

Feelings prompts (elementary school)

STRONG⁴LIFE



Use these prompts and questions with your elementary school-age students. You know your students' developmental levels, so use your best judgment to determine what's most appropriate for them, and make modifications as needed.



The purpose of these activities is to help your students build awareness about feelings, and the primary goal is for them to explore and reflect on their own. **Never force a student to share their feelings. Sharing personal feelings should always be voluntary.**

Books and literature

Use the following questions to guide a conversation about a character in a book your class is reading. You can substitute the character for a historical figure, athlete, artist, STEM pioneer or anyone your students may be familiar with.

Question 1: How might this character be feeling?

Question 2: How would we know what this character may be feeling by looking at them (e.g., clenched fists or jaw, tensed muscles, smiling, laughing, crying, etc.)?

Modification: Ask your students to act out the feeling using sounds, facial expressions and body language.

Question 3: How might this character describe this feeling inside their bodies?

Modification: Ask your students to point to and describe where they feel the emotion in their bodies (e.g., butterflies in their stomachs, sweaty hands, racing heartbeat, etc.).

Check-in/morning meeting questions

Activity 1: Ask your students, "What type of weather represents how you're feeling today?" Are they sunny and happy? Mad and stormy? Tired and foggy? Ask them to share their responses aloud, but only if they feel comfortable.

Go deeper: Have a follow-up group discussion about how everyone has different feelings, and that they can change day to day—and that's OK! Help your students understand that some days they might like the rain because it waters their plants, but other days they might not because it keeps them from playing outside.

Activity 2: Encourage your students to think about how they might feel in different situations. They can use a feelings chart for quiet reflection or turn to a partner to share. Ask them to share if they feel comfortable.

- How would you feel if you saw someone get pushed and fall in the hallway?
- How would you feel if you made a new friend?
- How would you feel if your favorite toy or game went missing?
- How would you feel if you forgot to study for a test?





Journaling

Activity 1: Have your students respond to a prompt, such as “Write about a time you felt _____” (e.g., embarrassed, angry, excited, proud, etc.).

Modification: Ask them to draw their feeling.

Activity 2: Ask your students to write down two different feelings they’ve felt today and to think about if their feelings are very similar or very different. Then, have them write two to three sentences about their feelings.

Modification: Have your students use a feelings chart to identify different feelings they’ve experienced today.

Activity 3: Encourage your students to write about a feeling they hope to have today and to explain why.

Modification: Ask your students to write three to five feelings words. Then, have them circle the feelings they’ve felt before in one color and the feelings they feel today in another color.



Art

Activity 1: Show your students a piece of art, and ask them how it makes them feel and why.

Go deeper: Ask your students to notice if their feelings are connected to specific parts of the art. For example, “How do you feel about the colors?” or “How do you feel about the shapes you see?”

Activity 2: Ask your students to make a list of three to five feelings using colors they think best represent each feeling (e.g., red for mad, blue for calm, yellow for happy, etc.).

Modification: List three to five feelings, and ask your students to draw a small picture that represents each feeling.

Activity 3: Ask your students to draw a picture that shows how they feel today.



Music

Activity 1: Ask your students, “What song makes you feel _____?”

Modification: Play a song that includes feelings words, and ask your students to list or say the feelings words they heard in the song.

Activity 2: Allow your students to take turns choosing appropriate songs to listen to throughout the day. Ask your students to reflect on which song(s) helped them feel motivated, awake, focused, determined, etc.

Modification: Using a feelings chart, ask your students to notice and point to what they feel after hearing a song.

Activity 3: Allow your students to use small instruments (if you have them) or safely use classroom items (e.g., pencils to tap, hands to clap, books to open/close, etc.) to create music that represents various feelings. Encourage them to notice which sounds represent certain emotions. For example, “Which sounds feel happy? Which feel sad? Which feel scary or intense?” Remind them that each person’s experience is different, so they should try to pay attention to what the sounds feel like for themselves.

This is general information and not specific medical advice. Always consult with a doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns about the health of a child.

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