

HOW ARE YOU FEELING TODAY?



SUPPORTING CHILDRENS EMOTIONAL LITERACY

How are you feeling today?

This activity is designed to be used in conjunction with the book:

‘I’M NOT AFRAID OF SPIDERS. POEMS ABOUT FEELINGS’

It has been written with the current PHSE guidance in mind and fits with the learning objectives:

- Supporting children to recognise a range of emotions in themselves and other people.
- Supporting children to use a range of different words to describe feelings.
- Supporting children to talk about the feelings people experience in different situations.
- Supporting children to know how and when to ask for help with feelings.

It is suitable for groups of primary school children and will get them thinking and talking about emotions while also having some fun and it can easily be adapted to use with individuals.

The poems are all about children in familiar situations who are feeling a variety of different emotions, some pleasant and some difficult.

There are three different activities which can be used on their own or together depending on how much time you wish to spend.

Each activity begins with the reading of a poem.

After reading each poem discuss the feeling described with the group using the talking points suggested. Add your own questions if you wish, this part of the activity is intended to be a starting point for conversations and to encourage the children to share their thoughts and feelings.

Each section includes an optional extension activity and the opportunity to recap on the feelings that have been discussed.

The poem ‘The Sea’ has optional sound effects to go with it that you can use if you have access to the internet and the poem ‘Angry’ can be used with a useful clip about anger which you can find on You Tube. You will need paper/felt tips/crayons to complete the whole activity for some of the other poems.

At the end of each section there is an opportunity for the group to think about how people show emotions without using their words, by playing Feelings Charades.

Introduction

Show the group your copy of 'I'm not afraid of spiders. Poems about feelings.'

Ask:

Is anyone here afraid of spiders?

Explain that everyone feels scared sometimes, it's just one of many feelings.

Invite the children to:

Put your hand up anyone who has ever felt:

HAPPY

SAD

EXCITED

Pick one or two children to tell the group what they have felt happy / sad etc about.

Explain that the poems you are going to read are all about feelings and read the first one:

'What are feelings'

Page 5

Every one has feelings, in the next poem we will see a boy who is feeling frustrated.

Activity one

Read the following poems stopping after each for a brief discussion.

Pocket Money Frustration

Page 70

Talking points:

What do you think the boy wanted so badly?

Why is he so frustrated?

Do you think he did slam the door?

Point out here that we can sometimes tell how someone is feeling, not just by what they say, but what they do as well.

What do you think he could do now to help himself feel better?

Talking points:

*Most people have something they worry about, including adults.
Worry is quite normal.*

Here are some things that a lot of people worry about:

The dark	Trying something new
Being alone	Thunder storms
Spiders	Getting lost
Snakes	The dentist

Optional:

Have these worries written on tickets of paper folded up in a jar and invite children individually to take a ticket out and read what is on it.

Ask:

If you are worried about something what do you think you should do?

Talk to the group about the importance of talking to a trusted adult about your worries.

Who might that be?

The Sea

Before reading the poem ask the children to close their eyes and imagine they are at the seaside.

If you have access to the internet type into You Tube
'sounds of waves and seagulls'

Play these sounds for a few minutes while everyone shuts their eyes and imagines themselves to be at the sea and ask the children to think about the questions below.
(if no internet just ask the questions while the children have their eyes shut)

What can you hear?

What can you see?

What can you feel?

What can you smell?

What are you doing?

Now open your eyes everyone

Ask for hands up and invite one or two children to tell you what they had imagined.

Read **'The Sea'**

Page 10

Talking points:

What emotion is the boy feeling when he arrives at the sea?

How can you tell?

What sort of things do people do with their bodies/faces/voices when they are feeling excited?

Example:

What do football players do when their team have scored a goal?

What do their supporters do?

Extension

Give out paper, crayons, felt tips.

Invite the children to draw a picture from the poem.

Have a show and tell when done.

Recap

We have seen children feeling

FRUSTRATED

WORRIED

EXCITED

Optional

Feelings charades

Ask the group to pretend they are feeling each of these feelings:

What will your face look like?

What will your body be doing?

Have them either do this where they sit or moving about the room.

Activity Two

The swimming pool slide

Page 37

Talking points:

This poem shows how your feelings can change very quickly.

How does the girl feel before she sees the slide?

What does she feel when she sees how big it is?

How is she feeling at the end of the poem?

Has anyone here ever had a go at something that made them feel very nervous to start with?

Talking points:

Feeling embarrassed is something that most people feel sometimes.

Why do you think the boy felt so embarrassed?

Have you ever felt embarrassed about something?

Talking points:

This poem gives an example of how emotions can turn quickly from one to another, depending on what is happening.

How was the boy feeling to start with?

How is he feeling at the end?

How do you think his Mum and Dad felt when they saw him racing round the house?

How do you think they felt when they saw him crying because he had crashed into something and hurt himself?

Talking points:

Invite the children to tell you:

What makes you feel happy and why?

Can anyone think of a different word for happiness?

delighted, jubilant, ecstatic, contented, peaceful, joyful

Discussion here about how everyone has something different that makes them feel happy and that emotions can be felt at different levels, so you could be jubilant in the morning when you are playing in the snow and content in the afternoon when you are watching your favourite film.

Extension

Now put the children into groups or pairs and give out large sheets of paper, crayons or felt tips. Ask them to write in the middle **I feel happy when....** and draw a circle round these words.

Now they can think about all the things that make them happy and write them around the words in the middle.

Have a show and tell when complete.

Recap

We have seen children feeling

NERVOUS

EMBARRASSED

EXCITED

UPSET

HAPPY

Optional

Feelings charades

Ask the group to pretend they are feeling each of these feelings:

What will your face look like?

What will your body be doing?

Have them either do this where they sit or moving about the room.

Activity Three

Hoping to hear

Page 75

Talking points:

The child in this poem is very hopeful that their operation has worked.

Do you think it did?

We can be hopeful about lots of different things, can't we?

If you are going to the seaside you might hope that the sun will shine.

When it's your birthday you might hope you get that special present you asked for.

Has anyone got anything they are hopeful about?

I'm Curious

Page 90

Talking points:

Can anyone guess roughly how many times your heart beats every day?

It's over 100,000 times and roughly 3 billion in a lifetime.

Curious people ask a lot of questions.

Do you think it's good to be curious?

Why?

Angry

Page 54

Angry is the way I deal with things

Page 82

Talking points:

How can you tell if someone is angry?

Does everyone get angry sometimes?

Is it alright to feel angry?

Some children might answer 'No' to the last question, and there is an opportunity here to explain that anger is a normal human emotion that we all experience sometimes, and that it is what we do with our anger that we need to think about.

Does anyone have any good ideas of how to calm down when you are feeling angry?

Extension

Teach the group how to use deep slow breathing to help when you are feeling angry:

*Imagine you are holding a flower in one hand and a candle in the other.
Smell the candle (breath in slowly) and blow the candle out gently (breath out)*

If you have access to the internet there is a great clip on **You Tube** of some children talking about using deep breathing to calm angry or difficult feelings:

'Just Breath – Julie Bayer-Salzman & Josh Salzman'

Talking points:

What does the word apprehensive mean?

Have you ever felt apprehensive?

*Sometimes being apprehensive can keep us safe.
For example: if you want to cross a very busy road you might feel
a bit scared and go and look for a zebra crossing.*

*It's natural to feel apprehensive when we are try something for the
first time.*

Extension

Role Play

Put the children into groups of three or four.

Choose one person to be the child standing on the diving board who is feeling apprehensive, they will tell their friends how they are feeling and why they feel like that: What are they worried about? Their friends will try to help and encourage them.

Do this twice:

The first time the child on the diving board walks away.
What will the friends say?

The second time the child dives into the pool.
What will the friends say?

Recap

We have seen children feeling

HOPEFUL

CURIOUS

ANGRY

APPREHENSIVE

Optional

Feelings charades

Ask the group to pretend they are feeling each of these feelings:

What will your face look like?

What will your body be doing?

Have them either do this where they sit or moving about the room.

To sum up:

Read **'What are feelings?'** on page 5 again or ask if any of the children would like to read it to the group.

Now shout out if you know the answer to this question:

What does everyone have?

FEELINGS!!



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

I have spent many years working with families, children and young people in a number of different roles including: Montessori Teacher, Support Worker for young people in the care system, Family Worker and Parent Coach. Like many people I have become concerned at the increase in emotional and mental health difficulties in children, some of whom are very young when they begin to show their distress.

We are living in a world where there are many pressures on children and young people and supporting their emotional well-being is more important than ever. I work with parents who have some concern around their child's well-being or behaviour and am often asked:

How can children be encouraged to talk about their feelings rather than bottling them up or allowing them to explode?

It is in response to this that I have written:

'I'm Not Afraid of Spiders. Poems About Feelings'

It is aimed at parents, teachers and anyone who works with children, and of course the children themselves!

Also available on Amazon are my two parent workbooks:

'How to Encourage Good Behaviour so You Can Enjoy your Children'

'How to Use Positive Discipline to Improve Your Child's Behaviour'

To find out more about my work visit: www.thecambridgeparentcoach.com

I hope you find this activity and the book useful and always welcome feedback.

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