

# Feelings prompts (middle and high school)

STRONG<sup>4</sup>LIFE



Use these prompts and questions with your middle and high 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 might be familiar with.

**Question 1:** How might this character be feeling?

**Follow-up question:** How would we know what this character may be feeling by looking at them on the outside (e.g., smile on their face and laughing, clenched fist and jaw, etc.)?

**Follow-up question:** What might this character be experiencing on the inside because of their current feeling (e.g., racing heartbeat, sweaty palms, etc.)?

**Question 2:** What are two conflicting feelings this character might be dealing with?

**Go deeper:** Ask your students to write a few sentences about how they might deal with the character's conflicting feelings if they were in the character's shoes.

**Question 3:** Who might this character confide in about their feelings and why?

## Check-in/morning meeting questions

**Activity 1:** Ask your students, "What color(s) best represents how you're feeling today?" They can write down their response or choose to share it with their classmates (if they feel comfortable).

**Modification:** Collect small items of various colors (e.g., felt, paint samples, etc.) and ask your students to pick an item that represents one of their feelings today.

**Activity 2:** Encourage your students to notice how they feel when they transition between classes, and ask them to write a few sentences about it.

**Go deeper:** Ask your students to notice the connection between how they felt during the class transition and then how they felt during the class they were heading to.

**Activity 3:** Ask your students to notice, write down or share (only if they're comfortable) a feeling they want to bring with them throughout the day, and one they might want to leave at the door.





## 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:** If your students feel more comfortable drawing as a form of expression, ask them to draw their feeling.

**Activity 2:** Encourage your students to write about a time having two conflicting feelings made it hard to make a decision. How did they figure out what they felt? What did they do about it?

**Activity 3:** Ask your students to make a list of all the feelings they’ve experienced so far today.

**Go deeper:** List four categories of basic feelings words (e.g., happy, sad, mad, scared, etc.). Then, have your students work in small groups to list as many secondary feelings for each of the primary basic feelings as they can think of. For example, additional feelings words for happy might be excited, peaceful or content.



## Art

**Activity 1:** Have your students use markers or colored pencils to draw a picture that represents how they’re feeling today. Encourage them to notice if the colors they chose have meaning to them.

**Activity 2:** Ask your students to select a piece of art that represents how they’re feeling today.

**Go deeper:** Have your students write a few sentences about why this piece represents how they feel today. Ask your students, “What do you think this artist was feeling when they created this piece of art?” Have them share their opinion with a partner or in small group (if they feel comfortable).



## Music

**Activity 1:** Ask your students what song, artist or style of music best represents how they feel in certain classes or at different times throughout the day. Have them quietly reflect, write down their thoughts or share with a classmate if they feel comfortable.

**Activity 2:** Encourage your students to think about a song or soundtrack that represents this time in their life. Have them quietly reflect, write down their thoughts or share with a classmate if they feel comfortable.

**Activity 3:** Listen to music and encourage your students to notice how their body feels when listening to it.

**Go deeper:** Ask your students to think about other pieces of music that make their bodies feel similar.