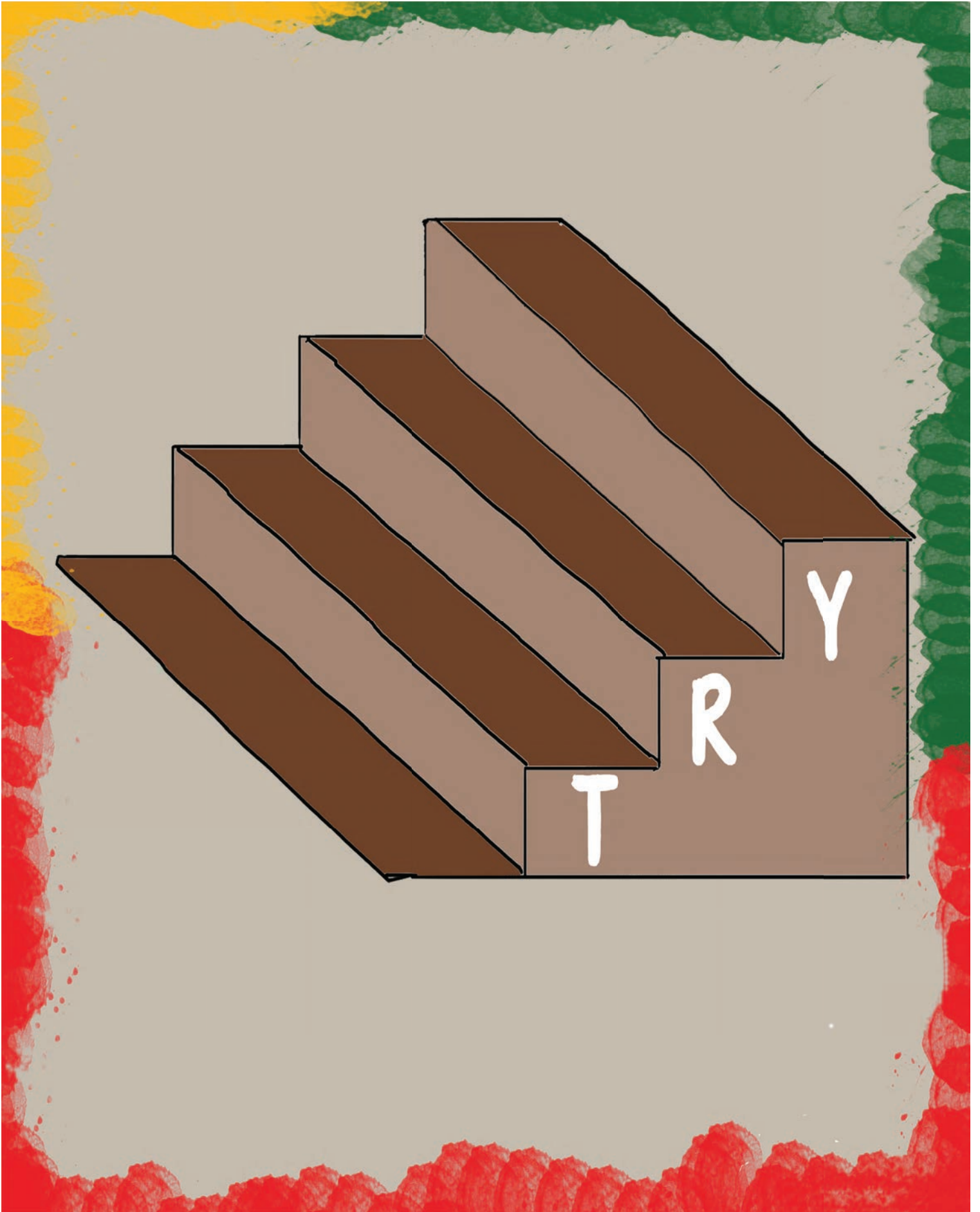
**TALK**













## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *Different Feelings Are Okay*

Explore and Practice: *Spot the Problem*

## GOALS

This set of activities is designed to:

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

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

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

## KEY CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

It's okay to disagree when 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

- ▶ *Different Feelings Are Okay* storybook
  - ▶ *Problem-Solving* poster
  - ▶ *Spot the Problem* scenarios
-

## RESEARCH AND RELEVANCE

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

Adults can provide support by guiding students to stop and regain calmness, talking about each person’s feelings and perspectives so they can identify the problem, generating possible solutions and potential consequences, and choosing a course of action to see how it works. Younger students can do these steps in simple forms and with adult facilitation. With time and practice, these steps can become more detailed and nuanced as students’ social interactions become more complex. Eventually, they will develop the flexible capability to resolve peer disputes without assistance.

### What You Can Do to Problem-Solve

Students 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 been in a conflict because you misunderstood someone’s feelings or perspective? Did you know there was a problem?

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

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

### Try this today...

When reading stories or discussing events (e.g., a story a student is sharing with the class) that involve a conflict or difference in opinion, take opportunities to guide the class in recognizing each person’s perspective and using words to label the problem. This helps students develop empathy and allows them to practice identifying problems in which they are not involved.

*What did the girl want to do with her drawing? How did she feel when her little brother scribbled on it? Did he mean to ruin her picture and make her angry? Why did he scribble on it? It appears that the problem is that her brother likes to scribble on paper, but sometimes he scribbles on her drawings when they are left on the table.*

## READ AND DISCUSS: DIFFERENT FEELINGS ARE OKAY

*Children listen to the story, discuss how to STOP and calm down, TALK to one another to understand the problem, and work together to find a solution.*

### Before Reading

Think of when you were playing with a friend and each of you wanted to do something different. What happened?

In this story, Z doesn't want to do what the kids do, so they help Z learn that it's okay to disagree and have different feelings and ideas. When you have a disagreement, stop and talk about the problem so you can figure out how to solve it together.

As you listen to the story, pay attention to how Z and the kids feel differently so you can spot their problem.

### During Reading

How did the kids feel about going outside to splash in the puddles? (*Excited; happy*) How did Z feel about it? (*Worried; sad*) Will this be a problem for playing together?

Why did Z agree to go outside with the kids? (*Z knew they were excited to go outside; Z didn't want them to be upset*) If Z would have gone outside at first, without saying the problem, what could've happened? (*Could've gotten wet and cold; wouldn't have had fun; would've felt sad or angry*)

When Z and the kids finally figured out that they disagreed, what is the first thing that they did? (*Stopped*) Why is important to stop first when there is a disagreement? (*So you can calm down, so you can think clearer*) What are some ways that you can calm yourself down? (*Take a deep breath, count to five, think of something that makes you happy*)

After they stopped, what did they do next? (*Talked and listened to one another so they could figure out the problem*)

What problem did they have? (*They wanted to do different things; they didn't feel the same way about playing in puddles*)

What was their solution? (*The kids gave Z a raincoat and boots to wear outside so Z could stay warm and dry*) Was this a good solution? (*Yes*) Why? (*They agreed on the solution; everyone felt okay about it; the kids got to go outside and Z didn't get wet*)

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**Extension:** Have students practice taking deep breaths 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, you can figure out how to solve the problem*)

Why is it important to stop and calm down before you talk about a problem? (*So you can listen to each other, so you can speak kindly to each other*)

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**Extension:** Have students turn to their buddies and practice disagreeing by *Speaking Up and Speaking Kindly* 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

*Students discuss the first two steps in problem-solving (Stop, Talk) and practice identifying and stating problems presented in scenarios.*

## Set the Stage

Share a real-class scenario and ask if the students think this is a problem (e.g., *We have only one cape in the theater box. What if two students want to wear it at the same time? Is a problem?*).

Discuss the first two steps in problem-solving, referring to the *Problem-Solving* poster.

[STOP] When you're having a disagreement or problem with someone, you might feel upset or angry. The first thing to do is to Stop and calm down. When you're feeling calm again, you'll be able to talk and listen to each other. What is the first thing to do when you have a problem? (*Stop and calm down*)

[TALK] When you're calm, the second thing to do is to Talk to each other 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 students 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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## Facilitate the Activity

Explain that the class will talk about different situations and try to *Spot the Problem*.



Guide students in discussing the *Spot the Problem* scenarios. Have them share answers with their buddies before inviting a few to share with the class. Read each scenario and:

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

## Wrap It Up

What's the first thing you do when you're having a problem with someone? (*Stop and calm down*)

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

Why is it important for everyone to share their feelings? (*Everyone's feelings and ideas are important; it helps us figure out the problem and think of different solutions*)

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## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

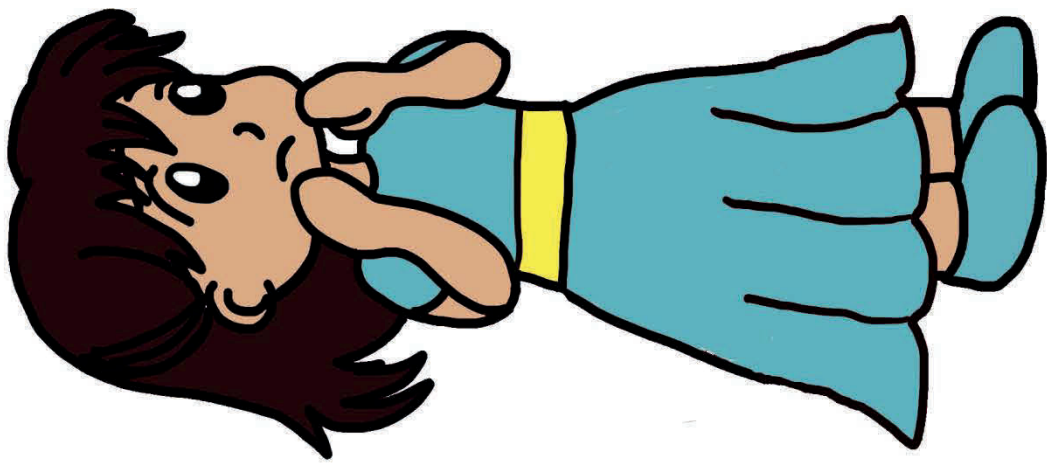
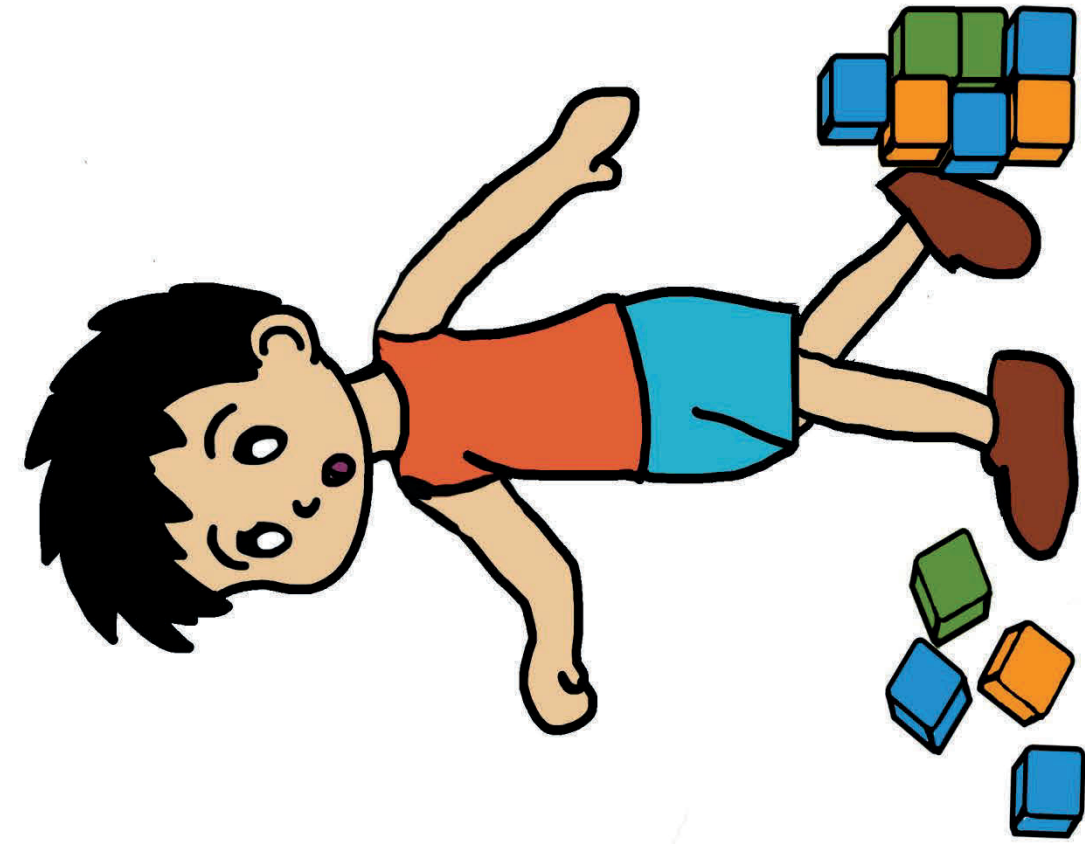
**Agree/Disagree Game:** Play a game in which you make a statement (e.g., *I love chocolate ice cream*) and have the class indicate whether they agree or disagree by giving a thumbs-up, thumbs-down, or flat hand ("not sure"). Each time, ask a volunteer for each response (agree, disagree, or not sure) to discuss their opinion, reminding them to use respectful and positive statements (e.g., say *I like strawberry ice cream best!* rather than *Chocolate ice cream is disgusting!*). Emphasize that everyone has different opinions sometimes and it is important to express their opinions and differences respectfully.

**Disagree Respectfully Role-Play:** Discuss conflict scenarios and invite students 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 build blocks together. Your friend wants to add more blocks and build the tower really high, but you think that it will fall.*
- ▶ *A friend shows you a new game she received for her birthday and says, "This game is the best game ever!" You don't like it at all.*
- ▶ *You and a friend make pretend food out of clay. Your friend wants to start making animals out of the clay instead, but you want to keep making food.*

**What's the Problem Scenarios:** Use puppets or stuffed animals to act out brief problem-solving situations. Guide students in identifying how each of the characters feels, how to calm down, and what each wants. Have them state the problem in words, and then brainstorm possible solutions.

- ▶ *Two students reach for the same truck at the same time.*
- ▶ *One student wants to put stickers on their shared paper, but the buddy wants to use markers.*
- ▶ *One student accidentally knocks down another's block tower.*



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 does Mia feel? (*Angry; sad; disappointed*)

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

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

### **TALK**

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

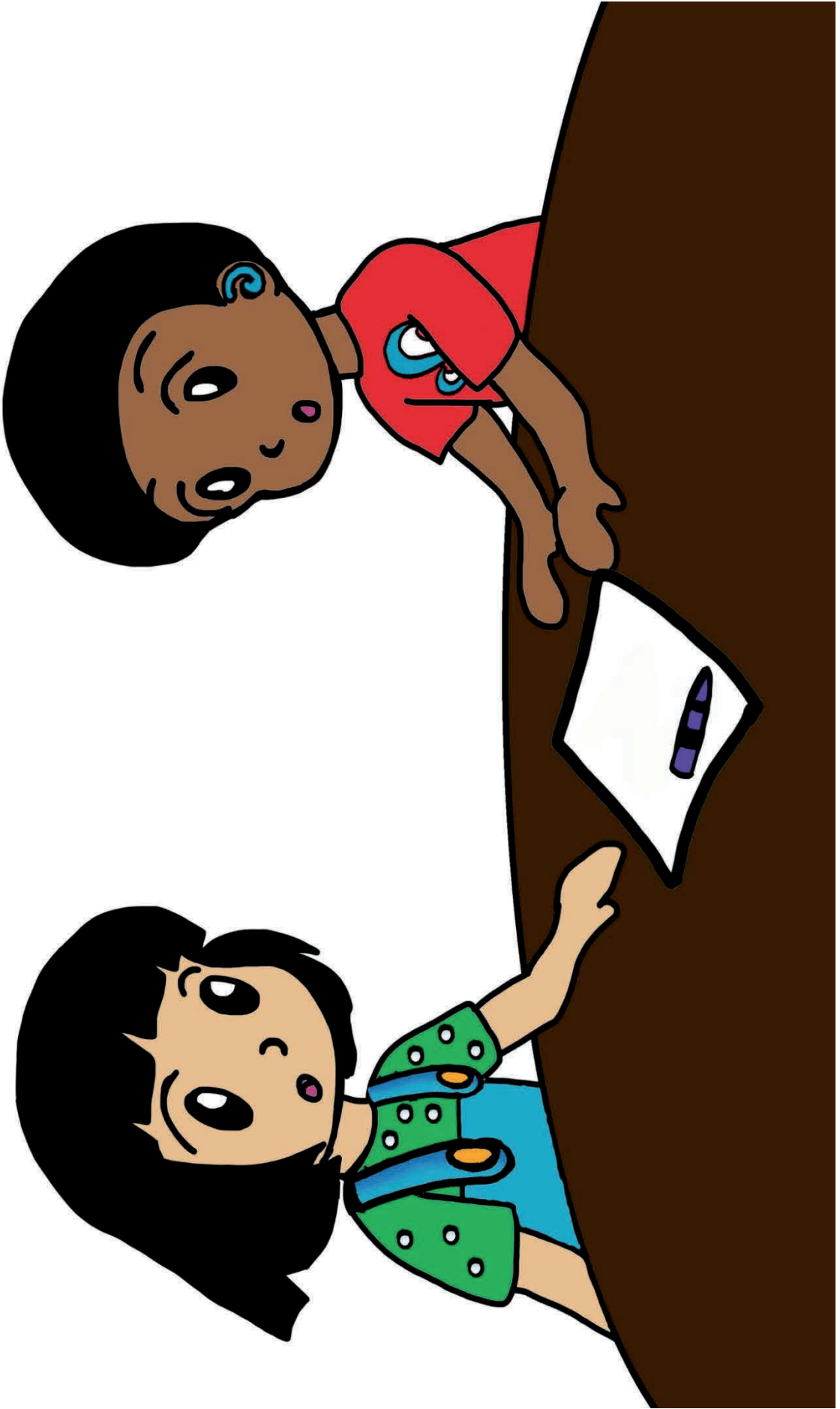
What do you think Mia wants? (*To build a block tower*)

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

What problem does 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 can they do to solve the problem? (*Kenny can help fix her tower; one person could play in a new area*)



Kim and Jordan are drawing. Kim is going to draw with the purple crayon, but Jordan reaches for it at the same time and says he is going to use it.

**STOP**

How does Kim feel? (*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 five*)

**TALK**

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

What do you think Kim wants? (*To use the purple crayon*)

What do you think Jordan wants? (*To use the purple crayon*)

What problem does Kim and Jordan have? (*They both want to use the same crayon*)

**THINK, TRY**

Kim and Jordan both want to use the same crayon. What can they do to solve this problem? (*Take turns with it; find another crayon; choose another color to use*)

## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *Deciding Together*

Explore and Practice: Buddy Buckets

## GOALS

This set of activities is designed to:

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

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- ▶ Name the last two steps in problem-solving (Think, Try)
- ▶ Generate fair solutions for scenarios
- ▶ Practice problem-solving during play with a peer

## KEY CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

There is more than one way to solve a problem.

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

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

- ▶ *Deciding Together* storybook
  - ▶ *Problem-Solving* poster
  - ▶ Containers with collections of various small toys (a "Buddy Bucket" for each buddy pair)
-

## RESEARCH AND RELEVANCE

Young children often have difficulty considering 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. Focusing on their own needs and feelings leads children to behave in ways that seem controlling or bossy, and this can make it difficult in resolving conflict among peers. Conflict that occurs in the classroom provides learning opportunities in which adults can guide students through the process of peaceful and effective problem-solving. Helping them develop positive strategies for resolving day-to-day conflict with peers helps to prevent them developing unhealthy patterns of behavior that could lead to social difficulties later in life. Others benefit when they observe examples of positive conflict resolution.

### What You Can Do to Problem-Solve

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

### Think about this...

How do you approach disagreements or conflict 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 in which it is more difficult for you to compromise?

### Try this today...

When reading stories or discussing events (e.g., a story student is sharing with the class) that involve a conflict or difference of opinion, take opportunities to ask them to think of as many possible solutions as they can. Guide them in thinking of the consequences for each person involved (e.g., *If they decided to play restaurant upstairs in the loft, most would be happy, but what about the child who is afraid to climb a ladder? What would he do?*).



## READ AND DISCUSS: *DECIDING TOGETHER*

*Students listen to the story, discuss the importance of considering everyone's ideas, work together to THINK of solutions, and TRY to make everyone feel okay.*

### Before Reading

Have you and a friend had to figure out a problem together, such as sharing something you both wanted? How did you decide what to do?

In this story, the kids help Z learn that it's fair to decide things together. This means that everyone shares ideas and everyone listens. They think and decide together on a fair solution that works for everyone.

As you listen to the story, pay attention to the different ideas Z and the kids have in solving their problem and whether they think of a fair solution.

### During Reading

After Z and the kids found the caterpillar in the tree house, what was the problem? *(They wanted to do different things with the caterpillar)* What were some of the ideas they had to solve their problem? *(Put the caterpillar in the garden; smoosh it; take it home; keep it in the tree house)*

Would it have been fair for Z to decide what to do with the caterpillar? How would the other kids have felt if they had to do it Z's way? *(Sad; angry; Z wasn't listening to them)*

After Z and the kids thought of different solutions for the caterpillar, which did the kids decide to try? *(Kayla was going to bring her bug house to the tree house)* Was this a fair solution? *(Yes)* Why? *(Everyone decided together; everyone felt okay about it)*

### After Reading

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

What could you do if someone you were playing with wanted things to be their way? *(Say how I feel; suggest other ideas; ask an adult to help us work it out)*

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#### Extension:

Brainstorm what students would do if they found a caterpillar at school, highlighting the many solutions.

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## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: FIND A SOLUTION

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

### 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, first, stop and calm down and then talk to one another to figure out the problem.

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

[TRY] After you've thought of different ways to solve the problem, the last step is to choose one and try it out. Ask yourself three questions when deciding on a good solution: *Is it safe? Is it fair? Will everyone feel okay?*

Guide the class in discussing one to two conflict scenarios, reminding them there are 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 it is a good one.

#### Suggested Scenarios

- ▶ *You and a friend both want to ride bikes on the playground, but there is only one bike left.*
- ▶ *You're building a sandcastle, but other students keep running back and forth through the sandbox.*
- ▶ *You're drawing a picture when someone else asks to use the crayons, but you want to keep using them.*

---

*Extension:* Have students share problem-solving ideas with their buddies before inviting a few to share with the class.

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### Facilitate the Activity

Set out the Buddy Buckets and explain that the class will practice being good problem-solvers as they play with their buddies (designate a length of time they will play). Invite buddies to choose a container and decide fairly how to play together. As they play, provide support and positive reinforcement for any problem-solving efforts, repeating the relevant steps (*You and your buddy have a problem because there is only one dinosaur, and you both want to play with it. You came up with a good solution by taking turns!*). 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 solution; guide them in their choices.

### Wrap It Up

Did you and your buddy have different ideas about what to play? How did you solve the problem and decide together? (*Thought of solutions; picked one to try*)

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

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## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

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

**Problem-Solving Role-Play:** Discuss problem-solving scenarios. Invite students to think of a fair solution and to role-play an ending to the scenario.



## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *Being a Team*

Explore and Practice: Teamwork in Action – Block Construction

## 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 one another.

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## MATERIALS

- ▶ *Being a Team* storybook
  - ▶ Blocks or building materials
  - ▶ *Cooperation* cards
-

## RESEARCH AND RELEVANCE

As children develop their abilities to express their feelings and ideas, to understand the feelings and perspectives of others, and to exhibit self-control by paying attention and inhibiting impulsive behavior, they are better equipped to play with partners or small groups of children and to 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 children 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 that bring children into close proximity and encourage cooperation? What changes could you make to achieve those goals, while maintaining necessary classroom structures?

### Try this today...

Promote cooperation, turn-taking, and teamwork by setting up small group activities and centers with limited materials. For example, if four children are making collages at the art center, provide only 1 or 2 bottles of glue, or have pairs of children work together on one larger sheet of paper. 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 children’s cooperative behaviors.

*I see that you have figured out how to share the stickers with one another—choosing one sticker and then passing them to the next person is a great idea to make sure that everyone gets to use them!*

## READ AND DISCUSS: *BEING A TEAM*

*Children listen to the story and 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 like to play with other people? When you play or work with other people, what are some things you do to make sure that you are working as a team?

In this story, the kids help Z learn that it is important to *cooperate* with others and work as a team. That means that everyone listens to each other and shares and helps one another. Cooperating can make working together much more fun for everyone!

As you listen to the story, pay attention for times when Z and the kids are *not* cooperating and other times when they are working as a team.

### During Reading

What happened when Gabriel and Annie first tried to work together with Z to build the Zanderloo tower? (*Z didn't include them, Z didn't listen to them, Z didn't share the blocks*) Why did Z do that? (*Z was excited to play, wanted to show them the tower, forgot to share*)

How do you think Annie and Gabriel felt when they weren't able to work as a team with Z? (*Sad, disappointed, bored*)

Why is it important for everyone to get to work on what you're doing together? (*It's fair, everyone gets to play, everyone might have good ideas*)

What did Z, Gabriel, and Annie do to be fair and cooperate at the end of the story? (*Listened to each other's ideas, decided what to build together, helped each other, shared the blocks, worked on the tower together*)

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**Tip:** Be sensitive to family and cultural differences in the emphasis placed on independence versus interdependence, while highlighting the positive aspects of cooperation and teamwork.

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### After Reading

When do you cooperate and work together with your classmates here at school? (*Play games together, clean up together, build things together*)

What are some things that you should do to be fair and cooperate when you are working together? (*Listen to each other's ideas and decide what to do together, share, take turns, help each other*)

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**Tip:** Display the *Cooperation* cards as children share corresponding ideas.

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## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: TEAMWORK IN ACTION – BLOCK CONSTRUCTION

*Children work together on a collaborative construction activity.*

### Set the Stage

Show the class a bucket of blocks and ask them to brainstorm what they could build with them.

Explain that children will be working as teams to build something together, referring to the ways to show cooperation depicted on the *Cooperation* cards.

Everyone is going to get a chance to practice cooperating with one another while you work in teams to build something together with blocks. First, you will need to listen to each other's ideas so you can decide together what you're going to build. Then, remember to be fair and cooperate by sharing and taking turns and helping one another while you work. And because you're a team, it's important that each person on the team gets to work on what you build together.

### Facilitate the Activity

Divide children into teams (2-4 children each) and distribute building materials. As children work together, provide support and positive reinforcement for their cooperative efforts (*I can see your team cooperating by taking turns stacking blocks on your tower!*). If children are working separately or some are not participating, guide teams in collaborating (*It looks like you are building both a hospital and an airport. How will people at the airport get to the hospital? Good idea for cooperating—you could build a road together to connect them!*).

After teams have worked on their constructions, gather the class back together to discuss the experience.

### Wrap It Up

Did you have different ideas about what to build? How did you decide together? (*Listened to everyone's ideas, asked each other what to build*)

What are some ways that you cooperated with your team? (*Shared the blocks, took turns stacking blocks, handed each other blocks*)

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**Tip:** If supplies are limited, or for additional monitoring, have teams take turns working at a "team center."

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**Tip:** Take photos of each team in action.

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**Extension:** Have children draw and dictate 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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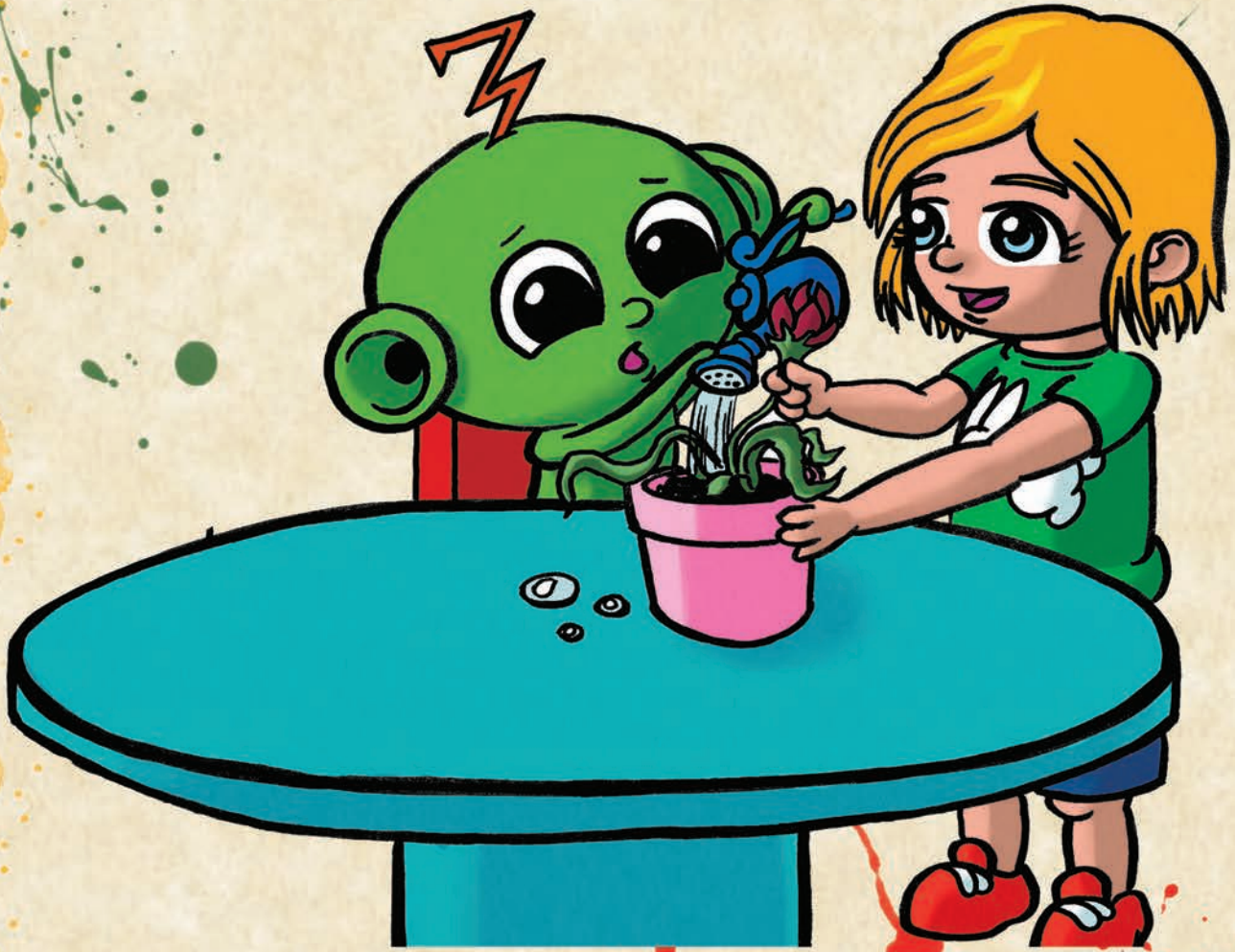


## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

**Team Projects:** Occasionally throughout the year, set up activities that foster teamwork among the entire class or small groups of children. Breaking up some projects into smaller tasks assigned to “committees” can support teamwork practice in more manageable groups. Team projects might include:

- ▶ Gather large boxes, recyclables, or building materials and encourage children to decide as a group what to create together.
- ▶ Planning and preparing a simple meal.
- ▶ Choosing and developing a special activity or display for a Family Night.





Help



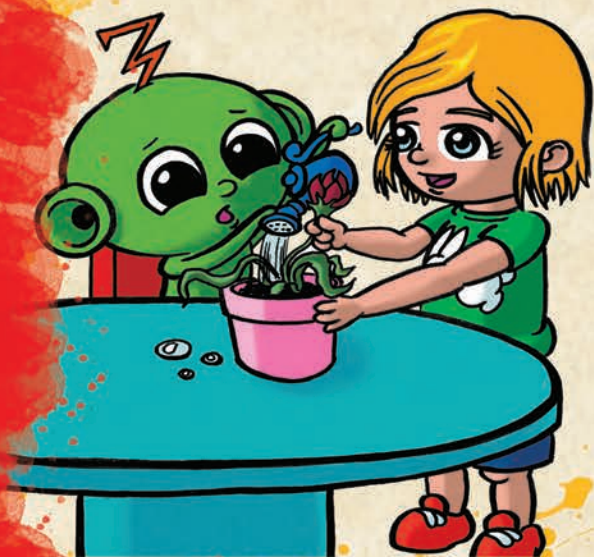


# Listen

# Share



# Help





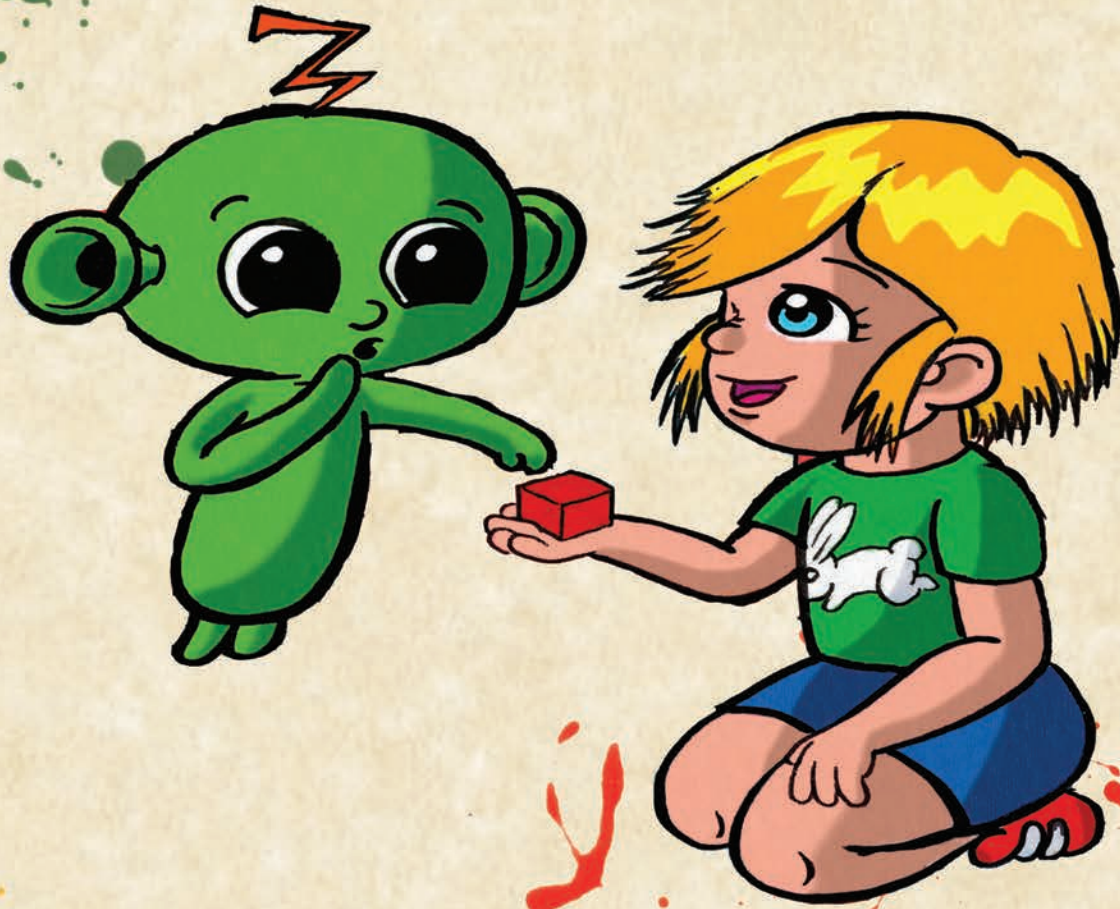


Listen

NOT FOR DISTRIBUTION.







Share



## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *Z Gets the Ziggles*

Explore and Practice: Turn It Up, Turn It Down Song

---

### MATERIALS

- ▶ *Z Gets the Ziggles* storybook
- 

## GOALS

This set of activities is designed to:

- ▶ Promote awareness that everyone has different preferences and behavioral styles
- ▶ Promote consideration of the impact one's behaviors has on others
- ▶ Foster self-regulation

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- ▶ Name and demonstrate ways to calm down
- ▶ Practice intentionally changing their activity level in a movement game

## KEY CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

Everyone is unique in how they feel and do things.

Being *considerate* means showing you care about other people's feelings.

It is important to make sure that what you are doing is *considerate* of the others around you.

To calm down, you can:

- ▶ Take deep, slow breaths
- ▶ Quiet your voice
- ▶ Let your body relax

## 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 attention, emotions, and behaviors. Because all children have different characteristics, they may experience their classmates as too noisy, active, or overstimulating. Others may find peers too quiet, passive, or even boring. It is helpful to guide them 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 is okay to respectfully let others know when their behavior is too much. Even when children are different, 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 today...

Support students in their daily efforts at self-regulation. Some may need extra facilitation, reminders, or an intentionally planned space or activity that reduces 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 those who seem overwhelmed and require your assistance in calming down.

## READ AND DISCUSS: Z GETS THE ZIGGLES

*Students listen to the story and discuss how it is okay to do things differently, but that it is important to be considerate of others around them.*

### Before Reading

What makes you really excited, loud, or wiggly? Have you ever been around someone else who was very excited, loud, or wiggly when you weren't feeling that way? What was it like?

Sometimes when people are having fun or feeling silly, they get really excited, loud, or wiggly. That can be fun, but sometimes it's *too much!* It can make it hard for those around them to play. In this story, the kids help Z learn that it's important to be *considerate* and care about other people's feelings. When someone is doing *too much*, they can calm themselves down and relax so that everyone can play.

As you listen to the story, pay attention to what Z does to calm down when Z starts to become TOO MUCH for the kids.

### During Reading

What did Z do when Z had the ziggles? (*Made a lot of noise; bounced and boinged around; wouldn't stop moving*)

How did Z's ziggles affect the kids in the tree house? (*They couldn't hear one another; things got knocked over; they couldn't play*)

Was Z making things difficult on purpose? (*No*) Why was Z acting ziggly? (*Z was excited; didn't know how to calm down*)

What did the kids teach Z to calm down so they could all play together? (*Take deep breaths in and out; quiet Z's voice; relax Z's body*)

Why is it important to pay attention to the people around you and make sure you're not making things difficult for them? (*They can play and learn; I'm being considerate*)

## After Reading

Let's practice calming down just like Z. Take a big, deep breath and let it out slowly. Keep your voices quiet and let your bodies get very loose and soft. How does it feel? (*Relaxed; calm; quiet*)

What can you do if you're really excited and having trouble calming down? (*Ask an adult for help; take a break*)

---

## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: TURN IT UP, TURN IT DOWN

*Students practice changing the speed of their movements by "turning it up" and "turning it down" during a song.*

## Set the Stage

Ask the class how someone acts when excited and ziggly inside (*Jumping up and down; running around; being loud*).

Explain that it is okay to be excited, but it is important to be considerate of how others feel and to calm down when necessary.

Sometimes people feel excited and jumpy, and sometimes they feel quiet and still. It's okay for everyone to act in different ways, but you have to make sure you're being considerate of how others feel. If what you're doing is TOO MUCH and making things hard for those around you, change what you're doing by "turning it up" or "turning it down" so that everyone can play.

## Facilitate the Activity

Explain that the class will practice by "turning it up" and "turning it down" during a song.

Have students face their buddies. Sing several rounds of "*If You're Happy and You Know It*," varying the pace and intensity of the singing and movements. Begin with slow singing and small movements (e.g., *blink your eyes at each other, wiggle your fingers at each other*), and gradually speed up the song and use larger movements (e.g., *jump up and down, wiggle like fish*). Next, slow the song and movements down again. End the song with a quiet, calming voice and slow movement (e.g., *sit down quietly*).

---

**Extension:** Model and have children practice:

- ▶ Asking/signaling you or another adult for help calming down
- ▶ "Taking a break" (Have an established space in the classroom that is quiet and safe)

---

**Tip:** At the transitions, cue children that it is time to "turn it up" or "turn it down."

---

## Wrap It Up

How did it feel when you were wiggling like a fish during the song? (*Excited; jumpy inside; out of breath*)

What did you do with your body so that you could “turn it down” and sit quietly at the end of the song? (*Slowed down; took some deep breaths; looked at the teacher*)

What could you do if someone around you is doing something that feels like TOO MUCH? ? (*Tell them; ask them nicely to change what they’re doing; ask an adult for help*)

---

## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

**Bubbles:** Have students alternately pop bubbles with movements that are large (e.g., clap; stomp) or small (e.g., poke; flick). Next, blow bubbles and have the students walk through them *without* popping any.

**Calming Down Book:** Have students think about a time when they needed to “turn it down” at school (e.g., after coming in from the playground), and have them draw/write what they can do. Create a class book and keep in it the quiet area that has been established for “taking a break.”

**Fast/Slow and Loud/Quiet Counting:** Establish a counting pattern (e.g., 1–5 slowly and 6–10 quickly, then reverse the pattern) and have students practice adjusting their speed or volume of speaking as they count.

**Fast and Slow Movement:** Have students alternately do jumping jacks, Hula-Hoop, march, etc. quickly and then slowly according to the speed of your counting. Then, have buddies practice and have each buddy adjust the counting rate.

---

**Extension:** Model and have students practice stating how they feel and asking a peer to adjust behavior that is “too much” (e.g., *The noise is making it hard for me to read my book. Could you please play more quietly?*).

---







# Peer Relationships





### 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 want to:*

- ▶ Ask your child how they 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 benefits the person.
- ▶ Brainstorm ways your family can 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 ways we can include others when we play and ensure that no one feels left out.

*You may want to:*

- ▶ Ask your child about a time when someone invited them to play and how it 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 sometimes 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 exploring 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 want to:*

- ▶ Ask your child how they make an *apology in action*.
- ▶ Help your child learn 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; do something kind).

### 5.4 Reflecting and Connecting

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

Our class is remembering special times and events in the past year to reflect on how everyone has grown as an individual and as a classroom community and create hopes and goals for the future.

*You may want 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 want to continue

## 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 student's experiences and learning throughout the year and creates an opportunity for connection with future growth.

## GOALS

This unit is designed to help students:

- ▶ 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

*Students discuss the importance of being caring toward others and then practice giving compliments and doing something kind for a peer.*

### 5.2 Being Inclusive

*Students discuss the importance of making sure everyone feels welcomed and included and practice inviting and including one another in a musical game.*

### 5.3 Making Amends and Forgiving

*Students discuss the idea that everyone makes mistakes and the elements of making amends.*

### 5.4 Reflecting and Connecting

*Students discuss feelings and memories at the end of the school year and create a display of their favorite class memories.*









## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *Have a Good Day*

Explore and Practice: Brighten Someone's Day

## GOALS

This set of activities is designed to:

- ▶ Promote a caring, prosocial orientation toward others
- ▶ Foster gratitude for others' kindnesses

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students 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
- ▶ Sharing
- ▶ Saying kind things

*Gratitude* means appreciation or thankfulness.

Showing gratitude when others are kind to us makes them feel good.

A *compliment* is something kind you say about someone else.

## MATERIALS

- ▶ *Have a Good Day* storybook
- ▶ "Sunshine Stick" (cut out and attach sun to a popsicle stick)
- ▶ Paper, writing materials, and/or craft 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 to 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 help children develop caring and empathy for others. In addition, when children feel connected to others — whether in close relationships and friendships or as part of a community where they are accepted and feel they belong — they develop concern for others and a sense of social responsibility toward them. Fostering their prosociality in a group setting can promote a positive and caring emotional climate within the entire 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 rather than for 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 students' prosocial actions (e.g., *That was really nice sharing!*), reinforce their prosocial disposition (e.g., *You're someone who likes to help others!*) or focus on the positive consequences of their actions (e.g., *When you gave Tina a turn on the swing, it made her really happy.*). When appropriate, invite the other student to share their feelings (e.g., *Jason, I noticed that Lilia shared her stickers with you. Why don't you tell Lilia how it made you feel?*).

## READ AND DISCUSS: *HAVE A GOOD DAY*

*Children listen to the story and discuss ways to be kind to others and how it can make everyone feel good.*

### Before Reading

Has a friend done something kind for you? How did it make you feel?

In this story, the kids help Z learn there are many ways to be kind and help someone have a good day. Showing kindness and caring toward others makes them feel special and can make you feel good, too.

As you listen to the story, pay attention to the kind things Z and the kids do for one another.

### During Reading

How was Z kind and caring toward Jordan and Mia? (*Z cleaned up; made them pictures; shared muffins*) How did this make them feel? (*Special; happy; important; that Z cared*)

Having gratitude means showing you are thankful to someone who has been kind to you. What did the kids say to Z to show their gratitude? (*Thank you*)

How did it make Z feel? (*Happy; good inside*) Why does it makes you feel happy when you do kind things for others? (*I see they're happy; I know I helped someone*)

---

**Extension:** Have students turn to their buddies and practice saying *thank you*.

---

### After Reading

How can you be kind to your classmates and help everyone have a good day? (*Share my things; say nice things to one another; help someone who is having trouble; give someone a compliment; show affection with a hug or high-five, smile at one another*)

When someone does something caring or says something nice to you, what can you do or say to show gratitude? (*Say thank you; tell them how it made me feel; give them a hug*)

## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: BRIGHTEN SOMEONE'S DAY

*Students pass around a "Sunshine Stick" to practice giving and receiving compliments and make a card for their buddies.*

### Set the Stage

Say something kind about the class (e.g., *I love how our class helps to put away the blankets so quickly at the end of our quiet time every afternoon!*) and explain that this is a compliment.

That is a *compliment* about our class. A *compliment* is something kind you say about someone else or about something they've done.

Show the Sunshine Stick to the class.

This Sunshine Stick has a sun on it to show that when you are kind to someone, you can really brighten their day. We're going to use the Sunshine Stick to give our classmates *compliments* and say kind things to one another.

With a volunteer, model giving a compliment and showing gratitude when receiving a compliment (*Thank you*). Emphasize that it makes people feel special when a behavior or action is recognized and appreciated (rather than their appearance or belongings), and provide a few examples (e.g., *I like how Keana always works hard to build really cool towers. Jared is a good friend because he shares with his classmates.*).

Give a compliment to the first student, and after they say *thank you*, hand them the stick. The student should turn and compliment the next person, who will say *thank you* and take the stick. Continue around the circle. After everyone has had a turn, invite them to share how they felt when a classmate gave them a compliment (*Happy; special*).

### Facilitate the Activity

Explain that the class will brighten their buddy's day by making Compliment Cards (have buddies sit together as they work). Invite students to dictate a compliment to write on their card. Encourage buddies to show gratitude toward each other after their card exchange.

---

**Tip:** If supplies are limited, or for additional monitoring, have buddies come to a "buddy center" in pairs to make cards.

---

---

**Tip:** To help students focus on positive traits and behaviors, prompt them to begin compliments with "You are..." or "I like how you..."

---

### Wrap It Up

How did you feel when your buddy gave you a card? (*Happy; special; grateful*)

How does it help our class when we show kindness to one another? (*Everyone has a good day; we feel happy; we care about one another; we get along*)

---

**Extension:** Establish a permanent space with materials for students (or teachers) to create:

- ▶ Compliment cards
  - ▶ Thank you notes
- 

---

## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

**Buddy Bracelets:** Set up a “buddy center” and invite students to come in pairs with their buddies to make beaded “buddy bracelets” for each other. Encourage them to show gratitude after their exchange. You may want to establish a permanent space with materials for students (or teachers) to create bracelets, pictures, or “kindness cards” for their classmates, teachers, or family.

**Classroom Caring Project:** Discuss with and choose an activity the entire class can do together to show 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 student in the class is making a contribution.

**Community Helpers:** Invite someone from the community (e.g., a “community helper;” a volunteer; a parent who helps a neighbor) to discuss their experience helping others.

**Sunshine Catchers:** Encourage students to “catch” one another being kind. Make paper sun cutouts available so that they can write/dictate the kind behaviors they (or you) see. Create an ongoing classroom display with the suns and discuss how their kind acts benefit one another and the classroom community.

**Z Sing-Along CD:** Listen or dance to *Have a Good Day* and discuss how to help others have one, too.



## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *Including Everyone*

Explore and Practice: Everyone In

## GOALS

This set of activities is designed to:

- ▶ Promote inclusive attitudes and behaviors
- ▶ Foster empathy and kindness

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- ▶ Describe how it feels to be included and excluded
- ▶ Practice inviting peers to join them in a game

## KEY CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

*Including* others means welcoming them and making sure they can join in with everyone else.

It is important to find ways to make sure that everyone feels included.

---

### MATERIALS

- ▶ *Including Everyone* storybook
  - ▶ Music player
-

## RESEARCH AND RELEVANCE

A positive classroom climate is supported when all students feel accepted and welcomed — by everyone. Unfortunately, there can be a number of reasons why students 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 abilities (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.*)
- ▶ Circumstances unrelated to the peer (e.g., *I just need to talk to my other friend for a few minutes.*)
- ▶ Need to be alone or with just one or two peers (e.g., *When students 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 students are guided in considering their reasons for exclusion (some of which may indeed be legitimate), they can take ownership of their actions and become actively involved in finding a solution. Although it is not always possible for *all* students to play or work together *all* of the time, helping them think about the perspective and feelings of the excluded person can motivate them to figure out alternatives to ensure 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 someone 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. That must've made him feel very welcome!*

*I saw that you added another car to your train today and invited some students to be passengers — that must've been a lot of fun to play in a different way!*

*It looks like Alicia really appreciated that you made room for her to sit at the table.*

Set clear classroom expectations about exclusion, and do not allow it based on gender or any other social category.

*It's not okay to say only girls can play [name a classroom area or activity] this morning; it's for everyone. If there's not enough room right now for others to play, let's think and figure out a way to make sure everyone can have a turn.*



## READ AND DISCUSS: *INCLUDING EVERYONE*

*Students listen to the story, discuss what it is like to be included and excluded, and figure out how to make everyone feel included.*

### Before Reading

How do you feel when someone invites you to play with them?

In this story, the kids help Z learn that it's kind to *include* others. There are many ways to make sure everyone feels included.

As you listen to the story, pay attention to how Z and the kids figure out ways to include others in a game.

### During Reading

Why was Z going to find something else to do instead of playing Rumble Jumble? (*Z didn't know how to play*) What did the kids do to make sure Z was included? (*Let Z watch; taught Z how to play the game*)

Why did Z tell Jeremy he couldn't play the game with them? (*There weren't enough pieces*) How would you feel if you were left out that others were doing? (*Sad; ignored; disappointed; lonely*)

How did Z and the kids include Jeremy? (*By playing with partners*) What would be another fair way to make sure everyone played the game? (*Take turns watching and playing; find things to use for more pieces; play a different game*)

How did Jeremy feel when his friends figured out a way for him to join the game? (*Included; happy; they cared about him*)

### After Reading

Is it sometimes okay to say *no* to someone who wants to play with you? When? (*When I want to play alone; when there isn't enough room at the table or area; when there aren't enough toys to share*)

How can you say no kindly? (*Tell them why you can't play together; offer to play with them later; offer to take turns with the toys*)

If you want to play with someone and they say you can't, what can you say or do? (*Ask if they want to play later; ask someone else to play; ask an adult for help joining in*)

---

**Tip:** Emphasize that it is kind to include others when possible, and encourage students to ask an adult for help figuring out how to do this (or how to say *no* kindly when it is not possible).

---

## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: EVERYONE IN

*Students practice inviting classmates to join them in a musical game.*

### Set the Stage

Have students sit in a circle, emphasizing how everyone is included.

When you *include* others, it means you welcome them and make sure they can join in with everyone. Look around our circle. Is everyone in our class *included* in the circle?

Explain they will be playing a musical game in which everyone joins in and is included.

### Facilitate the Activity

Invite two students to stand in the middle to start the game. Point out which students are on the outside and which are in the middle of the circle. Explain how to play the game.

- ▶ When music is playing, everyone on the outside and in the middle of the circle can dance.
- ▶ When the music stops, everyone should freeze in place.
- ▶ Upon the teacher's instructions, each student in the middle of the circle invites someone new into the middle (e.g., *Do you want to come into the circle with me?*).
- ▶ Everyone can dance when the music begins playing again.

Each time you stop the music, give a different instruction about whom to invite (e.g., *Invite someone who is wearing red... has a name that rhymes with "pack"... is standing next to the chalkboard.*). Tell students that it is okay if more than one person invites the same student into the middle of the circle. Continue playing until all students are in the middle. Then, give an instruction that allows you to be invited (e.g., *Invite the tallest person in the room.*).

At the end of the game, have students sit down in a circle to reflect on the experience.

### Wrap It Up

How did you feel when you were invited into the middle of the circle? (*Happy; excited; included*)

How did it feel when you had to wait a long time? (*Wanting to be included; left out*)  
Are there times when you have to wait to be included? (*When students are already playing together; when there aren't enough toys; when there isn't enough room*)

---

**Tip:** Repeat the game as time allows, varying instructions so that different students have an opportunity to be invited into the middle of the circle earlier in the game.

---

---

**Tip:** Point out that students who had to wait a longer time also had more classmates inviting them into the circle.

---

In this game, everyone had a chance to be included in the middle of the circle. How did it make the game fun? (*Everyone was included; everyone got to keep playing together; no one was left out*)

---

## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

**Jump In, Jump Out:** Draw shapes on the ground with sidewalk chalk (or use Hula-Hoops), one shape for each pair of buddies. Have buddies stand outside of a shape, and give different instructions for moving in and out of the shape:

- ▶ *Jump in on one foot, jump out on one foot*
- ▶ *Jump in and sit down, stand up and jump out*
- ▶ *Put two fingers in, take two fingers out*
- ▶ *Put your arms in and hold hands, let go and take your arms out*

Next, cross out half of the shapes and repeat the game, with two buddy pairs per shape. Repeat the game again with three or four buddy pairs per shape and then finally the whole class in one shape. When students realize they have to change the game in order to include everyone, brainstorm solutions (e.g., draw a bigger shape, have buddy pairs take turns moving in and out of the same shape, etc.).

**Let's Do Lunch:** Designate a day for buddies to sit together and share a meal or snack, and have them create "invitations" to each other for this event. Build anticipation by having students help plan a special food, select music, or make festive decorations for the tables.



## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *Staying Friends*

Explore and Practice: Everyone Makes Mistakes

---

### MATERIALS

- ▶ *Staying Friends* storybook
- 

## GOALS

This set of activities is designed to:

- ▶ Promote an awareness to take responsibility for one's actions
- ▶ Foster motivation and skills for making sincere and reparative amends
- ▶ Promote a forgiving attitude toward others

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- ▶ Acknowledge that everyone makes mistakes
- ▶ Describe and demonstrate ways to make amends in various scenarios

## KEY CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

Friends get upset at each other sometimes but can still stay friends.

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 angry feelings toward 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 these result in hurt feelings, broken belongings, and damaged relationships. Learning how to stay calm, take steps to repair these situations, and maintain 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 aren’t ready or don’t recognize the harm 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 caused. Even when the offense is 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

The ability 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 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. Forgiving someone and “letting go” of negative feelings helps children avoid aggressive tendencies and other negative social behaviors and maintain relationships despite conflicts that will inevitably occur.

### Think about this...

When you are upset or in a conflict, what strategies do you use to stay calm?

How easy or challenging is it to admit 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, upset, or hurt on the inside. Providing caring support during these times and making it clear that it is not okay to act upon these feelings in unkind ways can help children 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 responsibility for their actions.

## READ AND DISCUSS: STAYING FRIENDS

*Students listen to the story, discuss the importance of showing concern, take steps to make the situation better when someone has been hurt, and why it is important to be a fast forgiver.*

### Before Reading

An *accident* is something someone doesn't do on purpose. Have you ever done something on accident that made someone upset or hurt their feelings? What happened? What did you do to make things better?

In this story, Z and the kids accidentally hurt one another's feelings. The kids help Z learn that even when that happens, they can still figure out how to make things better and stay friends.

As you listen to the story, pay attention when Z and the kids feel hurt by something the other has done and what they do to stay friends.

### During Reading

How did Z feel to see the kids making the birdhouse without Z? (*Disappointed; sad; upset; angry; hurt*)

What did Z say? (*The birdhouse was silly; they couldn't be friends anymore*) How did it make the kids feel? (*Sad; hurt; disappointed*)

Do you think the kids left Z out and hurt Z's feelings on purpose or on accident? (*On accident; they didn't mean it*) If they didn't mean to hurt Z's feelings, why did they tell Z their part in what happened and say they were sorry that Z was sad? (*They wanted Z to know what happened; they wanted Z to feel better; they wanted to show they cared; they wanted to remain friends*)

To forgive someone means letting go of angry feelings. When you forgive someone, it doesn't mean that what they did is okay, but you stop being angry at them. Did Z forgive the kids? How did it make Z feel? (*Z felt better; stopped being angry*)

What did the kids do to make things better with Z? (*Talked about what happened; showed they cared about Z's sad feelings; asked Z to help them hang the birdhouse*)

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**Tip:** Remind students 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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### After Reading

Why is it important to explain and show you care when you've hurt someone's feelings, even if you didn't do it on purpose? *(They know what happened; they feel better; to show I care about them)*

Have you ever been really upset at a friend? What can you do to prevent saying things that aren't kind? *(Try a calming-down activity; take a break from playing with each other; say how I feel; talk about what happened; ask an adult for help)*

Why is it important to be a fast forgiver? *(I start feeling better; sometimes it's difficult to think of what to do next when I'm angry; the person who hurt me can start feeling better)*

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**Extension:** Have students turn to their buddies and practice saying the words, "I forgive you."

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## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: EVERYONE MAKES MISTAKES

*Children discuss the idea that everyone makes mistakes and the elements of making amends.*

### Set the Stage

Make a series of silly or exaggerated mistakes (e.g., drop something, say a big word incorrectly, bump something over, or forget to do something) and each time, label your action as a "mistake" (e.g., *Oops! I made a mistake and forgot that we were going to sit outside today!*).

### Facilitate the Activity

Discuss the concept that everyone makes mistakes.

What does it mean to make a mistake? *(To do something that isn't right; to do something the wrong way)*

Sometimes people make mistakes, and those mistakes can hurt feelings or ruin belongings. Let's think about some. Do you think children ever use things that belong to someone else? Give a thumbs-up if you think they do and a thumbs-down if they never make that mistake.



Continue discussing several examples of common mistakes (e.g., *knocking over what someone is building; forgetting to take turns; saying things that aren't nice*) and have the class decide whether children (and adults) ever make that mistake. You may want to admit to some of those mistakes yourself.

There are a lot of mistakes people can make. Do you think everyone makes mistakes?

Discuss the importance of finding ways to continue caring relationships even when mistakes occur, and introduce the idea of making amends.

Anyone can make a mistake, and even when it happens on accident, it's important to *make amends* by talking about it and trying to make things better.

Explain each of the elements of making amends, demonstrate the corresponding signals with both hands, and have the class copy your actions.

**Say your part (point to your mouth)**

To make an amends, you first *say your part*. This means staying calm and explaining what happened, even if it was an accident. Being honest helps the other person understand what happened, and that can make them feel better.

So, for example, if you came around the corner and accidentally knocked over someone's block tower, what could you say to *say your part*? (*I didn't see your tower; I forgot to look where I was going; I was going too fast*)

**Speak from the heart (cover your heart with your hands)**

To *speak from the heart* means you say something kind to let the other person know you care about what happened. Even if it was an accident, it's important for the other person to know you really care that they're sad or upset.

What could you say to *speak from the heart* to the person whose tower you ruined? (*I wish your tower wasn't ruined; I wish you weren't sad*)

**Fix what's been broken apart (clasp hands as if putting something back together)**

To *fix what's broken apart* means you find a way to make it better. If something was broken or ruined, you need to help fix it or clean it up. But the person's feelings may have been a bit broken or hurt, too. You can *fix what's broken apart* by thinking of a way to make that person feel good again, like saying something nice or inviting them to play.

If you knocked over someone's tower, what could you do to *fix what's broken apart*? (*Help clean up the blocks; help build another tower; offer to share the tower I build*)

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**Tip:** If students share specific examples and name peers (e.g., *One time Joey took my marker!*), redirect them to the general question (e.g., *Is this a mistake children can sometimes make? Thumbs-up or -down?*).

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**Tip:** Even if students make sincere amends, they may need time before they are ready to play together again. Establish a safe space for them to take a break when upset.

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### Wrap It Up

Let's use our words and hand signals to say the three parts of making an amends to someone. (*Say your part, Speak from the heart, Fix what's been broken apart*)

Why is it important to make amends when someone is upset or hurt by something that you've done? (*The person feels better; to show I care; to make things better for them*)

What can you do if someone makes amends to you? (*Forgive them; listen to them*)

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**Tip:** Emphasize that students can ask an adult if they need help managing their emotions, finding the right words, thinking of ways to make the situation better, or responding to someone's amends.

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## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

**Calming Down:** Teach students a calming activity such as taking deep breaths, counting slowly, or picturing something beautiful. Guide them in practicing this activity after they have been physically active (e.g., coming in from recess), and encourage them to try it when they are feeling upset at someone.

**Making Amends Role-Play:** Discuss conflict scenarios and invite students to role-play the scenario and demonstrate making amends.

## OVERVIEW

Read and Discuss: *Remembering Friends*

Explore and Practice: Memory Masterpiece

## GOALS

This set of activities is designed to:

- ▶ Provide a review of what students have learned and experienced throughout the year
- ▶ Provide an opportunity for students to consider how they have grown and changed
- ▶ Encourage thinking and planning for the future

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students 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 more about:

- ▶ Ourselves
- ▶ One another
- ▶ How to be a community

We have grown and changed in many ways.

We will keep learning and growing.

## MATERIALS

- ▶ *Remembering Friends* storybook
- ▶ Large butcher paper or construction paper and art supplies

## RESEARCH AND RELEVANCE

The end of the school year can bring a mix of emotions as students (and adults) prepare to transition away from familiar routines and structures and say goodbye to many with whom they have developed relationships over the year. Taking time at the end of the school year to reflect upon significant events, accomplishments, relationships, and growth can provide students opportunities to:

- ▶ Feel a sense of belonging and connection as they remember shared experiences.
- ▶ Feel valued and recognized for their importance and contributions to the class.
- ▶ Feel a sense of pride as they celebrate the accomplishments as individuals and as a 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 was particularly frustrating, challenging, or stressful in your work this year? What are you proud of accomplishing with your class?

How have you grown professionally this year? How has this affected your work, or how will it influence your work in the future?

What will you remember most about the group of students in your class this year? What do you hope they remember about *you* or about their experiences in your classroom this year?

### Try this today...

Take time to share individually specific messages of how you have seen your students 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: *REMEMBERING FRIENDS*

*Students listen to the story, discuss why it is important to remember time spent together, think about how they have changed and grown.*

### Before Reading

Do you remember something special from this school year?

In this story, Z and the kids remember the time they spent with one another and the memories they have.

As you listen to the story, pay attention to how the kids and Z feel as they remember their time together, and listen for what they hope will happen in the future.

### During Reading

How did Kayla and Z remember feeling when they first met? (*Nervous and shy*)  
How did that change over time? (*No longer shy; became comfortable*)

What memories did Z and the kids share? (*Taking care of a caterpillar; blowing bubbles together; Z being ziggly*)

What are some of the things the kids help Z learn? (*How to get along; what they had in common; how to calm down*)

### After Reading

How did you feel when you started school and met your classmates this year? (*Nervous; shy; excited; confused*)

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 that you did together with friends? (*Makes you happy, you remember the fun you had together, you see how you have changed since then*)

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**Tip:** Have students share and compare their feelings with their buddy before sharing with the class.

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## EXPLORE AND PRACTICE: MEMORY MASTERPIECE

*Students discuss favorite memories from the school year and work cooperatively to create a representation of those memories.*

### Set the Stage

Display a long piece of blank butcher paper and explain that students will create a banner that represents some of the memories they shared from their time together as a classroom community.

Today we're going to make a banner together to show the things we remember about being part of (class name). Remembering what we've done together helps us see how we've all grown and changed this year. Everyone will work on it together because we've all been an important part of this class.

Invite students to share memories from the past school year, providing specific prompts as needed:

*Who can remember a time when our class showed teamwork?*

*Can you remember a time when a classmate did something nice for you?*

*What was your favorite thing to do on the playground with your friends?*

Record the students' memories directly onto the banner.

### Facilitate the Activity

Have the students work together on the "memory masterpiece" by adding paintings or drawings of their own favorite class memories to the banner. Have students sit with buddies or in small groups around the banner, and encourage them to share their memories with one another as they work.

Gather the class to reflect on the experience.

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**Tip:** Take photos of students working together and add them to the display.

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### Wrap It Up

What memories did your classmates share that you remember as well?

How are you different now than you were earlier in the year? (*I know how to \_\_\_\_\_; I have new friends; I grew taller*)

How do you feel when you look at our memory masterpiece? (*Happy; included; sad to say goodbye*)

## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

**Classmate Appreciation:** For each classmate, have students dictate or write one kind word to describe them, writing these adjectives on a slip of paper placed into a personal “mailbox” for each student.

**Cross-Grade Scramble-up:** Arrange a day when students can spend a lunch or snack period with students from the next grade up (e.g., buddy students with an older peer, or partner small groups with those from the upper grade). Prior to the lunch, help them prepare by brainstorming topics they could talk about or questions they would like to ask the older students (e.g., *What is the best part of being in your grade? What was the coolest thing you learned this year?*).

**My Future Me:** Guide students in discussing how school will be different next year (e.g., *new classmates; different classroom, books, and activities*). Next, discuss how they will be different next year (e.g., *grow taller; know more students at school; learn to count higher; learn new words*), and discuss what they will do over the school break to help make those changes (e.g., *eat healthy; read books with family members; play with friends; try a new activity, etc.*). Have students draw and/or dictate how they imagine themselves to be different next year. You may want to mail home their predictions and resolutions prior to the beginning of the next school year.

**Thinking Back, Thinking Ahead:** Throughout the last weeks of school, guide students in reflecting on memories of the past school year and hopes for the future.

- ▶ *What did you do this year that makes you proud?*
- ▶ *What will you miss most about being in our class?*
- ▶ *What is the nicest thing a classmate did for you this year?*
- ▶ *What is one way you've become a better friend or classmate this year?*
- ▶ *What do you hope doesn't change next year?*
- ▶ *What is one way you want to help your classroom community next year?*
- ▶ *What is one thing you think will be easier next year?*
- ▶ *What are you are looking forward to next year?*











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