

Get Happy and Cultivate Compassion in 15 Minutes a Day (Modified for K-5 Learning)

What is Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)?

According to the **Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)** social-emotional learning (SEL) *is a process for helping children develop the fundamental skills to navigate through life effectively.*

These skills include:

- Recognizing and managing emotions.
- Developing caring and concern for others.
- Establishing positive relationships.
- Making responsible decisions.
- Handling challenging situations constructively and ethically.

They are the skills that allow children to learn how to:

- Calm themselves when angry.
- Make friends.
- Resolve conflicts respectfully.
- Make ethical and safe choices.

Social and Emotional Learning:

- Enhances academic achievement.
- Helps students develop self-management and self-control.
- Improves relationships at all levels of the school-community.
- Reduces conflict among students.
- Improves teachers' classroom management.
- Helps young people to be healthier and more successful in school and life.

This modified curriculum from Project Happiness' standard curriculum allows you to:

- Teach Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) tools in small chunks of time.
- Work with and benefit children ages K-5 grade levels.

Day 1: Happiness

SPECIFIC GOAL(S):

1. Define “happiness” and identify its components.
2. Discuss and model the students’ work on the differences between short-term and long-term happiness.
3. Use directed movement to change students’ physical state, thus changing their emotional state.

PREPARATION AND MATERIALS:

1. page from *Project Happiness Handbook*
2. magazines
3. images printed from internet
4. poster board(s)
5. student journals/notebooks
6. scissors
7. glue
8. colored pens, pencils, crayons, etc.
9. *optional: recorded music*
10. *optional: Appendix A-“Happiness” pages for younger children*

PROCEDURE:

Introduction of Happiness:

1. Read “The Never Ending Cycle of Desire” on page 3 of the *Project Happiness Handbook*.
2. Discuss:
 - a. What brings **short-term happiness** (examples: eating something sweet, a new toy, playing a video game, winning a board game)?
 - b. What brings more **lasting happiness** (examples: helping others, spending time with friends, playing sports, making art, having a pet, being part of a family, etc.)?
 - c. Have students write and/or draw answers in their journals, or use “Happiness” pages in Appendix A. This may be a homework assignment.
For younger children: create examples through storytelling and pictures. Have children tell their own stories, either from real life or imaginary.

Group Movement Exercise:

1. Have students do a “happy dance” as well as movement for other emotions such as sad, angry, confused, frustrated, jealous, surprised, etc.
2. Discuss:
 - a. If they feel happy after doing their “happy dance.”
 - b. If and how each emotion feels similar/different in their body.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY:

Group Art Exercise:

- a. Using images cut out from magazines and/or the internet, create a “happiness poster” with short-term happiness on one half, and long-term happiness on the other, and hang on the wall for the remainder of the Project.
- b. Students can also make their own collage in their journals.



short-term happiness

Four sets of horizontal lines for writing, each consisting of a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line.



Appendix A (continued)



long-term happiness

Four sets of horizontal lines for writing, each consisting of a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line.

