Happy Schools Guide and Toolkit

A Resource for Happiness, Learners' Well-being
and Social and Emotional Learning in the Asia-Pacific Region

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SHORT SUMMARY

The Happy Schools Guide and Toolkit is designed to support teachers and school leaders in primary and secondary schools across the Asia-Pacific region, in thinking about how they can create their own Happy School. It has therefore drawn from aspects of the Happy Schools Framework, which can be most readily addressed at the school level. While the Happy Schools Guide is targeted towards school leaders and teachers at the school level of administration and pedagogy development, the Happy Schools Toolkit is conceived for teachers at the classroom level.

The Happy Schools Guide is composed of a series of booklets, each introducing key themes and concepts in relation to happiness and learner well-being, while also including several workshop-style activities that school leaders and teachers can use to explore how to incorporate happiness into their schools and everyday routines. It also examines happiness in teachers and school management, and provides information on how to (i) conduct an assessment of school practices that either support or hinder happiness; (ii) develop an annual Happy Schools Action Plan; and (iii) monitor happiness at both the school and classroom levels.

The Happy Schools Toolkit is composed of 25 lessons grouped under the following three themes: Happy Learners, Happy Classrooms, and Happy Environments. These lessons are ready to use and can be efficiently integrated within existing school subjects, and within the normal school day, entailing minimal time and effort. Each lesson has an overarching objective, corresponding outcomes and teacher guidance, while also allowing flexibility for adaptation to different learner needs and contexts.

Key takeaways
The Happy Schools Guide and Toolkit is intended to assist teachers and school leaders of primary and secondary schools across the Asia-Pacific region in reflecting upon how to create their own Happy Schools for learners, teachers, and the entire school community.

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'Since wars begin in the minds of men and women it is in the minds of men and women that the defences of peace must be constructed'

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Foreword

During our times of rapid societal and economic transformations, teachers and learners are facing unprecedented challenges, most recently due to disruptions to learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Since March 2020, when the pandemic was swiftly accelerating, over 84% of enrolled learners in 163 countries worldwide have experienced partial or full school closures. Countries in Asia and the Pacific region were the first impacted by COVID-19, which disrupted access to education for 760 million children at the initial peak of the pandemic in 2020. Countries around the world have adopted new teaching methods through diverse modalities, among them mobile phone apps, online and hybrid learning, radio broadcasts and special television programming. Educators have had to adjust to these new approaches, technologies and teaching tools to ensure the delivery of quality education for their learners, and to do so with a minimum of education disruptions.

Despite these many challenges, in both in-school and out-of-school circumstances, the entire school community, including parents, have had to adjust to a 'new learning normal'. Now, as schools begin to reopen, and as there are continued shifts from regular school settings to online and hybrid learning platforms to ensure that learning continues, indeed no matter what may be in store for the future, there is a widespread need for us to foster a learning environment that is safe for students and school staff and conducive to learning in the foreseeable months and years ahead. There are important questions that need to be raised and addressed at this juncture: how has the education community coped with the tension and stress brought on by COVID-19? Moreover, stress and health issues have also been brought about by extended school closures, isolation, online learning and related matters. How can we best ensure effective and quality learning when mental health and well-being are fragile and at such increased risk?

In 2014, UNESCO launched a forward-looking 'Happy Schools Project' to promote student and teacher happiness in schools through enhanced learner well-being, social-emotional learning, and holistic development to emphasize perspectives of quality learning that are not limited to cognitive learning or typical academic domains. The Happy Schools Project emphasizes the importance of a whole-school approach and extra-cognitive learning skills, thus recognizing the values, attitudes, knowledge, skills and competencies that necessarily contribute to quality learning outcomes. In the current COVID-19 era, the progress already made with this important initiative, makes the concept of Happy Schools more relevant than ever.

This explicit focus on happiness, well-being, and social and emotional learning aspects of the learning process are increasingly recognized by educators worldwide as being highly relevant for today's changing 'education landscape', in which teachers, educators and learners have been put under uncommon pressure

and face a myriad of new challenges. Recent research has consistently shown that prioritising happiness and general well-being contributes significantly to bettering learning outcomes, and recognizing skills and competencies, such as communication, creativity, collaboration, leadership, equality, respect for diversity, tolerance and respect helps cultivate sustainable, inclusive and peaceful societies. Indeed, the Happy Schools Project is aligned with and supports the SDG 4.7 target:

> by 2030 ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

This 'Happy Schools Guide and Toolkit' is the outcome of the 'Happy Schools' pilot project first implemented by the UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education (UNESCO Bangkok) from 2018 to 2020. Prior to that time, a prototype 'Happy Schools Guide' was developed and utilized in capacity-development workshops for teachers and school leaders in three countries in the Asia-Pacific region, namely Japan, Lao PDR and Thailand. We would like to thank the dedicated teachers and school leaders that 'field-tested' the Guide in their schools and classrooms as part of this pilot project. These education leaders and teachers provided essential feedback, via surveys and in-person meetings, on the further development of the Guide and how it might be best utilized in everyday school curricula.

It is our hope that the Happy Schools Guide and Toolkit will assist teachers and school leaders of primary and secondary schools across the Asia-Pacific region in re-thinking how to create their own Happy Schools. The first part of the Guide suggests several workshop-style activities that interested school leaders and teachers can use to begin, catalyze and support a collective conversation about happiness and well-being in school. The second part of the Guide, which comprises the Teacher Toolkit, includes a range of model lesson plans and tools that teachers can utilize, adapt, and select from as they work to continually cultivate greater happiness and well-being within their classrooms.

Everyone deserves to be happy, and we hope that this Toolkit will play a role in these times of COVID-19 challenge and heartbreak. Through utilizing this Guide and Toolkit, teachers and school leaders will find new ways to develop enhanced learning attributes in their learners, such as connectedness, compassion, empathy, attention, focus, and – of course – *happiness*, the latter not just among students, but within and around the entire school community!

Shigeru Aoyagi
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UNECSO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for
Education (UNESCO Bangkok)

Acknowledgements

Happy Schools Summary

All parents want their children to be happy, and all teachers want their students to be happy as they learn. However, student happiness and well-being is becoming increasingly difficult to achieve in today's schools and societies. This is both due to global challenges such as rising intolerance, economic competitiveness and income inequality, as well as pressure in schools to increase test scores, which has led to a push towards cognitive achievement within classrooms over the last decades. Moreover, the current COVID-19 pandemic has spurred challenges within the education community with protracted school closures, unparalleled learning losses, as well as risks to health and wellbeing as numbers of deaths and those affected by COVID-19 rise worldwide. Teachers are responding to increasing demands, while students are required to take on more, hindering everyday interactions and creating a culture of stress. Growing mistrust and competition has also led to rising bullying and school violence, making learners afraid to express their personalities and make mistakes (UNESCO, 2016).

Research consistently shows that attention to happiness, well-being and social and emotional development is crucial for school 'success'. Not only does it raise academic achievement and lowers behavioural issues in schools, but it also enhances the morale of teachers and students (UNESCO-MGIEP, 2020). The purpose of this School Guide and Teachers' Toolkit is to assist teachers and school leaders across the Asia-Pacific in finding ways to create their own Happy School. This Guide and Toolkit therefore provides the practical steps necessary to implement UNESCO's Happy Schools Project and its Happy Schools Framework (UNESCO 2016) within classroom level practices. It also supports wider UNESCO initiatives such as Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) funded by Japan, and Global Citizenship Education (GCED), as well as peace and human rights education, gender equality and Prevention of Violent Extremism through Education (PVE-E), while also addressing SDG 4.7, which focuses on enhancing non-cognitive dimensions of learning in these areas.

The Happy Schools Framework

People

- Friendships and Relationships in the School Community
- Positive Teacher Attitudes and Attributes
- Respect for Diversity and Differences
- Positive and Collaborative Values and Practices
- Teacher Working Conditions and Well-being
- Teacher Skills and Competencies

Process

- Reasonable and Fair Workload
- Teamwork and Collaborative Spirit
- Fun and Engaging Teaching and Learning Approaches
- Learner Freedom, Creativity and Engagement
- Sense of Achievement and Accomplishment
- Extracurricular Activities and School Events
- Learning as a Team Between Students and Teachers
- Useful, Relevant and Engaging Learning Content
- Mental Well-being and Stress-Management

Place

- Warm and Friendly Learning Environment
- Secure Environment Free from Bullying
- Open and Green Learning and Playing Spaces
- School Vision and Leadership
- Positive Discipline
- Good Health, Sanitation and Nutrition
- Democratic School Management

The Happy Schools Guide and Toolkit is designed to support **teachers and school leaders** in primary and secondary schools across the Asia-Pacific region to think about how they can create their own Happy School. It has therefore drawn from aspects of the Happy Schools Framework that can be most readily addressed at the school level. In the midst of COVID-19, the relevance of having Happy Schools is further underscored for learning wellbeing and happiness. While the Happy Schools Guide is targeted towards school leaders and teachers at the wider school level, the Happy Schools Toolkit is directed towards teachers at the classroom level.

The **Happy Schools Guide** is composed of a series of booklets, introducing key themes and concepts in relation to happiness and learner well-being, while also including several workshop-style activities that school leaders and teachers can use to explore how to incorporate happiness into their schools and everyday routines. It also examines happiness in teachers and school management, how to conduct an assessment of school practices that either support or hinder happiness, develop an annual Happy Schools Action Plan, as well as monitoring happiness at a school and classroom level.

The **Happy Schools Toolkit** is composed of 25 lessons grouped into the following three themes: Happy Learners, Happy Classrooms and Happy Environments. These lessons are ready to use and can be integrated within existing school subjects by setting aside a minimal amount of extra time. These happiness lessons are ready to use for teachers to adapt and apply within their classrooms, by setting aside a bit of extra time in the normal school day. Each lesson has an objective, outcomes and teacher guidance, while also allowing sufficient flexibility to be adapted within different contexts and to different learner needs.

How to use this guide

It is recommended that teachers and school leaders review the Happy Schools Guide as part of a dedicated Happy Schools team, to assess how to incorporate happiness across school structures, systems and routines. At the same time, teachers can use the toolkit by pulling out individual lessons that are ready to use at the classroom level. While knowledge of the guide and its activities is beneficial to implementing the happiness lessons, they can be used independently and in parallel of one another.

Given the great cultural diversity of the Asia-Pacific, there are different meanings and interpretations of happiness that exist across the region, as well as the concrete needs, challenges and opportunities present within a particular school, as well as different learner needs based on their gender, orientation and abilities. The Happy Schools Guide and Toolkit is therefore meant to be adapted to suit the local context, beliefs, and school environment, as context shapes children's perceptions, and how they relate with themselves, and interact with the world. This includes a localized definition of happiness that aligns with local languages, culture and value-systems. It also requires that it take into account different learner perspectives of happiness, which may be understood differently by girls, boys or another gender, learners with different abilities, or from different socio-economic backgrounds. This will allow for local innovations to emerge, giving way to a diversity of approaches towards Happy Schools that suit different contexts and learner needs.

Happy Schools Guide
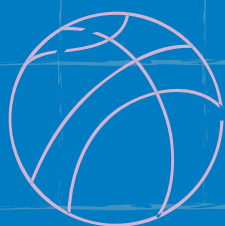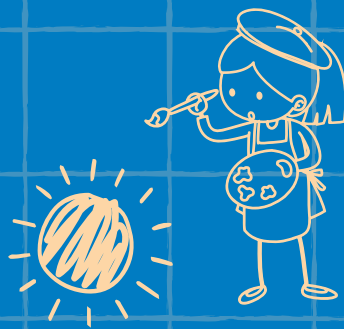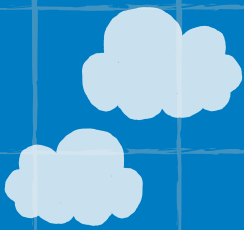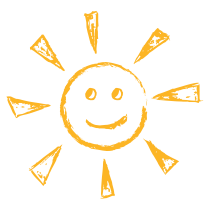
What is a Happy School?

- Understand definitions of happiness and why they are important for schools
- Get started in thinking about happiness, and how it relates to education
- Recognize different types of happiness, and decide which types to foster in your school
- Discover the Happy Schools Framework and its domains of People, Process and Place
- Assess your school based on the Happy Schools Framework

Schools today are increasingly focused on teaching subject-based or discipline-based knowledge and skills to raise student achievement and prepare students for competitive entrance exams in the hope that this will secure their future employment. Because of the growing focus on tests and exams, especially in higher grades, many schools tend to take academic achievement as the exclusive measure of success. Yet, educators have long intuitively realized that this cognitive focus is too 'narrow', and that cultivating happiness and well-being among their students is just as important as the accumulation of knowledge. Recent educational research has caught up to the views of educators, confirming the powerful connection between academic success and student well-being.

COVID-19 has further highlighted the need for a plan of action for "happiness and well-being" at schools considering the following elements:

- According to UN reports, COVID-19 has aggravated the mental health of students around the world especially in developing countries, because of children's protracted isolation, experiences of loss, risks to personal health as well as health and well-being of others, and lack of access to technologies;
- Significant number of children have experienced domestic violence during COVID-19 pandemic;
- COVID-19 has caused huge learning losses in developing countries, especially in Asia-Pacific region, and such learning losses have generated stress and distress for students;
- The economic recession in many countries, caused by COVID-19, has imposed stress and distress amongst children who might be directly or indirectly impacted by degradation of their family's economic situation.

In light of the above, in *Happy Schools: A Framework for Learner Well-being* (UNESCO, 2016a), school happiness and learner well-being are seen as crucial to working towards the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) to ensure learners develop the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to a peaceful, sustainable and equitable world.
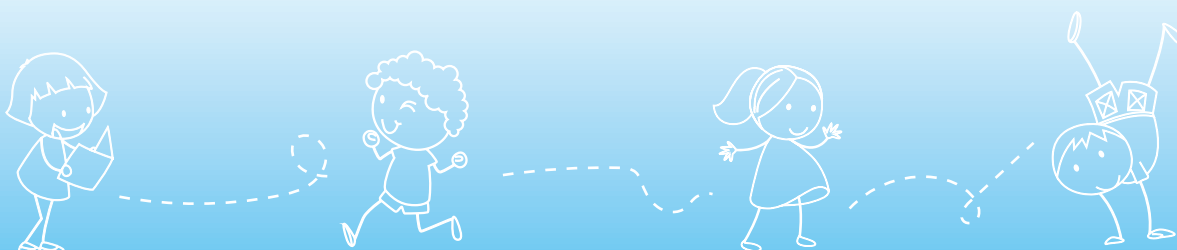
What is happiness?

What is happiness? How do we define it? Where does it come from? How can it be cultivated? What is the link between happiness and schooling? These questions have challenged philosophers and thinkers from all over the world for thousands of years, and modern scientists for the past century (UNESCO, 2016a). They have wondered: Is happiness primarily a personal feeling, perhaps revealed by a smile? Is it a sense of feeling good about yourself? Or is it something shared with others? Does it tend to stay a long time or is it just temporary? Can one achieve happiness without unhappiness? Or do these always come together? Given the great diversity of languages, cultures and worldviews, particularly evident across the Asia-Pacific region but existing everywhere, a single definition or approach to finding happiness is unlikely to ever emerge. But this is a strength and broader view and understanding of this concept so that each child can find their way of experiencing it, and not a weakness. The more tools and paths we can develop to reach happiness, the more likely students can find their way to it. There is no better way to help students be happy in today's classrooms and their future lives than to provide them with a diverse range of approaches to happiness, allowing them to recognize what works for them personally, within their culture, and what responds to the specific challenges they face. This recognition of diversity, and the need to think in more detail about different approaches becomes the very starting point for developing your own Happy School.

Getting Started: Defining Happiness

School leaders and teachers leading the Happy Schools Project will first need to come together with selected students and define what happiness means to them within the context of their school. Learners' and school community's participation in defining happiness enables joint ownership and relevance.

Thus, a general and broad definition of happiness which can be applicable in different cultural contexts, may be useful. In this regard, Wessman and Ricks propose that happiness "appears as an overall evaluation of a quality of the individual's own experience in the conduct of his [or her] vital affairs. As such, happiness represents a conception abstracted from the flux of affective life indicating a decided balance of positive affectivity over long periods of time." (Wessman and Ricks in Power, 2015, p.7). According to this broad definition, the key concept to perceive happiness consists of building and maintaining the "balance of positive affectivity" among individuals.

On the other hand, the three Awareness Activities included in this guide also outline ideas for how to define happiness. These are organized in the form of a workshop-style structure, one that allows participants to actively contribute and share ideas to foster democratic management, teamwork and collaboration – all important features of the Happy School Framework itself.

As a first step, it is recommended that those who will be driving the Happy School implementation (we might call them the Happy School Team) collectively decide on a structure and schedule for these activities. This team would ideally include a mix of school leaders and teachers. If feasible, it is also desirable to include students at various stages. At the outset the group should elect a facilitator to help lead the activities, ideally a school leader who has a wider view of the entire school community. The facilitator does not need to have specialized training, but will simply be dedicated to guiding implementation of activities. The facilitator could have some experience in time management, generating a dialogue, and in creating a safe environment to encourage everyone to express themselves. Ideally, every teacher and school leader in the school community

would participate to ensure a whole-school approach, a concept that will be examined later in this guide. The following three Awareness Activities can be conducted by a minimum of two people in 90 minutes, including discussion time, and are an important starting point for initiating a school-wide conversation on how to cultivate happiness. It enables them to identify aspects of happiness and unhappiness within classrooms and the wider school community through a 'Happiness Mapping' that can then be displayed in the school.

Awareness Activity One:
Happiness Map

The first activity is to create a Happiness Map for your school. The elected facilitator provides each participant with a sheet of paper with the word 'Happiness' written at the top and five bubbles below. Participants are asked to write down which words they feel best match the term 'Happiness' in their own language, its features, or effects. In most languages, there are multiple terms for happiness, each with different nuances. These terms connect us with the deep thinking about happiness shaped by different religious, cultural, and historical circumstances of various times and places.

Summary

Participants work individually, utilizing a worksheet, then share their findings with the group.

Objectives

- Develop greater awareness of the multiple meanings of happiness in languages and cultures.
- Collectively discuss and debate how 'happiness' can be better understood.
- Design the first Happiness Map to guide the implementation of their own Happy School.

Intended Outcomes

- Understanding differences in how we experience happiness makes it possible to think of diverse ways to enhance happiness.
- Various cultures and languages have different perspectives on emotions and social interaction – these must be understood more clearly before the school embarks on building a Happy School.
- Builds personal and social awareness of happiness-related vocabulary.

Materials and preparation

- Handout: What does Happiness mean to us?
- Handout: Happiness Map

⌐ Activity Steps

Step 1: Facilitator explains the general interest in Happy Schools, including reasons for global interest. They emphasize the diverse meanings of happiness according to language, culture and individual learners.

Step 2: Participants work individually to complete the 'What Does Happiness Mean to Us?' handout, then discuss together how happiness is reflected in the classroom and school, for instance as an emotion (affect) while other times, it is a recognition of accomplishment (cognitive).

Step 3: Facilitator asks participants to write a list of five activities that they associate with that particular aspect of happiness under each of the bubbles. These five activities should be linked in some way to the school. Then discuss together in groups, focusing on the current school and teachers' own experiences when they were students.

Step 4: Participants try to place words from Step One and activities from Step Two onto the Happiness Map. As shown in the 'Happiness Map' handout, happiness is generally divided into cognitive (thinking) and affective (feeling) dimensions, and distinguish between personal and collective emotions.

Step 5: Participants discuss and debate the arrangements.

Step 6: Facilitator asks participants to come up with a collectively agreed Happiness Map, and explains this will be a map used to guide the Happy Schools Project in their school.

⊘ Facilitator Guidance

This activity can be done with as few as two teachers, but ideally as part of a larger teacher development programme at the department or school level.

Facilitators may write these words on the board or a large white sheet of paper, creating a synthesis of the different views shared.

Facilitators may wish to prepare a list of words and activities in advance that they can refer to prompt the discussion.

Depending on the context, it might be difficult for some participants to understand that emotions and 'happiness' occurs not only inside but among people. The facilitator should emphasize the collective aspects of happiness as they are particularly important in schools.

Sources: Uchida, Y. & Kitayama, S. (2009) and Uchida et al. (2004)

Handout: What does Happiness Mean to us?

Happiness

Excitement

Joy

Calm

Pride

Hope

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Handout: Happiness Map

"Inside" (Individual) ← → "In-Between" (together)

"Thinking" (Cognitive)

"Feeling" (Affect)
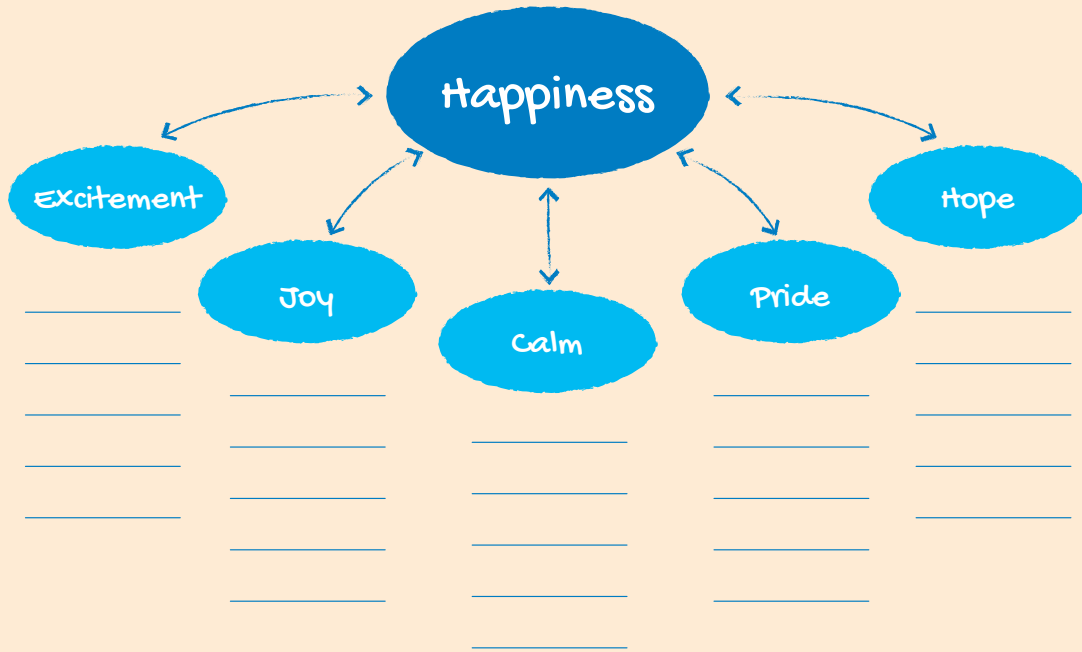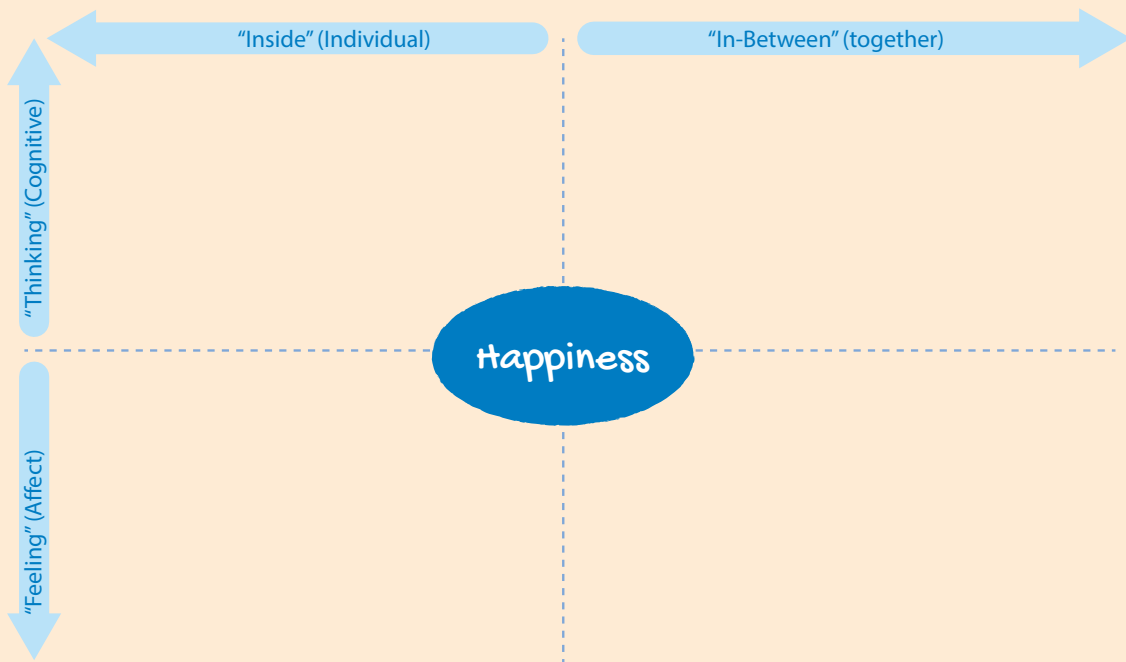
Happiness

How is 'Happiness' Understood by Researchers?

Research on happiness dates back to the Greek philosophers through to the founding of positive psychology in the 1990s. A broad review of different theories can define happiness in two ways:

Hedonistic happiness: This is what makes us feel good, for instance when we experience more pleasure than pain such as eating chocolate or swimming in cool water on a hot day.

Eudaimonic happiness: This is a Greek word (*Eu* means good, pleasant or true) used by Aristotle to explain more of the evaluations of one's own happiness. In other words, rather than simple pleasure or pain, eudaimonic happiness comes from living in a way that matches one's values or ideals and advancing towards a goal (e.g. to become an athlete) through effort, even if it involves struggle.

Although most of the research and global discussions remains focused on these two concepts, recent work by scholars working in the Asia-Pacific have identified other approaches to happiness:

Reduction of Suffering approach: involving the lowering of negative emotion (Oishi, 2009; Levine 2000).

Balance approach: where positive and negative emotions are seen to be occurring in pairs or cycles (Lu, 2001).

Awareness Activity Two:
Un-Happiness Map

After completing the Happiness Map, participants then turn to create an Unhappiness Map. Some teachers might immediately wonder: *Why is unhappiness the focus when creating a Happy School?* A simple answer would be that increasing happiness can come about in two distinct ways: boosting states of happiness or lowering states of unhappiness. A narrow focus on happy states and positivity alone prevents us from using the latter approach.

Summary

Participants work individually on the handouts then share their findings with the others.

Objectives

Participants develop a greater awareness of the multiple meanings of un-happiness in their own languages and cultures, how these relate to 'happiness' and coping behaviours.

Intended Outcomes

- Participants learn how happiness can be achieved by lowering states of unhappiness, or transforming unhappy states into motivation for improvement.
- Increased awareness of different languages, cultures and vocabulary defining unhappiness.

Materials and preparation

- Handout: What does un-happiness mean to us?
- Handout: Un-Happiness Map

Activity Steps

Step 1: Facilitators summarise the activity, referring to the first awareness activities and how the focus will now be to consider what unhappiness means. The facilitator emphasizes the diverse meanings of unhappiness, according to language, culture and individual differences.

Step 2: Participants work individually to complete the 'What Does Un-Happiness Mean to Us?' handout, coming up with words in their language that describe aspects or feelings associated with 'unhappiness'.

Step 3: Participants move on to work individually to focus on what aspects of unhappiness they experience around the school as well as draw from their own experiences when they were students. For example, they may reflect on 'shame' arising when a student has answered incorrectly.

Step 4: After working alone, participants come together, sharing their answers while a facilitator writes all the different aspects on a large sheet of paper or on the board.

Step 5: Participants move on to work individually on completing the Un-happiness Map handout, then discuss and debate the arrangement. The major focus in this round is on coping mechanisms when it comes to unhappiness and discomfort in school situations.

Step 6: Facilitators lead a collective discussion to address the Un-happiness Map, explaining that this will be map used as a reference when implementing Happy Schools.

⊘ Facilitator Guidance

This activity can be done with as few as two teachers as in the happiness map activity.

Facilitators should help ensure that participants do not simply write the opposite of what they did for the happiness map. They might want to suggest a few words that are not simply opposites. Or ask them to recall situations in their classroom where this has happened and how it was addressed.

One possible way is to give teachers a view of different words found in different cultures (see Additional Resources). Seeing other cultures makes us more aware of our own.

Facilitators can find numerous sources online, in their own languages, that will help enrich the discussion. They may wish to prepare in advance, but not 'force' this list on the participants. This mapping should be more inductive and bottom-up.

Researchers have often emphasized how reduction of negative emotion is a major difference in approach to happiness found in some places in the Asia-Pacific.

Source: Uchida, Y. and Kitayama, S. (2009)

Handout: What does Un-Happiness Mean to us?

Unhappiness

Sad

Depressed

Angry

Disappointed

Shame

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Handout: Unhappiness Map

"Inside" (Individual)   "In-Between" (together)

"Thinking" (Cognitive)

"Feeling" (Affect)

Anger

Shame

Depressed

Embarrassment

Unhappiness

Avoid Interaction

Speaking Out ✚

Afraid to Speak

Aggression

Self-improvement ✚

Social Disruption
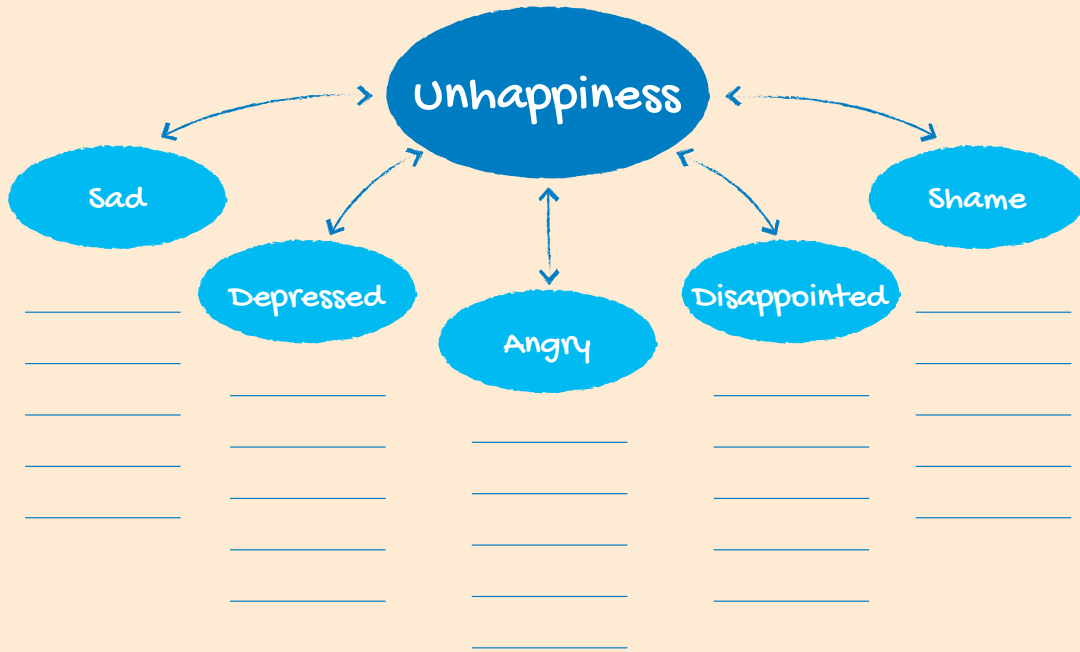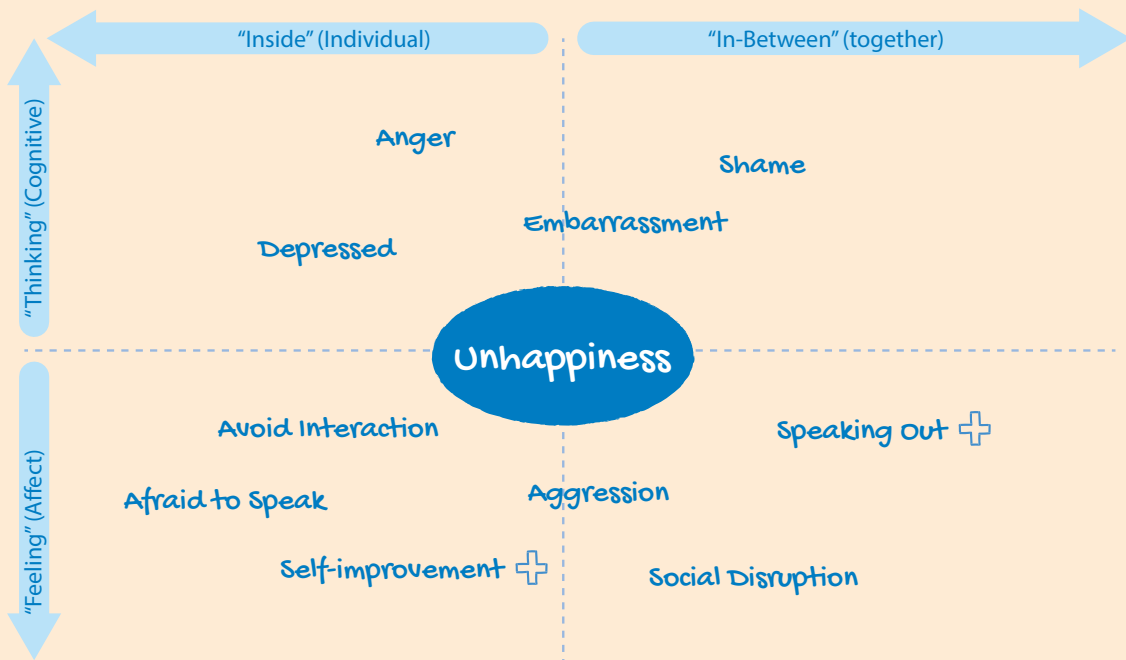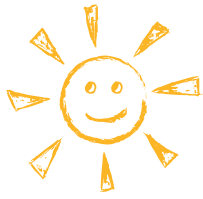
The Happy Schools Framework

The Happy Schools Framework is made up of 22 criteria under the three broad categories of People, Process and Places (UNESCO, 2016a). It offers a vision of quality education that goes far beyond the predominance of cognitive or academic indicators, such as test scores or textbook contents. Happy Schools instead promotes non-cognitive skills, attitude aspects, values and competencies, such as happiness, well-being, social and emotional learning, empathy and interdependence. This approach extends UNESCO's commitments to *Learning to Live Together* highlighting the importance of understanding others, and *Learning to Be* emphasizing the role of education in enabling learners to reach their fullest potential and become members of a community and society (Delors et. Al.., 1996; Faure et. Al.., 1972). In this holistic vision of education and learning, happiness and well-being are seen as crucial foundations for achieving all-around quality learning outcomes.

The Happy Schools Framework

People

- Friendships and Relationships in the School Community
- Positive Teacher Attitudes and Attributes
- Respect for Diversity and Differences
- Positive and Collaborative Values and Practices
- Teacher Working Conditions and Well-being
- Teacher Skills and Competencies

Process

- Reasonable and Fair Workload
- Teamwork and Collaborative Spirit
- Fun and Engaging Teaching and Learning Approaches
- Learner Freedom, Creativity and Engagement
- Sense of Achievement and Accomplishment
- Extracurricular Activities and School Events
- Learning as a Team Between Students and Teachers
- Useful, Relevant and Engaging Learning Content
- Mental Well-being and Stress-Management

Place

- Warm and Friendly Learning Environment
- Secure Environment Free from Bullying
- Open and Green Learning and Playing Spaces
- School Vision and Leadership
- Positive Discipline
- Good Health, Sanitation and Nutrition
- Democratic School Management

People

School leaders and administrative staff, teachers, students and their parents make up the school community and, in many contexts,, the wider community also influences the school and vice-versa. The Happy Schools Framework recognizes that both the quality of these relationships and the individuals themselves are the essential ingredient for a Happy School. While daily interactions and practices among people in the community become the basis for positive relations, individual members of the community must also be happy for this to be possible. A primary focus on relations helps draw attention to the spaces between individuals: positive relations *between* teachers and students, friendships *between* students of different grades, understanding *between* parents and teachers, and interactions *between* school leadership and members of the wider community. Attitudes, attributes, and emotions among individuals within the community are crucial. For example, positive teacher attitudes, such as kindness, fairness and enthusiasm are important for making students feel accepted. But these attitudes are built, in part, on teachers' individual well-being, and students' individual emotional awareness and sensitivity are essential for fostering relations. These relational and individual aspects of Happy Schools are mutually reinforcing, and both captured under the notion of People.

Process

The processes that enable a school to enhance happiness rests in teaching and learning content, approaches, and methods, as well as the overall teaching and learning experience. This includes ensuring that teachers and students have reasonable and fair workloads, can exercise their autonomy, are engaged in the teaching and learning process, use their creativity, and feel valued and appreciated in a safe and trusting environment. This category aims to bring out a broad array of students' talents and competences, enhancing their well-being and academic achievement. It necessarily implies that the learning content (what is presented and learned in the school- and classroom setting) is useful, relevant and engaging. While some aspects are not determined at the school level, there are some aspects such as collaborative spirit, engaging learning, and learner creativity that can be addressed at the classroom or school level.

Place

A warm and friendly learning environment is crucial to increasing happiness in schools. The physical surroundings of the school and the classrooms, as well as their layout and decoration allow for a great variety of intellectual, practical and creative learning activities to take place. They strongly influence the atmosphere in which teachers and students meet and work together, therefore impacting their overall well-being. The physical space surrounds the social and pedagogical space, making it safe and secure. It is free from bullying and intimidation, encourages staff and students to use happiness and well-being-oriented teaching and learning practices and embraces diversity and inclusion. Teachers can take various initiatives to implement within their classroom itself. This includes improving the visual appeal of their classrooms, adding some green learning and natural light, incorporating positive discipline and preventing bullying and other forms of harassment.

Social and Emotional Learning

In recent years, there has been a strong focus on boosting Socio and Emotional Learning (SEL), a concept highly relevant to Happy Schools. In the Social, Emotional and Ethical (SEE) Learning model (2019), the primary domains are personal, social and systematic, with the primary dimensions identified as awareness, compassion and engagement. The domains form the basis for the way that the Happiness Lessons have been organized in the Happy Schools Toolkit as follows.

- **Personal – Happy Learners**: self-awareness and self-management are featured by integrating mindfulness techniques with mapping of personal emotion.
- **Social – Happy Classrooms**: awareness and relationship skills are covered in lessons building awareness of relations in the school community and strengthening compassionate and empathetic awareness of others.
- **Engagement – Happy Environments**: Responsible decision-making is covered through techniques such as interdependence mapping and happiness literacy.

Links between Happy Schools and Social and Emotional Learning

		AWARENESS	CARE	ENGAGEMENT
	PERSONAL	ATTENTION, SELF-AWARENESS (i.e. understanding emotions)	SELF COMPASSION, SELF-CARE (i.e. reflective thinking, decision-making)	SELF REGULATION (i.e. perseverance, motivation, discipline)
	SOCIAL	INTERPERSONAL AND SOCIAL AWARENESS (i.e. respecting diversity, patience, empathy)	COMPASSION FOR OTHERS (i.e. kindness, flexibility and adaptability)	RELATIONSHIP SKILLS (i.e. active listening, collaboration)
	SYSTEMIC	APPRECIATING INTERDEPENDENCE (i.e. understanding relationships of local, national, global)	RECOGNIZING COMMON HUMANITY (i.e. responsibility, tolerance and openness)	COMMUNITY AND GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT (i.e. actively demonstrate personal and social responsibility, conflict resolution)

A Whole-School Approach

Pursuing a 'whole-school' approach is central to the Happy Schools Framework. It recognizes that all aspects of the school community can impact students' happiness and well-being. For instance if a particular teacher is teaching happiness and well-being in their classroom, but the wider school exhibits limited inclusion of these ideas or commitments to happiness, then students will soon recognize the inconsistency. In order to achieve Happy Schools, it requires a wider vision by school leaders to ensure that the concept is consistent both within the classroom and the wider school community in all aspects of the school week or day. This includes warm, friendly hallways, violence-free schools, open and green learning spaces and democratic school management. The guide provides specific ways that school leaders can ensure a whole-school approach by focusing on practices such as positive discipline and democratic management in the section on 'Happy School Management' and 'Happy School Action Plan'.

School leaders can draw upon the insights of teachers and students to further develop a whole-school approach. This can be achieved through creating a school vision statement, explicit school-level goals, and ensuring that implicit norms, values and day-to-day interactions that shape relationships in schools are essential aspects of fostering happiness and well-being. Celebration of traditions, rituals, clubs and activities that build connections, honour students and their families are also important. Various ideas to foster a 'whole school' approach to Happy Schools would include orientation activities that initiate students and families into the Happy School community, practices that celebrate student achievements in the realms of happiness and well-being, and clubs and activities that give students time and place to share their experiences, talents and perspectives.

Sustainability is not just something to learn, it's something to live!

STUDENTS SHOULD LEARN ABOUT SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP TO HELP THEM UNDERSTAND THE WORLD THEY LIVE IN

SCHOOL GARDEN PROGRAMMES CAN TEACH HEALTHY EATING AND HELP BUILD AN EMOTIONAL CONNECTION WITH THE NATURAL WORLD

EDUCATION IS THE BEST TOOL FOR CLIMATE CHANGE AWARENESS

SCHOOLS SHOULD BUILD RELATIONSHIPS AND ENGAGE WITH COMMUNITY ISSUES

SOLAR PANELS

ENERGY SAVING LIGHTBULBS

RENEWABLE MATERIALS

HUMAN RIGHTS DISCRIMINATION GENDER EQUALITY BULLYING

SCHOOL

SCHOOL HALL

STUDENTS, PARENTS, TEACHERS, PRINCIPALS, SCHOOL MANAGEMENT AND THE COMMUNITY SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN SCHOOL DECISIONS.

SCHOOL BUILDINGS SHOULD BE SAFE AND SUSTAINABLE, CONSERVING WATER AND ENERGY AND REDUCING WASTE

THE WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH ADDRESSES THE NEEDS OF ALL LEARNERS

THE WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH TO SUSTAINABILITY BRINGS TOGETHER WHAT IS TAUGHT, HOW IT'S TAUGHT, EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, TEACHER TRAINING, DECISION MAKING PROCESSES, THE PHYSICAL BUILDINGS, THE ENVIRONMENT, AND THE WIDER COMMUNITY.

The Whole-School Approach to climate change

A 'whole school' perspective requires schools to be a place where both happiness and unhappiness can be addressed, and that includes a space to engage students having difficult thoughts, feelings and emotions. **A Mindfulness Room** could be designated, where students can go to calm down, refocus and engage in mindfulness practice. A structure of rituals and routines can also be introduced into the learning environment to focus on happiness and well-being. For example, a **Mindfulness Corridor**, where students are asked to walk mindfully in the space can help reinforce classroom lessons. Even simply posting visuals based on the happiness lessons in the Happy Schools Toolkit around various parts of the school can reinforce what students have learned in the classroom. The key point here is that teachers and school leaders collaborate to extend what is being taught in classrooms with the messages students obtain from the wider school environment. When there are sufficient resources, these approaches may be augmented by psychological support and counselling services, as well as safe places where students can meet trusted adults.

Awareness Activity Three:

Our Schools and Classrooms – How to Improve Happiness?

Building on the previous two Awareness Activities, the facilitator leads participants in linking the Happiness and Unhappiness Maps they collectively created based on the Happy Schools Framework. By using the vocabulary from earlier discussions, it will help them decide which aspects of the school need attention. Concretely, the facilitator will ask participants to link the criteria in the framework to a given emotion, then collectively discuss how it can be improved.

Summary

Facilitators provide participants with the worksheets, then shares ideas, and agree on ways to improve.

Objectives

Participants link their ideas on happiness and unhappiness from the previous awareness activities to the Happy Schools Framework, and collectively develop initial thoughts on how to improve happiness in their classrooms and schools.

Intended Outcomes

- Participants know how to identify what factors are helping and hindering happiness within their school.
- Participants understand and identify the root causes of unhappiness and see how they could be tackled to promote happiness.

Materials and preparation

- Handout: Happiness and Unhappiness in Our School
- Handout: Ways to improve
- Happy Schools Framework

Activity Steps

Step 1: Facilitators display the collectively drawn Happiness and Unhappiness Maps, and brief participants on the many new ways of expressing the term 'Happiness'. They then remind participants to think of these maps within the context of their school.

Step 2: Participants work individually to complete the 'Happiness and Unhappiness in Our School' handout, then discuss together.

Step 3: Facilitators distribute the Happy Schools Framework and ask participants to look at each criteria of the Happy Schools Framework and provide the word that first comes to mind, and their reason for choosing them.

Step 4: Facilitators lead a discussion based on the following prompts:

- What word(s) were most commonly associated with these aspects of the school? Why? Give concrete examples.
- Having discussed and debated, participants are asked to discuss how these aspects might be improved at the school? Concrete examples are best.

Step 5: Facilitators survey the results and circle the specific areas that need improvement.

They then distribute the second 'Ways to Improve' handout, asking participants to focus only on these circled areas, and thinking of ways to improve the situation. The primary goal is to collectively identify and brainstorm ways to improve the school, within the categories and common vocabulary of the Happy Schools Framework.

Step 6: (Optional) Facilitators may also wish to provide teachers with a copy of this guide, highlighting various aspects discussed, and previewing the Happiness Lessons that follow in the Toolkit.

Step 7: Teachers and school leaders may wish to collectively agree upon the 4–5 areas of the Happy Schools Framework that seem to generate the most unhappiness in their schools and focus attention on those aspects, perhaps as part of the building of their Happy School Action Plan.

⊕ Facilitator Guidance

Ensure participants refer to their answers to the previous Awareness Activities when reflecting upon aspects of the school that elicit certain emotions.

Facilitators should encourage participants to give concrete examples from their own experience around the school, rather than general statements.

Facilitators should write each aspect of the Happy Schools Framework onto a separate sheet of white paper, writing down the corresponding comments.

Facilitators may wish to ask participants if anything is missing from the Happy Schools Framework that they wish to add within the context of their school. This allows different schools to face different circumstances and these should be added to their version of the Happy Schools Framework.

Handout: Happiness and Unhappiness in Our Schools

People

Relationships
Word:
Reason(s):

Teacher Attitudes
W:
R:

Diversity/Difference
W:
R:

Values/Practices
W:
R:

Working Conditions
W:
R:

Teacher Skills
W:
R:

Other
W:
R:

Process

Workload
Word:
Reason(s):

Teamwork
W:
R:

Learning Approach
W:
R:

Learners
W:
R:

Recognition
W:
R:

Extracurricular
W:
R:

Team Learning
W:
R:

Learning Content
W:
R:

Mental Conditions
W:
R:

Place

Class Environment
Word:
Reason(s):

Security
W:
R:

Play Spaces
W:
R:

School Vision
W:
R:

Discipline
W:
R:

Health, Food
W:
R:

School Management
W:
R:

Other
W:
R:

Handout: How to Improve?

People

How to improve?
Domain:

How to improve?
Domain:

Process

How to improve?
Domain:

How to improve?
Domain:

Place

How to improve?
Domain:

How to improve?
Domain:

Example of suggestions add to the Happy Schools Framework

Diversity/ Difference

(I) promote knowledge of other cultures,
(ii) encourage role play and discussion focusing on empathy,
(iii) teach about various religions and languages, and
(iv) inclusion of children in diverse developmental stages in collaborative learning (pgs. 47-47)

Discipline

(I) replacing punishment with constructive activities that foster emotional regulation, and
(ii) introduction of delayed gratification in the classroom (pg. 66)

Teamwork

(I) introduce group assignments for collaborative problem-solving, and
(ii) introduce diverse teamwork learning activities (debates, games) (pg. 53)

Health, Food

(I) ensuring the availability of healthy food in school cafeterias,
(ii) having a school nutritionist, and
(iii) organizing school-community clean ups (pg. 67)

The overall goal of this Awareness Activity is for teachers and school leaders to construct and recognize the overall 'happiness landscape' of their current school. One additional, yet integral approach is to ask students their opinions, treating them as equal partners in the development of a Happy School. As such, conducting a Happy School Survey among the students is an excellent way for teachers and school leaders to get a sense of how students view their school. Within the Toolkit, the lesson 'Happiest Places and Moments at School' provides a template for how to do this. Utilizing the happiness and unhappiness vocabulary generated above, that activity asks students to access how they feel about the different aspects of the school. This is one of numerous ways to gather information from students.
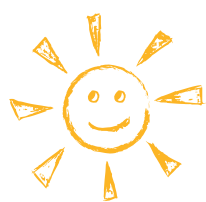
Happy Teachers

While the focus of the previous section was on understanding happiness and well-being through the Happy Schools Framework, this section will now turn to practical approaches for teachers. The most important aspect is arguably the happiness of teachers themselves, which is often a major determinant of student happiness and well-being as well. This section explores two of the criteria of the Happy Schools Framework in particular: positive teacher attitudes and teacher well-being.

How School Leaders Can Support Teachers

School leaders must focus on improving teacher working conditions and ensuring fair workloads, as well as supporting teachers ongoing professional development and learning of concepts relevant for a Happy School such as positive discipline for instance. Many of these aspects, however, depend on the arrangement of a given school system, and decisions about teacher workload, curriculum and salaries may not be in the hands of school leaders. Often, these decisions are made outside the school.

School leaders can work to enhance teacher happiness by ensuring time for in-service training that explicitly focuses on their well-being. Activities utilized throughout this guide, particularly the Awareness Activities and some of the Happiness Lessons in Happy Schools Toolkit, can actually be adapted for use with groups of teachers themselves with some adjustments. This includes creating Happiness Maps, reflecting on the Happy Schools Framework, taking the Emotions Survey, and using the Mood Meter to assess teacher mood. Research suggests that when school leaders frequently inquire about teacher well-being, it already helps to enhance it, as it raises awareness among teachers to focus on happiness in their own classrooms. The most effective way to ensure teacher well-being is to ensure that they themselves drive the process.

What Teachers Can Do

Teachers may feel that the addition of Happy Schools activities to their classrooms will only make them busier, even if they may agree with the overall goals. However, research shows that greater attention to non-cognitive dimensions of learning often makes teachers feel happier. It actually enhances their own well-being, largely because focusing on students' happiness allows them time to think about their own. Below are three suggested practices that can contribute to teacher well-being.

Lesson Study — Happiness Collaboration Group

A well-developed model of teacher collaboration is the 'Lesson Study' process (Stigler and Hiebert, 1999). It is widely practiced in Japan as a means of continuous professional development and has been exported to other countries as a good practice of pre-service and in-service teacher education. In 'Lesson-Study' groups organized by grade or subject area, teachers design and take turns conducting model lessons and providing feedback on one another's work to improve the quality of the lessons. The groups meet regularly to discuss the learning challenges of their students and to collaboratively develop lessons that more effectively meet students' needs. Lesson Study programmes are effective partly because they take place in specific school contexts and focus on the unique challenges and opportunities that exist in that school.

Lesson Study groups explicitly focused on the Happiness Lessons can attempt model lessons aimed at enhancing student well-being, providing teachers with a chance to collaborate and share their own views. The focus on continual improvement at the heart of the Lesson Study, when combined with attention to happiness, may provide a sense of community for teachers to share their own views of well-being, as well as continually improve the Happiness Lessons in the Happy Schools Toolkit.

Teaching Happiness Journal

Teachers can keep a teaching journal or diary[1], focusing on issues related to their own happiness and well-being. For the most part, this can be a record of a teacher's experience, written down while the experience and associated emotions are still fresh. It can be effective with just 5–10 minutes of writing at the end of the day or during their break. Simply writing an experience down allows the teacher to reflect on what happened during that day with critical detachment and to learn from it. Writing about the lessons that did not go well, and revisiting unpleasant experiences later on is a key part of self-awareness. It can help the teacher to a) distance themselves from the experience, b) analyze what went wrong, and c) avoid the same mistakes in the future. A useful way of keeping a teaching journal is to incorporate it into the same document as a lesson plan (or simply writing in the margins). It can specify what will be covered in the class and how. Then, after class, the following questions can be answered:

- What worked well, and why?
- What didn't work well, and why not?
- Thinking about creating a Happy School, what occurred in the lesson?
- Thinking about creating a Happy School, what changes could be made?

An additional benefit of diligently keeping a Teaching Happiness Journal is that it can be utilized as a resource for future in-service training and Lesson Study activities. That is, individual reflection will enhance and enrich later group activities.

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1 See for example, The Happier Teacher Journal: Gratitude, Growth, and Positivity for Teachers (Teaching Bites, 2019).
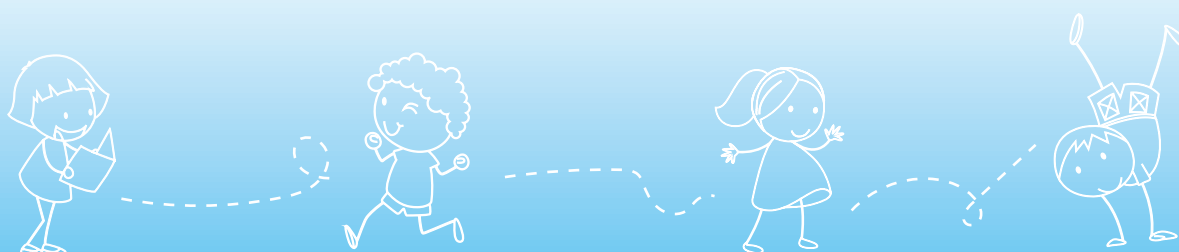
Mindfulness Practices

Mindfulness techniques have recently become prominent in education. The Happy Schools Toolkit includes four different mindfulness-based lessons. Here what is good for students is also good for teachers. Exercises in mindful attention, mindful walking and mindful eating can all be utilized by teachers to cultivate a more focused mind. In addition to these there are many more mindfulness practices included in the Additional Resources section. Recent work has pointed out that teachers have much to gain from mindfulness practices, such as losing the stress of having to 'go somewhere', responding skillfully to daily challenges in the classroom, gaining freedom from mental habits and so on (Hanh and Weare, 2017). Most of all, developing mindfulness allows teachers to relate skillfully – rather than react – to student behaviour. Students are quite attuned to emotional state of their teachers, and the focus generated by mindfulness is likely to have wider effects on classrooms. As a further step, teachers who practice mindfulness may wish to share it with colleagues, thus creating a community of mindfulness practitioners that may underpin teacher happiness and well-being within schools.

Mindfulness as Asia-Pacific Contribution to Global Happiness

Over the past decade, mindfulness has come to be recognized as a key component of happiness, health and well-being across much of the world. In North America and Europe, these approaches are now being formally integrated into both curriculum and classrooms. Although Mindfulness techniques appear simple and the trend new, these well-being 'pedagogies' have a long history in the Asia-Pacific. In many countries of the region, mindfulness-based techniques were central to education before the arrival of modern, Western school systems. In Thailand and Laos, monastic education usually included a component of mindfulness, and virtually all 'teachers' were mindfulness practitioners (McDaniel, 2008). The same was the case in the Republic of Korea, Japan, and Viet Nam, despite some differences in approaches. For example, in Japan and China, many Confucian scholars integrated mindfulness-like techniques called 'silent sitting' into their Confucian learning models. Cultures influenced by a Tibetan Buddhist worldview and practices such as Bhutan and Nepal also integrated mindfulness techniques into their learning models (Deroche, 2021). In fact, the current North American and European trend for Mindfulness originates with Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese and Tibetan practitioners going to 'teach' in North America in the 1960s–1970s. Today, recognizable names such as Thich Nhat Hanh are at the forefront of extending this Asia-Pacific model globally.
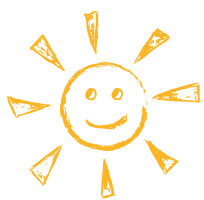
Happy School Management

School leaders are key to ensuring that the Happy Schools approach is implemented across the whole school. The Happy Schools Framework outlines three criteria that are central to the work of most school leaders: school vision, positive discipline and school management.

The lessons in the Happy School Toolkit that are promoted by teachers at classroom level can also be complimentary to school management by linking them to the wider school environment.

Positive Discipline

Discipline

Experiencing trust and feeling safe in school are essential to students' happiness and well-being. Indiscipline is a disturbance of the community and of trust in school relationships, and schools are increasingly using 'positive discipline' as a preferred method. Positive discipline aims to establish and maintain the trust between teachers and among students. It helps them to restore the relationship, in case it has been disturbed or broken.

Seven Principles of Positive Discipline

- Respect the child's dignity
- Develop pro-social behaviour, self-discipline and character
- Maximize active participation
- Respect developmental needs and quality of life
- Respect child's motivation and life views
- Assure fairness (equity and non-discrimination)
- Promote solidarity

Source: UNESCO, 2006

Positive discipline uses approaches to encourage pro-social capacities rather than punishing bad behaviour. It is different from punishment, which involves telling children what not to do.

Discipline vs. Punishment

Discipline is	Punishment is
Giving children positive alternatives	Being told only what not to do
Acknowledging or rewarding good behaviour	Reacting harshly to misbehaviour
When children follow rules because they are discussed and agreed upon	When children follow rules because they are threatened or bribed
Consistent, firm guidance	Controlling, shaming, ridiculing
Positive and respectful of people	Negative and disrespectful of people
Physically and verbally non-violent	Physically and verbally violent

Unlike punishment, positive discipline is intended to help students succeed and thrive in school through promoting positive behaviours and preventing negative and risky behaviours (Education Development Center Inc., 2013). Teachers and school leaders can use the following steps to integrate positive discipline in schools:

1) Describe the appropriate behaviour: 'everyone please quiet down' or 'please do not run in the hallways'.
2) Provide clear reasons: 'we are going to start now and everyone needs to listen' or 'noise in the hallways makes it difficult for those studying in their classrooms to focus'.
3) Request acknowledgement: 'do you see why quieting down is so important?'.
4) Reinforce the correct behaviour: eye contact, nodding, smile, extra play time, positive feedback in front of others.

School leaders should work to integrate positive discipline into school policies, programmes, and practices, including equipping and supporting teachers to integrate them at the classroom level. Ideally, they can ensure it is applied beyond the school in the local community. Indeed, positive and restorative disciplinary practices preserve relationships, foster responsibility and respect students' dignity. When disciplinary action is needed, this approach provides opportunities for students to practice their social and emotional skills, develop personal responsibility and remain part of the classroom and school community.

Democratic School Management

School Vision

Allowing students to play an active role in school life and management of the school community is a proven way to enhance their feelings of trust and belonging as well as creating a sense of self-worth and efficacy while practising organizational skills. At the school level, students can participate through a school council, student council or the school budgeting process. At the classroom level, they can participate through initiatives such as a class committee.

School Management

School leaders, teachers and students can work together to develop ground rules for classroom interaction and discussion to flourish in a safe and respectful learning environment. Ground rules also help to reduce bullying and to build a sense of community. For them to be effective and responsive to changing circumstances, teachers and their students must review them from time to time and make adjustments when necessary.

Laying out consequences for when ground rules are broken is also important. This includes consequences for the perpetrator, redress and support for the victim, and zero-tolerance policies that are part of the root causes of unhappiness such as violence or stigma. This can be integrated as part of the process of develop the school's Happy Schools Action Plan.

Democratic school management can also be promoted through a School Charter, which is developed collectively by students, teachers and school leaders. The School Charter is a collaborative document that helps schools establish supportive and productive learning environments. Together, the community describes how they want to feel at school, the behaviours that foster those feelings, and guidelines for preventing and managing unwanted feelings and conflict. By working together to build the School Charter, everyone establishes common goals and holds each other accountable for creating the positive climate they envision. Unlike 'rules' or a code of conduct, the School Charter represents agreed-upon norms for how everyone will be treated.

Questions to ask when designing a School Charter

How do we want to feel in school each day?

Each student or staff member lists the 3–5 feelings they want to experience each day at school. Then, as a group, they are combined to form a final list of 5–8 feelings that represent the feelings that are most important to the group.

What will we do to ensure these feelings consistently and create a positive learning environment?

Everyone is asked to think about what these feelings will look like in school in terms of specific, measurable and observable behaviours. In other words, what will the group need to do each day to ensure everyone experiences these feelings?

How will we prevent and manage conflict and unwanted feelings?

The group first discusses the uncomfortable feelings and unwanted behaviours they would like to avoid experiencing in school, how these feelings and behaviours will be handled, and how conflict will be prevented and managed, including what happens when the School Charter is breached.

The School Charter is written or typed up, signed by everyone in the group, and posted somewhere visible so it can be referred to and revisited for amendments as needed. Some school leaders may wish to link this School Charter directly to the criteria of the Happy Schools Framework, while others will want to leave it more open-ended for students who may not be familiar with it. The School Charter exercise can be taken into account when drafting the Happy Schools Action Plan, demonstrating the democratic management style of the Happy Schools Project.
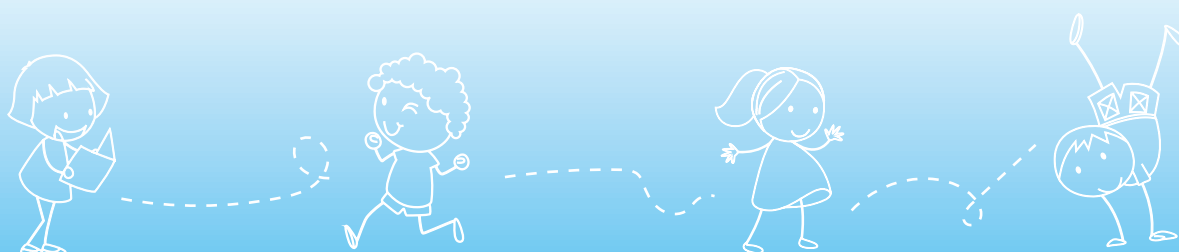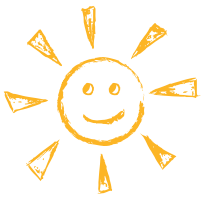
Happy Schools Action Plan

Teacher Attitudes

Team Learning

Working Conditions

School Vision

Teacher Skills

School Management

Achieving long-term happiness in schools requires a blueprint for a long-term, whole school and continual improvement approach. It also requires building upon the Happy Schools Framework to integrate it into regular school routines. To achieve this, it is advisable to develop a Happy Schools Action Plan that ensures continual improvement, keeps the school community focused, and provides a record for future adjustments and expansion.

Ideally, the Happy Schools Action Plan is developed, planned and implemented by a Happy Schools Team or Committee. This team is usually comprised of school leaders and teachers, and if possible, also includes parents. A Happy Schools Coordinator is nominated to lead the Happy Schools Team would be led by an agreed upon. This Coordinator can also be the same person as the facilitator leading the Awareness Activities explored earlier in this guide. The most important is that the coordinator has already been involved in all phases of the process. If a school leader is elected as coordinator, whether the principal or vice-principal, this helps ensure that a whole-school approach is taken into account during regular school planning and management activities. The team would formulate the Happy Schools Action Plan on an annual basis, focusing on three phrases: 1) Formulating Objectives, 2) Scheduling and Implementation and 3) Evaluation. Similar to conducting the awareness-raising activities above, the formulation of a Happy Schools Action Plan can take the form of a workshop, which is led by the coordinator.

Formulating a Happy SchoolsAction Plan

⌕ Summary

Coordinators lead participants in formulating goals and developing a schedule for implementation.

✐ Objectives

Participants create an action plan for ensuring a happy schools focus and approach.

⊘ Intended Outcomes

- The school community is focused on their goals as presented in the Action Plan.
- Participants have a clear idea of the foundations for continual school improvement.

⬡ Materials and preparation

- Handout: SMART Goals
- Handout: time and work breakdown schedule
- Any data on monitoring from classrooms or the school-level

⌐ Activity Steps

Step 1: Coordinators display the collectively drawn 'How to Improve?' charts from Awareness Activity Three, inviting participants to recall their answers and suggestions to build on strengths and weaknesses.

Step 2: Coordinators explain the idea of a Happy Schools Action Plan including how to formulate goals. The more specific and the more precise the objective, the easier it is to determine the activities that will be undertaken to achieve it, and the easier it will be to determine that those activities will produce the expected outcomes.

Step 3: Coordinators ask participants to first brainstorm a list of objectives for the Happy Schools Action Plan, either individually or in small groups. Then the larger group discusses, while the coordinator records these on the board.

Step 4: Having developed the initial list, the coordinator asks participants to select a smaller number of the best ideas, then reformulate them according to SMART Goals Handout.

Step 5: Once formulated, goals are combined into an initial Happy Schools Action Plan.
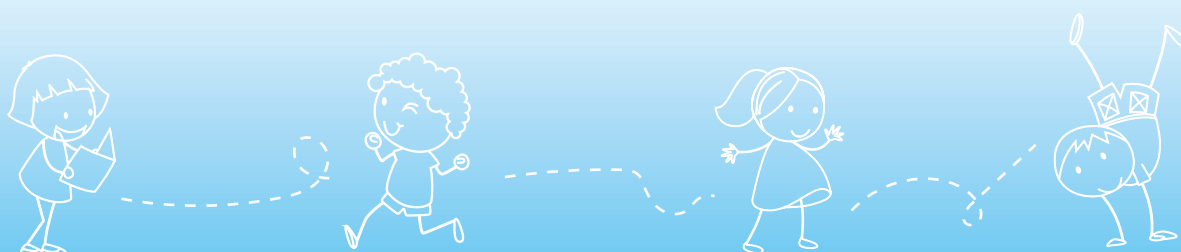
Step 6: Coordinators introduce the schedule implementation for the Action Plan:

1) Coordinators introduce the idea of a time and work breakdown schedule, then ask participants to breakdown goals into smaller tasks, perhaps assigning one task to one small group or individual.
2) Participants come back together in the larger group to assemble a unified schedule, discussing conflicts and details during the process.

Step 7: Coordinators may wish to close by scheduling for receiving approval for the plan and by assigning tasks to the group. Coordinators may also wish to schedule, in advance, when the mid-term an annual assessment exercises will be held.

⊗ Facilitator Guidance

Coordinators may prepare for this activity by gathering existing materials from the school such as the school charter, motto, discipline policies, and so on, so that the team may know what the school is already doing.

If there is already some data available from the monitoring activities, the coordinator may wish to introduce it as well, in order to make the planning more realistic.

Coordinators may utilize the SMART Goals Handout to introduce basic ideas, with further resources available online.

It is best if the Action Plan focuses on 4–7 key criteria of the Happy Schools Framework each year, rather than seeking to address the entire Framework. If too many goals are introduced, the focus can often be lost.

One key to successful implementation and planning is the gathering of monitoring data (feedback). The coordinator may wish to ask some to assist in this data collection, or explain how and when this data will be collected.

The Coordinator(s) will monitor the action plan's progression according to the original time schedule. When circumstances change or when hurdles occur, they will negotiate with the people concerned to modify this schedule and adjust tasks.

The Happy Schools Action Plan can then inform regular daily operations of the school, and be integrated into the official school charter, school motto or school's vision statement. It can also inform monitoring.

This Happy School Team evaluation meeting would also discuss the ways in which the Happy School should be adjusted or redirected in the following year to address other new issues or '(re)balance' the various dimension of happiness (for example, in the second year placing an emphasis on individual feelings, focusing on bullying, etc.)

Handout: SMART Goals

To be successful, the Happy Schools Action Plan needs to be systematic, planned and realistic. One effective way to do this is to utilize a SMART approach. SMART stands for Specific, Measurable, Agreed, Realistic and Time-Bound:

Specific - The Action Plan is focused on a well-defined issue that has been identified by the school community. The Action Plan is clear, concise and written in language anyone can understand.

Measurable - There is a system in place for determining whether the Action Plan's annual outcomes and results have been met. When appropriate, numbers or quantitative language are used when measuring or conveying the results. Given that an increased sense of the various types of happiness (or decreased sense of unhappiness) will be the goals of the Action Plan, the experiences and feelings of teachers and students are important indicators, and these might be measured with the monitoring tools outlined above.

Agreed and Accepted – There is a general agreement among all those concerned with the school (school leaders and teachers, but also parents and students, where applicable) about the actions and measures to be taken that year. To the extent that the various stakeholder groups accept and agree to the action plan's objectives and outcomes, it may make it easier to implement the Action Plan.

Realistic – The Action Plan is feasible and doable. The plan is neither too ambitious nor too complex. It can be completed within the given time and resources. Setting goals that are impossible to achieve is frustrating for all concerned. It might ultimately delay or dampen support for the Action Plan.

Time-Bound – The Action Plan should have an agreed start and end. All concerned should know what is expected from them and when. Concrete deadlines are preferable. If deadlines need to be changed, they need to be explained and agreed with all concerned.

Handout: Time and work breakdown schedule

	Period 1*	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4	Period 5	Period 6	Period 7	Period 8	Period 9
Activities and Tasks									
Activity 1									
Task 1.1									
Task 1.2									
Activity 2									
Task 2.1									
Task 2.2									
Task 2.3									
etc. etc.									

*The length of each period depends on the duration of the action plan. Ususally weekls or months are convenient for scheduling the activity and related tasks.

Monitoring Happy Schools

- Understand how to monitor happiness and well-being in classrooms and across the school.
- Recognize means of school management that align with the Happy School Framework.
- Focus on ways to improve the happiness of teachers, as the foundation of a Happy School.
- Learn how to integrate the Happy Schools Action Plan into regular school operation.

Introduction: Continual Improvement Towards a Happy School

A Happy School is less of a destination, and more a process of continual improvement. Even if many students seem to be happy and full of life one week, there is no guarantee that this will be the same the following week. This section of the Happy Schools Guide focuses attention on the key components of this important process of continual improvement. It discusses various ways to monitor happiness and well-being in classrooms and the wider school. It then turns to highlight several effective management practices that school leaders may seek to utilize school-wide. A separate section is focused on raising teacher happiness, as this is widely recognized as the single most important factor for raising student happiness. A final section builds on all this, suggesting ways that schools can create an annual Happy Schools Action Plan that lays out a longer-term vision, thus setting the school on a path of continual improvement and a whole-school, integrated approach that goes beyond stand-alone lessons or individual classrooms.

Monitoring

How can we know if we are moving in the right direction to become a Happy School? How can we monitor and evaluate how happy our school has become? In this section, teachers and school leaders will find approaches to monitoring happiness and well-being. These range from basic, quick 'check-up' exercises for classrooms to more advanced, longer term whole-school approaches. Monitoring is crucial because it provides feedback that is the foundation for continual improvement, signalling to teachers and schools leaders how they are progressing and what areas still need improvement.

Classroom Level: Mood Meter

The Mood Meter is a diagnostic and monitoring tool that allows teachers to understand the 'mood' of their classrooms. Using the Mood Meter, teachers and students become more aware of how their emotions change, both in a given day, throughout the day and over longer periods of time, as well as how their emotions can have an effect on their actions. It aligns well with the vocabulary raising activities presented later in the Happy SchoolsToolkit (such as Emotions Survey). By showing the general 'mood', snapshots can be taken over time and compared. This Mood Meter activity can also be done at different times during the day, for instance after lunch, after recess or after an examination. This allows teachers to more closely monitor fluctuations over the school day. Below is a basic lesson plan.

Mood Meter Activity

Summary

Students spend 1–2 minutes reflecting on their mood, then share with the group.

Objectives

To monitor the general mood of the class, encouraging students to conduct regular self-monitoring of their mood by themselves.

Intended Outcomes

- Teachers are able to monitor the general mood of the class.
- Students reflect on their own mood and identify their emotions.

Materials and preparation

- Mood Meter handout

Activity Steps

Step 1: Draw the Mood Meter on the board as follows:

Step 2: Teacher explains the Mood Meter to the students (the first time it is introduced):

- The Horizontal Axis represents the student's internal feelings and state ranging from extremely unpleasant (-5), to neutral (0), to very high energy (+5).
- The Vertical Axis represents the flow of energy in the student's body, ranging from very low energy (-5), to neutral (0), to very high energy (0).
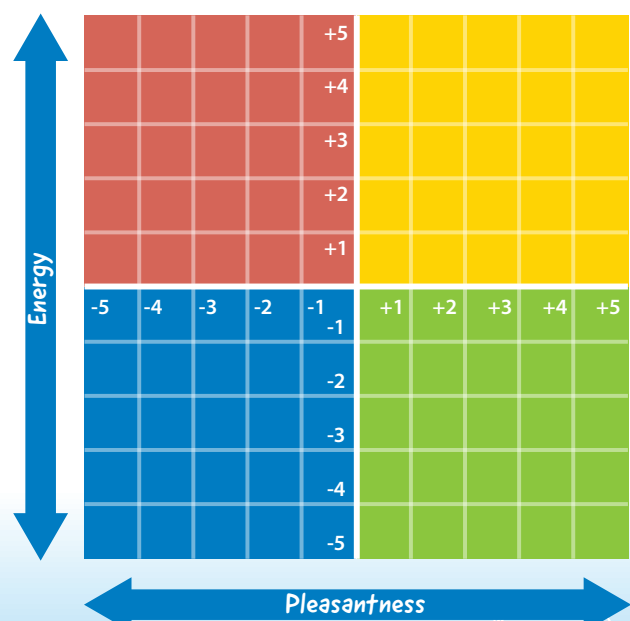
- The Horizontal and Vertical Axes cross to form four quadrants. Explain the quadrants starting in the red and ending in the green and yellow by any or all of the following:

  ▼ Asking for a few feeling words to identify emotions for each.
  ▼ Demonstrating or discussing facial expressions, body language and vocal intonation in each.
  ▼ Sharing a story about different experiences in different quadrants. If possible, try to find a connection to the world of education.

Step 3: Give students a piece of paper and ask them to write down one of the following, based on how they feel, come up and tape it onto the Mood Meter:

- Words describing their current feelings or emotions.
- Facial expression, body language, and/or vocal intonation related to these moods (e.g. silence as low energy, excitement as high energy etc.).
- Sharing a story with a reason for their current feeling.

Step 4: Once each member of the class has contributed, a general class 'Mood' can be understood. Some teachers may want to use this to simply monitor the class, while others may want to further discuss using the following prompts:

- Where on the Mood Meter does the class want to be?
- What strategies will get the class to that point?

⊕ Facilitator Guidance

This activity can be used at any time of the day, but is best used as part of transitions as a way to calm students and enable them to self-monitor their emotions (e.g. after lunch).

If this activity is used repeatedly, teachers may wish, instead of using the board, to use the same chart to affix the students' names with magnetic or adhesive tabs.

Some students may benefit from redrawing the figure to write 'low energy' (weak) and 'high energy' (strong), as well as pleasant and unpleasant.

Some students may have a difficult time understanding the idea of intensity of emotions, so it is described here as 'energy'. Some students may require some additional explanation.

Teachers who share their own stories, particularly on unpleasant emotions make it easier for students to do the same.

Teachers who have already taken part in the Happiness and Unhappiness exercises may wish to offer several different words to prompt students to think beyond simply 'happy' and 'unhappy'.

Teachers may wish to limit these stories to one minute to give space for many students to speak.

For monitoring purposes, the teacher may want to record a copy of the Mood Meter and compare it to previous exercises and see the differences over time. This may or may not be displayed for the students.

School Level: Emoji Monitoring Boards

Monitoring at the school level can serve a dual purpose: to allow school leaders and teachers to understand happiness and well-being in their school, but also to keep students and teachers informed about what needs to be improved. As part of the Happy Schools Project pilots schools, one school suggested the use of emoji boards to monitor happiness at the school level. This is based on a simple but effective idea where students are asked to rate various aspects of the school using the familiar emoji icons. These are then linked to different criteria of the Happy Schools Framework including: friendships and relationships, positive teacher attitudes, respect for diversity, environment free from bullying and so on. Students would frequently have the chance to rate these different aspects, providing feedback on where improvements are needed. A main Happy Schools Board, prominently displayed somewhere on school grounds, would then provide the overall picture of the school.

A preliminary sketch of what these Emoji Monitoring Boards might look like is provided in two versions below. The first version is simple and may be more appropriate for lower grades or elementary schools as it gives a smaller range of choices, and focuses on the intensity of that feeling in each domain. For example more faces means more people feel this way, or feel strongly about this. The second advanced version is more sophisticated, and includes specific emotions and vocabulary to build upon the earlier Awareness Raising Activities and reflect the specific culture and context. Note that in the second version, the differences in opinions students hold can be visibly reflected on the board.

Simple Emoji Monitoring Board

Happy
So-So
Unhappy

People

Relationships	😃
Teacher Attitudes	
Diversity/Difference	
Values/Practices	
Working Conditions	
Teacher Skills	

Process

Workload	😐
Teamwork	
Learning Approach	
Learners	
Recognition	
Extracurricular	
Team Learning	
Learning Content	
Mental Conditions	

Place

Class Environment	😃
Security	
Play Spaces	
School Vision	
Discipline	
Health, Food	
School Management	

Advanced Emoji Monitoring Boards

Emoji			
Excited	People	Process	Place

People
- Relationships
- Teacher Attitudes
- Diversity/Difference
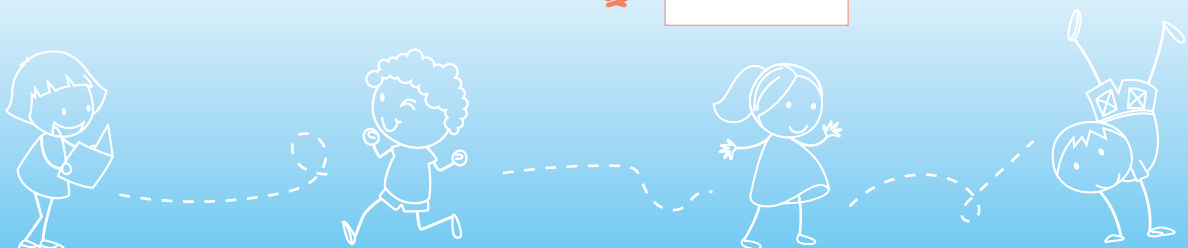- Values/Practices
- Working Conditions
- Teacher Skills

Process
- Workload
- Teamwork
- Learning Approach
- Learners
- Recognition
- Extracurricular
- Team Learning
- Learning Content
- Mental Conditions

Place
- Class Environment
- Security
- Play Spaces
- School Vision
- Discipline
- Health, Food
- School Management

Emoji legend:
- Excited
- Calm
- Joy
- Unsure
- Sad
- Angry
- Afraid

Students can provide feedback on these Emoji Boards in a number of ways:

- By setting aside time in each classroom to 'vote', then forwarding the results to the main office.
- By asking students to fill out a brief form when they arrive at school or at end of a school assembly (similar to Empathy Exit tickets), on a given day of the week.
- Given sufficient technological infrastructure, the voting could be linked to social media, allowing students to provide feedback with their phones or computer.

These Emoji Boards can also be accompanied by a message board where students can write short messages to expand further. Alternatively, students can also use adhesive paper with Emoji faces on one side, then then write their comments on the other side before sticking them on the school Emoji Board.

These exercises enable school leaders and teachers to better understand the situation at the school and classroom levels. It is advisable that such monitoring systems, particularly if made available online, are open only to those in the school community, and that proper rules for feedback on message boards are in place to ensure respectful, accurate feedback.
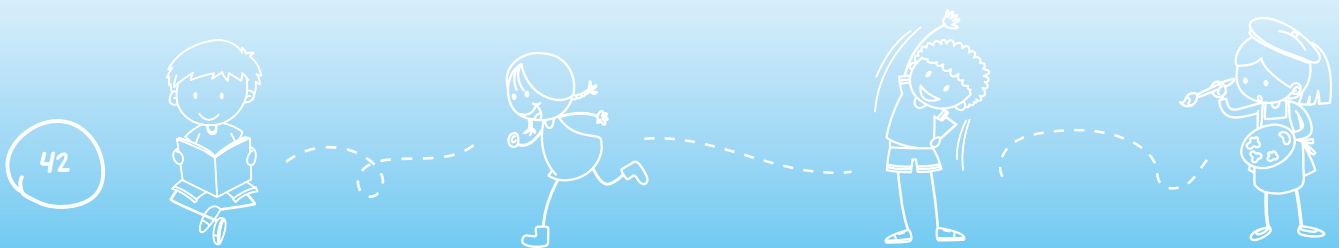
Emojis as an Asia-Pacific contribution to Global Happiness

Emojis have become a common aspect of students' lives as the Internet, texting, and social media have become increasingly prominent in childhood. When organizing the Emoji Boards idea with students, it might be interesting to share the story of the emoji, which originates from the Asia-Pacific region. Emoji (絵一文字) is a Japanese word that stands for picture ('e') and character ('moji'). It was invented by a Japanese researcher named Shigetaka Kurita in 1999. Prior to his invention, Japanese students and young people had been using symbols on the keyboard to express their feelings, seeking to express the emotions that words could not. This creativity came out of the rich tradition of manga in the country, and also reflects the fact that the Japanese and Chinese languages are ideographic: they use pictures to depict meaning. Interestingly, many English-speakers think emoji means 'emotional' character. The emoji has become a universal contribution to human understanding and communication of emotion and feelings over the Internet today.

Advanced Classroom Level: Mobile Apps

In recent years, there has been a boom in 'Mood Apps', which utilize technology to help people track their emotions and levels of happiness. For students in the Asia-Pacific region with access to these devices, these Apps can provide an interesting and easy way to monitor emotions throughout the day. Usually the Apps request the user to frequently report their mood (for example, every hour) by pressing emoji faces. These Apps then track the flow of different emotions over time. Several will also correlate one's mood to data collected passively: specific locations, people the students frequently interact with, or to specific activities such as waking up early for class, going to math class, or returning home from school. Some Apps will suggest quick 'treatments' that students can do to boost their mood. Some of these Apps are free and others require small payments. In recent years the most popular versions have been: Emotion Sense, gottaFeeling, Happiness, In Flow, Moodlytics, Moodscope, Moody Me, My Mood Tracker, Optimism and Pacifica. A simple comparison and introduction of these Apps can be found online, as new technologies and popularity of this topic are growing rapidly.

As pointed out earlier in this guide, definitions of happiness vary widely. Therefore, these Apps may not be useful for everyone or relevant to the local culture or context. However, those that ask students to frequently self-report their emotions and develop self-awareness of their own moods may find them to be useful, as they perform similar functions as some of the lessons in the Happy Schools Toolkit such as the 'Daily Mood Chart' and 'Emotions Survey'. Some Apps allow students to share data with their teachers, or to a larger class database. Although there are issues with privacy and accurate reporting, in the future this technology may potentially be used by teachers to get a better 'real time' sense of the levels of happiness and emotions in their classroom or at school.

Classroom and School Level

For teachers and school leaders with a deeper interest in monitoring happiness in their classrooms, there are more advanced assessment tools developed by researchers. These are not difficult to use, particularly if the focus is on monitoring changes in students' well-being over time. The University of Cambridge has recently launched The Well-Being Measurement Advisory Tool (WEBMAT). This free tool provides a simple, easy-to-use guide to find appropriate ways to measure well-being. WEBMAT first asks users to select the group they wish to study: Children, Adolescents, Adults (or the Elderly). By clicking 'Children', it then provides a list of many different aspects of well-being: feelings, life satisfaction, general well-being, mindfulness, self-esteem, engagement, etc. By clicking 'General Well-Being', in the next step, the user is given a choice of how many questions the assessment should include: Single-Item, 2–10 items, 11–20 items, 21–30 items, etc. By clicking '2–10 Items', WEBMAT then provides a list of two measurement tools commonly used, in this case:

 The Kids Screen Index - This tool takes approximately 5 minutes and includes 11 items, asking students questions such as 'Have you had fun with your friends?' and 'Have you felt lonely?'. There are also longer versions (27 questions and 52 questions).

The WHO Five Well-Being Index - This tool developed by the World Health Organization takes approximately 3 minutes to complete and is suitable for ages 9 years old and above. It has 5 items and examples include: 'I have felt cheerful and in good spirits' and 'My daily life has been filled with things that interest me'. It has been translated into more than 30 languages.

It is important to note that many of these tools have been developed in Europe and the United States, and may not always be appropriate for schools in the Asia-Pacific. In some cases, official translations may not always be available. Recognizing this, researchers from the Asia-Pacific have built their own measurement tools, reflecting different notions of happiness. These include the Interdependent Happiness Scale (Hitoko and Uchida, 2015), the Individual-Oriented and Social Oriented Cultural Conceptions of Subjective Well-Being Scale (ISSWB or 'Chinese Well-Being' Scale) (Lu and Gilmour 2006). More recently, several country-specific scales, such as Bhutan's Gross National Happiness Index and the Thai Happiness Index have also been developed (Senasu, Sakworawich, and Russ-Eft, 2019; Hitokoto, 2014).

School Climate Surveys also provide an interesting approach, which help school leaders monitor the degree to which their school is a safe and supportive learning environment. Researchers in North America have created a useful compendium of school climate surveys, which may be useful merged with the well-being surveys above to provide a whole-school approach.

While teachers may not always have time to look deeply into these different measures, school leaders and teachers wishing to go deeper may browse WEBMAT and the Asia-Pacific models above to locate an appropriate tool. They can then use these tools to monitor a given classroom or school population at given intervals, for example the start of the school year, the end of the first term, the end of the second term and at the end of the school year. These tools are best used not for comparison between schools or classes, but instead to continually monitor the same group of students over time to better understand changes in happiness and responses to different interventions to integrate the Happy School concept. A more advanced option may be to collaborate with educational researchers at a local college or university to help in the selection of happiness and well-being surveys for a more deeper understanding.

Happy Schools Toolkit

Introduction: Happiness Lessons

This toolkit is composed of 25 Happiness Lessons that are grouped into three themes: Happy Learners, Happy Classrooms and Happy Environments. Those grouped under Happy Learners reflect self-awareness and emotional regulation, while those under Happy Classrooms reflect awareness of others and interconnections such as gratitude, respect and empathy, and those under Happy Environments reflect the school's routines and physical spaces.

These lessons have been developed based on a broad survey and review of effective practices relating to the Happy Schools Framework, as taught by experienced practitioners with extensive experience within schools in the Asia-Pacific region and across the world.

- Provides teachers with practical ideas to teach happiness and boost student well-being
- Lessons link to different aspects of the Happy Schools Framework
- Guidance for teachers to integrate and adapt these approaches into existing lessons.

The lessons are designed to link to the criteria in the Happy Schools Framework. They are each structured to first provide a brief summary as well as objectives and learning outcomes, before outlining the subjects that it can be applied in, and the materials and preparation required. They then detail the steps for conducting the lesson, while providing teacher guidance and linking to further resources as necessary.

In most cases, teachers will find that the lessons in the Happy Schools Toolkit are ready to use, and that many including pull-out worksheets. However, they remain flexible as templates that teachers may wish to test and adapt to the local context to ensure their relevance and extend them further.

The lessons can be integrated into academic subjects, choosing how to merge with both cognitive and non-cognitive techniques. It is expected that teachers will choose the lessons that work best for them, according to the diverse needs of their class, the instructional subject, school curricula and daily schedule, among other factors.

Happy Learners

Happy Classrooms

Happy Environments

1. Interdependence Map

Summary

Students learn about the connection and interdependence between different aspects of their day-to-day lives.

Objectives

Students recognize the interdependence of things, people and events in this world, coming to focus on their inter-dependence with others.

Learning outcomes

- Learners recognize how to improve relationships within the school.
- Learners have greater awareness of the links between relationships at classroom level and wider society beyond the school.
- Learners gain awareness on how to nurture and strengthen their relationships with others.

Subjects it can be applied in:

History and Social Studies: historical periods and social systems are always connected through interdependent relationships, this lesson can be used in focusing on the social, political and economic factors behind a historical event or social phenomenon.

Science and Mathematics: this lesson can be used in learning about the connections between physical phenomena, particularly in biology.

Materials and Preparation

- Several sheets of paper
- Paper for Interdependence Map
- Objects that student will encounter every day in school such as desks, pencils, and paper

Happy Schools Criteria

Relationships

Diversity/Difference

Learning Approach

⌐ Lesson Steps

Step 1: The teacher asks student to consider the question 'What is needed for a single piece of paper to exist?' and holds up the piece of paper.

Step 2: The teacher guides a discussion, using prompts to guide students such as factories, paper mills, cutting down logs, hauling logs, transportation to the store, people selling the paper, the school purchasing paper, paper being used by the learner.

Step 3: The teacher and students draw a map on the board.

Step 4: The teacher shifts the discussion to 'What is needed for YOU to exist?', asking each student to work alone to fill out their own Interdependence Map based on the sample.

Step 5: Teachers may, from time to time, prompt students with guiding questions such as:

- Where does your body get its nourishment from (food, liquids)?
- Where does your house and clothes come from?
- Who supports or makes your life possible (parents, ancestors, siblings)?
- Where do you go to learn or play (schools, parks)?

Step 6: Teachers can ask students to share with a partner or with the whole class.

Step 7: Teachers may wish to ask students to circle the parts of their map that are connected to the school or people in the school, focusing attention on the interdependence of school life.

⊘ Teacher Guidance

Teachers in science classes may emphasize the natural world, while those in humanities disciplines may emphasize social relations. However, it is best to emphasize both, so that students learn to see connections to both people and places.

Teachers may wish to ask students what happens when they do not recognize their relationships with others. Or they may challenge students to try to come up with a part of them that is not connected to others (which is probably impossible).

Source: O'Brien (2010)
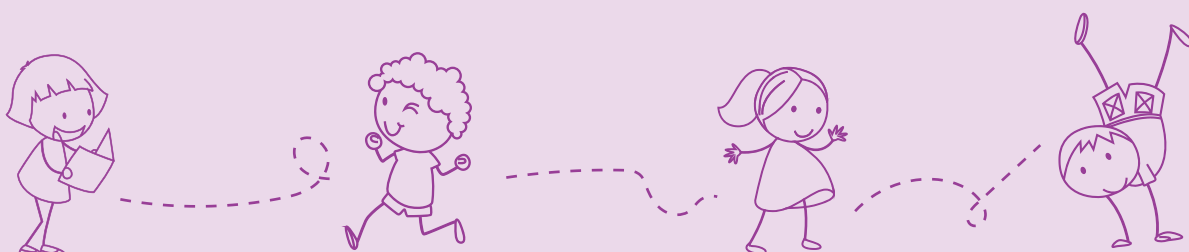
2. Stand by Me

Summary

Students, led by the teacher, share a time when they were insulted, reflect, and participate in a role play of the situation.

Objectives

Students learn to develop empathy for others and to demonstrate how to respond effectively to insults, discrimination and bullying.

Learning outcomes

- Students learn how to respond when they see or hear others being mistreated.
- Learn to cultivate social relations and contribute to a secure environment.

Subjects it can be applied in:

Civics and Moral Education: this lesson can approach the topics of bullying in schools through the use of role plays.

The Arts: this lesson can be applied through acting of scenes that depict an incident and the use of empathy.

Materials and Preparation

None

Happy Schools Criteria

Relationships

Teamwork

Security

Lesson Steps

Step 1: Teachers ask students to recall a time when someone made fun of them, pushed them around, insulted them, called them by an insulting name or excluded them in some way that felt demeaning.

Step 2: Students take time to reflect in silence.

Step 3: Teachers may share their own personal experience, modelling appropriate responses and vocabulary.

Step 4: Students share their experiences of being mistreated through storytelling or by writing their ideas in a journal. The teacher asks students to volunteer to share their incident.

Step 5: The teacher guides a class discussion with questions including:

- Who played what role?
- How did these roles impact those involved?
- How did this incident make the victimized person feel?
- Discuss what empathy is in the context of the incident and how it can be constructive.
- How might things have turned out if someone had intervened?
- Whose responsibility was it to intervene?

Step 6: Students engage in a role play in cooperative learning groups. They create simple and short role plays featuring an act of name-calling, bullying or intolerance, such as excluding someone from a group, putting someone down, or telling a racist, sexist or homophobic joke. Set the ground rules, such as no inappropriate language allowed.

Step 7: The teacher provides students with immediate constructive feedback while role-playing, and gives them an opportunity to share their feelings afterward. Students are encouraged to share what they wrote in their journals with their parents or families.

⊘ Teacher Guidance

As the teacher, your modelling and sharing of personal experiences has many benefits for your students. It humanizes the teacher and makes your students feel safe to talk about their own experiences. As an authority figure, by sharing your experience you universalize it for your students.

Some students may be reluctant to share humiliating incidents in the presence of their peers or teacher. Journal writing is an option for students to organize their thoughts and come to terms with them before sharing with the teacher or class.

Students might answer differently when working alone and when being interviewed. This can be raised, encouraging students to share the reasons for this as part of a class discussion.

Remember to set ground rules for the role play, such as no inappropriate language allowed.

Remind students of the seriousness of the role play, not to take the re-enactment lightly, but also remember it is a re-enactment for learning purposes.

Source: UNESCO (2016b)

3. Connections, Roles and Identity

🔍 Summary

Students work individually on paper or read a short story about connections and roles, then discuss as a group.

🏳 Objectives

Help students examine their connections to others, and critically assess their role within relationships.

⊘ Learning outcomes

- Students begin to understand happiness and well-being as emotions that are both personal and connected to others.
- Students are able to map their connections visually, and are more aware of the meaning of positive relationships and collaboration.
- Students have strengthened awareness of their shared social reality with others.

⬦ Subjects it can be applied in:

History and Social Studies: this lesson can be taught as part of wider discussions on relevant concepts such as democratic citizenship, human rights and community participation.

Language and Literature: this lesson can be used to observe how language is used in different relationships through formality, meaning and grammatical patterns.

Civics and Moral Education: this lesson can be used for discussion on how to connect and contribute to the local community.

📦 Materials and Preparation

- Board or flip chart and markers
- Connections Story (to be selected from the lesson steps)

Happy Schools Criteria

💚 **Relationships**

👪 **Values/ Practices**

🧩 **Class Environment**

Lesson Steps

Step 1: Teachers distribute paper and invites students to reflect.

Step 2: Teachers guide students in understanding Connections, Roles and Identity with the following prompts:

- Describe yourself using three key words and pictures.
- Note down three groups that you are strongly connected to,
- Explain your role in these groups (e.g. family, sports team)
- Explain which emotions tie you to these groups (e.g. love, fun, trust)

Step 3: Teachers lead a class discussion and create a mind map of 'connections' or 'roles'.

Step 4: Teachers select a story or article highlighting connections or roles. It is best if these stories are drawn from the local context, but teachers may also use widely known 'classics' such as:

- Shel Silverstein (The Giving Tree)
- Aesop's Fables (The Belly and the Members)
- White Wing's Escape (India)

Step 5: Teachers lead a class discussion with the following prompts:

- How are connections, roles and identities related?
- How to improve connections and better fulfill our roles?

Teacher Guidance

Teachers may wish to assign this exercise as homework, to allow more time for sharing and discussion during class time.

Encourage students to see the way that emotions and responsibilities combine to create the connections that bind communities .

A mind map is simply a visual representation of various words or phrases connected to one central idea.

For older students, stories drawn from the local news, sports or music may be more appropriate and engaging.

Teachers may wish to focus the concluding discussion more on connections and roles within the school itself, highlighting smaller communities within their given school, thus making the message more concrete.

Source: UNESCO (2016b)

4. Courtesy Campaign

🔍 Summary

Students work individually then share and collectively discuss ways to improve, and develop a Courtesy Campaign plan for the classroom or school.

🏹 Objectives

Help students reflect on how they interact with others in the class or school, then develop ways of improving general 'courtesy'.

⊘ Learning outcomes

- Students become aware of the ways that everyday interactions, languages and gestures form *the culture of the classroom* both convey and maintain positive relations.
- Students learn how to care for social relations at classroom and school level.

⬦ Subjects it can be applied in:

Language and Literature: this lesson can explore different vocabulary and phrases to convey courtesy and positive connections.

History and Social Sciences: this lesson can be used when approaching agreements and disagreements in historical events or social themes in debates and discussions.

⬡ Materials and Preparation

- Paper
- Board or flip chart and markers

Happy Schools Criteria

Values/ Practices

Class Environment

School Management
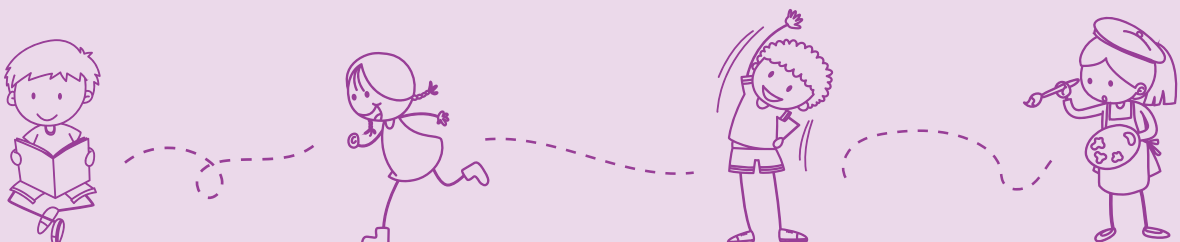
Lesson Steps

Step 1: Teachers distribute paper and instruct students to reflect individually or to share as part of a class discussion.

Step 2: The teacher leads a class discussion highlighting how language creates relationships based on the following prompts:

- How are you connected to others through language?
- What different forms of language exist? (honorific, formal, informal)
- What specific words or phrases are used to convey positive connections?
- What sort of language is displayed around classrooms or schools? (rules? information? encouragement? logical? emotional?)

Step 3: Teachers lead an activity to design a Courtesy Campaign. Students are asked to work in groups to come up with various ways to improve classroom 'Courtesy'. Utilizing the worksheet, they may think of ways to improve the following:

- Morning Greetings
- Conveying respect in relations
- Showing gratitude
- Politely showing agreement and disagreement
- Departing class or school
- Messages around the classroom.

Step 4: Teachers can choose to model various behaviours (both positive and negative), through role play or online videos, asking students how they feel with each example presented.

Step 5: Teachers wrap up the lessons, selecting various parts of the different presentations, and providing an overview of the Courtesy Campaign, asking students how and when they will implement it.

Teacher Guidance

Different cultures have very different notions of courtesy naturally built into their language and customs, so this activity may not need to be adapted in different cultures.

Encourage students to see how ways of speaking and forms of 'courtesy' relate to happiness in the classroom or school.

Teachers can give examples of how courtesy is carried out in schools in different countries. For example, in Japan students bow to their teachers, while in Thailand students may put their palms together in a traditional wai when greeting the teacher.

Teachers can model various interactions discussed using principles of positive discipline by asking rather than telling to convey the message to their students.

Teachers may want to create an incentive system, for instance through awarding stars or points when students apply the Courtesy Campaign in their daily classroom or school interactions.
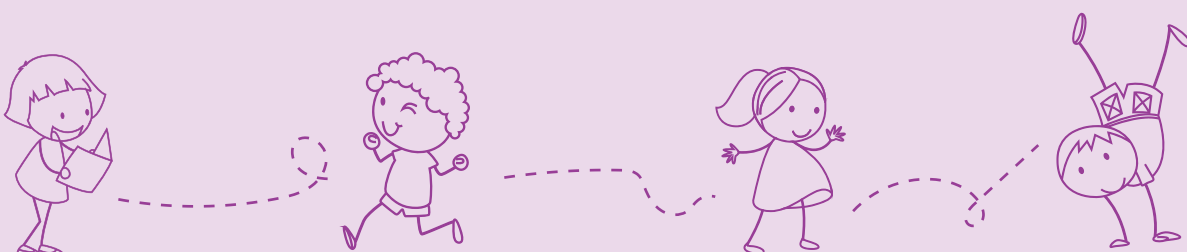
5. Gifts From the Heart

🔍 Summary

Teachers select students to come to the front of the class, and classmates take turns to praise the student for their contribution.

✎ Objectives

Develops students' ability to recognize the positive sides of each member of their class and develop vocabulary to express praise and gratitude.

⊘ Learning outcomes

- Students learn to model positive group interactions, particularly those focused on individuals.
- Students develop social awareness, especially in elementary grades when students begin to tease each other.

⊘ Subjects it can be applied in:

Language and Literature: this lesson can be linked to expressiveness in language and how gratitude is expressed in great literary works, learners can also be encouraged to explore new vocabulary while describing their gifts.

Civics and Moral Education: this lesson can be used to explore 'Gifts from the Heart' from a wider range of civic actors from parents, teachers, community and national figures.

▱ Materials and Preparation

- Heart-shaped sticky notes, preferably in bright colours.
- Designated wall space where names of students and sticky notes can be displayed.

Happy Schools Criteria

🙌 **Values/Practices**

🏆 **Recognition**

🧑‍🤝‍🧑 **Teamwork**
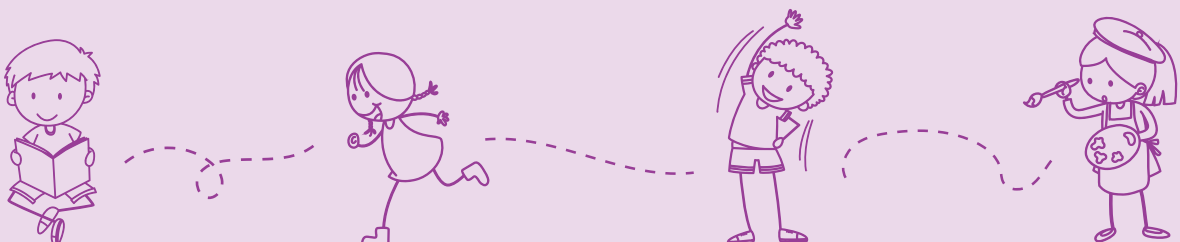
⬚ Lesson Steps

Step 1: Teacher asks students to reflect on what they learned or did in that day's class or in a larger activity such as a sports festival, and to focus on who played an important role.

Step 2: Teacher calls one or two students to the front of the class, then asks the other students to offer them 'Gifts from the Heart', which may include feedback on:

- What that student did well on that day
- How the task would not have been possible without that student
- Ways that students helped others in class

Step 3: At the end of each 'Gift', the students give a round of applause for the student, and the teacher summarizes the comment on the heart-shaped note, and places the sticky note next to the child's name.

Step 4: Teachers reinforce and model the positive comments that have been offered.

⊘ Teacher Guidance

This activity can be done in the last 5–10 minutes of a class or school day to end positively.

Encourage students to think deeply and add a new comment, rather than repeat the same ones.

If students have a difficult time, the teacher can prompt them by recalling key points in the lesson that day.

An additional activity can involve asking students what they learned that day from their classmates. This emphasizes that learning comes from other classmates, and is a form of reinforcing the strengths of each student.

This activity may be best used in a class where identifying one' own strengths is less prevalent, instead shifting to identifying one's strengths through others.

Teacher modelling will help increase the vocabulary of younger children with regard to praise, and may be linked to other lessons such as the Courtesy Campaign.

Source: Kiyose Elementary School (Nd.)
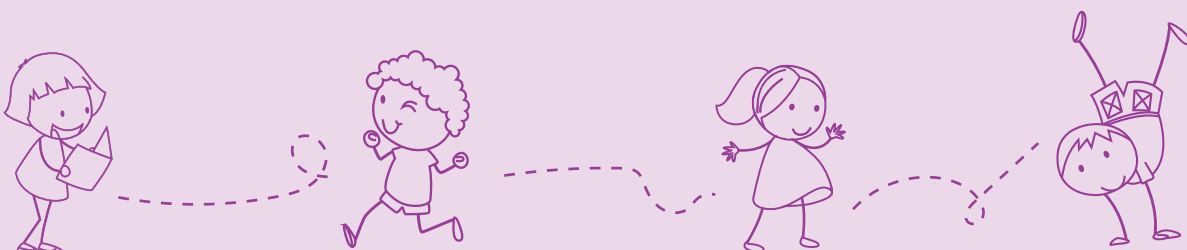
6. Mystery Friend

🔍 Summary

Played in the form of a game spanning an entire day or week, students try to perform random acts of kindness without being detected by that person, or by other classmates.

🏳 Objectives

Students develop sensitivity and ideas for random acts of kindness, learning to associate positive well-being with kindness towards others.

⊘ Learning outcomes

- Students not only develop awareness of relationships, but practice how to act and adapt their behaviours to improve them.
- Students develop greater sensitivity to the unspoken needs and wants of other members of the class.
- Students build greater everyday social awareness.

⬦ Subjects it can be applied in:

History and Social Sciences: this lesson can be used as a practical exercise linking to historical events and social themes which have been impacted by solidarity, empathy and social awareness.

Moral and Civic Education: this lesson can be used to relate to concepts such as empathy, tolerance and altruism.

⬡ Materials and Preparation

- Hat or Bag
- Slips of Paper (with the names of each student)

Happy Schools Criteria

♡ **Relationships**

🏆 **Recognition**

🔤 **Class Environment**
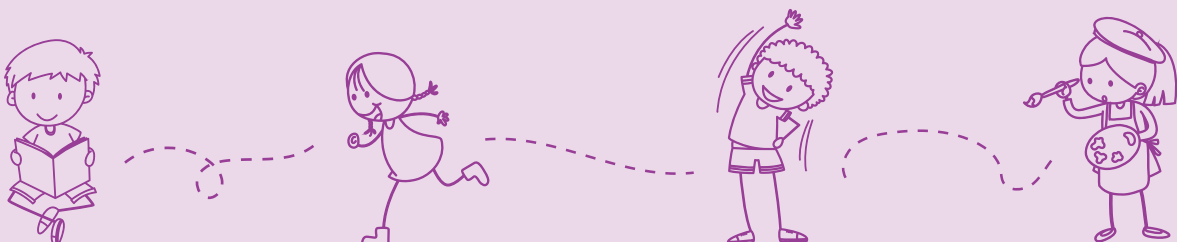
🔲 Lesson Steps

Step 1: At the beginning of the day, students select a piece of paper from a hat, keeping it completely secret from everyone. Every piece of paper has the name of another student in class on it who will become the recipient of a 'random act of kindness'.

Step 2: Teachers explain to students that at the end of that day (or week), they will try to guess their 'Mystery Friend'.

Step 3: Teachers may wish to help students understand 'random acts of kindness', and give several examples. Teachers ensure students have various opportunities to try to reach their Mystery Friend, for instance by allowing some extra free time inside or outside the classroom that day, or by giving students many chances to interact. Teachers may also remind the students from time to time during the day (or week) that they should find ways to show kindness to their Mystery Friend.

Step 4: Each student is asked if they experienced a 'random act of kindness' and who they think their 'Mystery Friend' might be.

- Teachers may want to highlight or vote on the best strategy used.
- Teachers may wish to close with 'real world' examples, as described in local media sources, their own ideas, or books such as Random Acts of Kindness: 365 Ways to Make the World a Nicer Place (Wallace, 2004).

🧭 Teacher Guidance

This lesson can be easily integrated with the lesson 'Morning Meeting' as it takes very little time.

As students do virtually the whole activity on their own, there is very little for the teacher to do which makes the activity suitable for virtually any subject or school day.

This game can be made a regular part of school life, by creating a Random Acts of Kindness Day each month. This allows students to think of new strategies in advance.

Teachers may also want to show students videos found online (for instance via YouTube) that show various compilations of random acts of kindness.

Teachers can also introduce inspirational quotes in their language and classroom culture, for example: 'No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.' (Aesop)

Source: O'Brien (2010) and Wallace (2004)
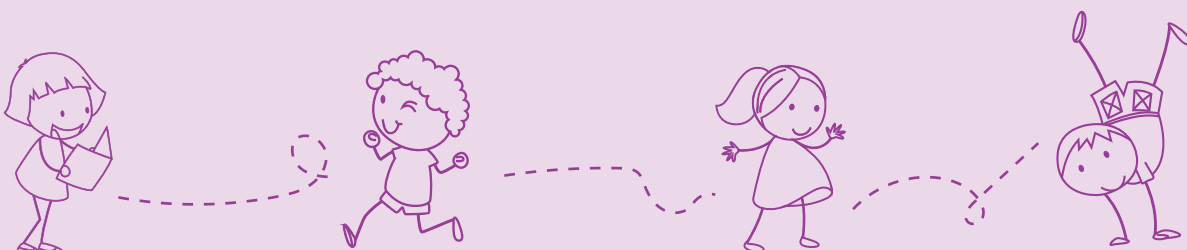
7. Class Container of Worries

🔍 Summary

Students, led by the teacher, share their worries and fears, and know that the adult they trust holds their worries.

🏁 Objectives

Helps students identify things that are troubling them, while also encouraging and providing them with tools to feel better by building community and trust.

⊙ Learning outcomes

- Students learn to move beyond the focus on positive emotions and focus on building long-term happiness.
- Students find a safe social space to share and process negative emotions such as their fears and worries.

📖 Subjects it can be applied in:

Language and Literature: learners can contribute to the 'class container of worries' using new language and vocabulary to describe their emotions, teachers can also draw quotes and proverbs from literary works to help learners identify and express their worries.

📦 Materials and Preparation

- Pens and Pencils
- Container (small box or bag), with the label 'Class Worry Container'

Happy Schools Criteria

🏆 **Recognition**

🧘 **Mental Conditions**

🧒 **Security**

⛏ Lesson Steps

Step 1: Teachers begin a discussion about the importance of sharing fears and worries with others. They may start by giving an example of a less severe worry, such as being late for school and ask the class how they would solve the problem (e.g. waking up earlier).

Step 2: Teachers distribute paper to each student, then instruct students to draw the problem or worry on one side of the paper, and the solution on the other side.

Step 3: Before each student puts their worry inside the container, they discuss their worries and solutions as a group. The teacher explains that some worries are bigger than others and are not easily solved, but the container can take the worry away from you and do the worrying for you.

Step 4: Teachers take the container and as students put the paper with the worry inside the container, they explain that the worry and solution is now going to be kept safe inside the Class Worry Container. The class decide together where in the learning environment to keep the Class Worry Container for safekeeping.

Step 5: Teachers conclude the class, emphasizing it is normal to have negative and difficult thoughts, feelings and emotions. The most important is to be able to express them and think of solutions to feel better. Your worries and solutions are being heard and are being kept safe by an adult.

⊘ Teacher Guidance

Teachers may wish to show the students the Class Worry Container at the outset of the discussion to generate interest, using a container that can be closed and kept permanently in the learning environment to be returned on a weekly basis.

Keep a stock of pieces of paper cut-out in the right size just large enough for the children to have space to draw or write their worries along with pencils and pens ready to use.

Do not force students to tell their worries to the rest of the class. If they prefer, they can simply draw their worries and solutions and put them in the container.

 Let them know that every week they can add a worry/solution to the class container – or whenever needed – as some might have urgent worries that arise. The children can also choose to take past worries out of the container.

Source: UNICEF (2013)
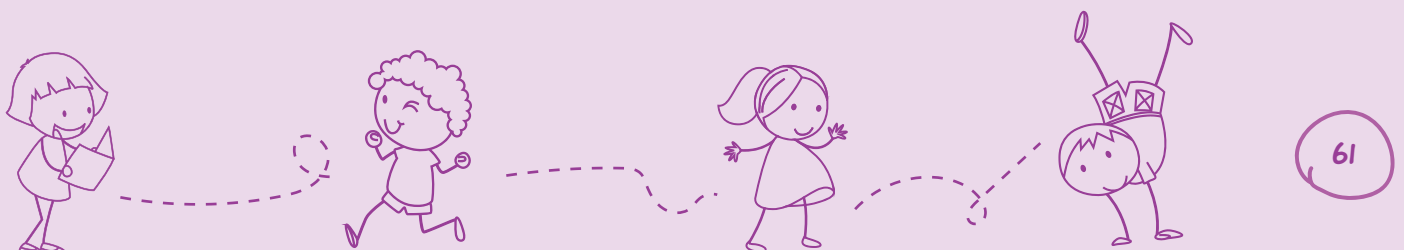
8. Empathy Bingo

🔍 Summary

Students learn what empathy is, practice empathy, then listen to conversations and look for empathy.

◁ Objectives

Students learn the concept of empathy as something different from kindness, and learn to understand how conversations can be empathetic.

⊘ Learning outcomes

- Students learn to differentiate empathy from kindness as something requiring much more listening and flexibility in thinking.
- Learners cultivate social skills of empathy and compassion.

◇ Subjects it can be applied in:

Language and Literature: this lesson can be used to debate the differences between empathy, sympathy, kindness and compassion, as well as experimenting with rewriting bingo dialogues to explore new words and emotional vocabulary.

▱ Materials and Preparation

- Video Links (if available)
- Empathy Bingo exercise

Happy Schools Criteria

♡ **Relationships**

👫 **Teamwork**

📲 **Learning Approach**

⊐ Lesson Steps

Step 1: Write 'Empathy' on the board (or an equivalent word in the local language), then ask students if they know the difference between empathy and kindness. Ask them to give examples.

Optional: Play a short video clip that demonstrates or displays empathy, for example this well-known children's show discussion.
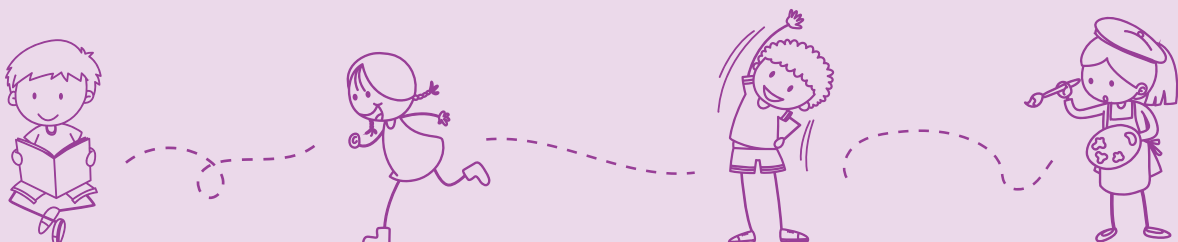
Step 2: Teachers explain the concept of 'Empathy' utilizing various quotes, examples, video clips or stories, asking students to suggest their own examples.

Teacher then moves to the 'Empathy Bingo' exercise:

- Using the 12-square handout, students fill out their sheets
- Facilitator and co-facilitator reads out the As and Bs
- Students fill out their sheet, maybe asking questions

This exercise can be modified in various ways by adjusting the language to the child's level and life stage, pulling examples from video clips, or simply having students talk about a real issue then listen for instances of each of these responses.

Step 3: Class Discussions based on the following prompts:

- What are various expressions to convey empathy?
- What is the difference between empathy and kindness.

⌖ Teacher Guidance

The key point to convey about empathy is trying to understand and respond to the feelings of others.

Several children's books related to empathy are available, where the same story is told from different perspectives so students learn to see the same episode in different ways.

Teachers may wish to highlight how not just words but various facial expressions, sounds, and bodily movements also convey empathy.

Teachers may wish to model a wider range of empathetic responses. The Bingo dialogues here are quite simple, but can be made more complex, and focus more on variations of empathy.

There exist many ways to teach empathy, and these may work better than Bingo. The key is to introduce the term and help students see how to use it in the classroom.

Source: Shuford (2008); Ashoka (2020)
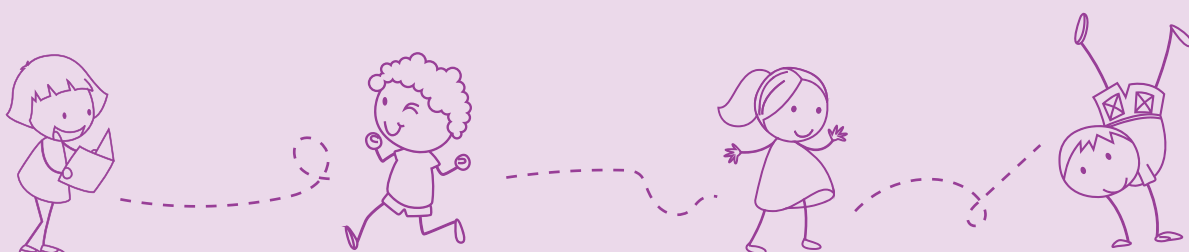
Empathy Bingo Exercise

This exercise was contributed by Sherri Sorro.

Copy the handout or put on newsprint 12 squares with the following words written in the boxes: advising, one-upping, educating, consoling, story-telling, shutting-down, sympathizing, interrogating, explaining, correcting, fixing it, and empathizing. Hand out the handouts (if you are using them) to all participants. Have a co-facilitator read each one of the "A's" below and you respond with the "B." Ask the group to name the type of response you gave.

Fixing it

1. **A.** I'm worried about having enough money to pay my bills this month. **B.** I'll loan you the money

One-upping

2. **A.** Look at my scar from the cycling accident. **B.** That's nothing, you should see the one I have on my knee.

Story-telling

3. **A.** I got caught in traffic for 2 hours in 100 weather and no air conditioning. **B.** That reminds me of the time......

Consoling

4. **A.** I feel so sad that my son was court ordered to a rehab center. **B.** It's not your fault, you are a good parent. You did the best you couldl.

Sympathizing

5. **A.** I just got the lab report back and it was what I most feared. **B.** Oh you poor thing.

Empathy

6. **A.** I have so much to do today. **B.** Are you feeling overwhelmed and wanting support?

Advising

7. **A.** It's scary for me to get up and speak in front of people. **B.** I think you should join Toast Masters.

Interrogating

8. **A.** I've been trying to get this weight off and just feel frustrated. **B.** When did you first start having this problem?

Shutting down

9. **A.** I lost my job. **B.** Cheer up, let's go eat.

Explaining

10. **A.** I'm really upset. You promised to be here at 11 and it is now after midnight. **B.** The reason I'm late is because.....

Correcting

11. **A.** I'm hurt over what you said to mom last night. **B.** That's not what I said.....

Educating

12. **A.** My boyfriend left for college 3,000 miles away. **B.** This is an opportunity for you to learn.....

Empathy Bingo Handout

Advising	One-upping	Educating
Consoling	Story-telling	Shutting down
Sympathizing	Interrogating	Explaining
Correcting	Fixing it	Empathizing
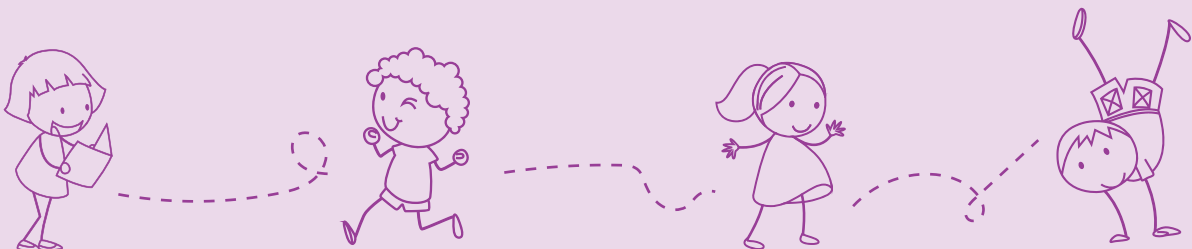
9. Feeling Faces

🔍 Summary

Students work with the Feeling Faces and Wheel of Emotions, developing stories about themselves or co-creating stories together.

🏳 Objectives

Students develop richer emotional vocabulary, develop increased awareness of different types of feelings and recognize those in others through affective storytelling.

⊘ Learning outcomes

- Students learn to identify different emotions – a crucial first step in cultivating happiness.
- Students identify patterns and meaning around happiness based on the local context and culture.
- Students develop awareness of emotional regulation.

⬦ Subjects it can be applied in:

Language and Literature: this lesson can be used to explore vocabulary and phrases to identify, express and release different emotions, while also developing their storytelling skills.

⬡ Materials and Preparation

- Feeling Faces Handout (Basic, Advanced)
- Feelings Wheel Handout (Basic, Advanced)
- Various faces of the most common emojis

Happy Schools Criteria

Learning Approach

Learners

Mental Conditions

Emojis

Feeling Faces Handout

Feelings Wheel Handout

⬚ Lesson Steps

Step 1: Teachers introduce the Feeling Faces and Feelings Wheel Handouts. The class discusses the use and role of emojis in students' life.

Optional: Teachers may wish to develop a locally adapted version of these handouts by asking students to come up with faces.

Step 2:

<u>**For Younger Students:**</u> Using the basic version of the Feeling Faces and Feelings Wheel Handouts, teachers ask students to explain how they feel. They then develop a story about themselves to describe how they felt for different feelings.

<u>**For Older Students:**</u> Using the advanced versions of the Feeling Faces and Feelings Wheel Handouts, students interview their peers, asking why and when they feel a certain way. The focus should be on affective (emotional) experiences.

Step 3: Teachers lead a class discussion on the differences between different sorts of emotions and the emojis that students tend to use the most online.

⊘ Teacher Guidance

Shorter versions of this activity can be used at the beginning or end of each school day, to refocus students' attention on emotions after content classes.

As students' emotional vocabulary varies with age, teachers can select the basic or advanced version for the handouts as necessary.

Another way to create an adapted local version of the handouts is to take common emojis from phones or social media, then ask the students to think of words connected to them.

Class discussion may end by asking students differences between words like 'Happy' and 'Excited', or by thinking up ways to boost happiness.

Source: Oliver (2018)
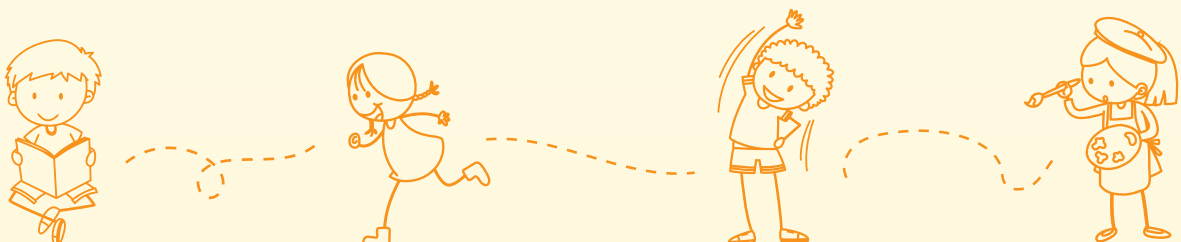
10. Emotions Survey

Happy Schools Criteria

Learners

Mental Conditions

Class Environment

Summary

Students fill out an Emotions Survey worksheet and compare the results with other students before, and then discuss as a group.

Objectives

To develop students' emotional vocabulary, raise awareness of different types of feelings, and help students interact with other students by opening up a class discussion on happiness.

Learning outcomes

- Students learn to ground their emotional experiences based on what happens in school, and in school relationships.
- Students, particularly in younger grades, learn to recognize and distinguish their emotions.
- Teachers are able to better understand students' feelings and emotions through the survey results.

Subjects it can be applied in:

Science and Mathematics: this lesson can be applied in psychology or in scientific methods where learners can learn how scientists measure emotions and research on the brain.

The Arts: this lesson can be used to sketch, draw or paint different emotions, identify emotions based on different types of music, or act our different scenarios.

Materials and Preparation

- Emotions Survey Worksheet
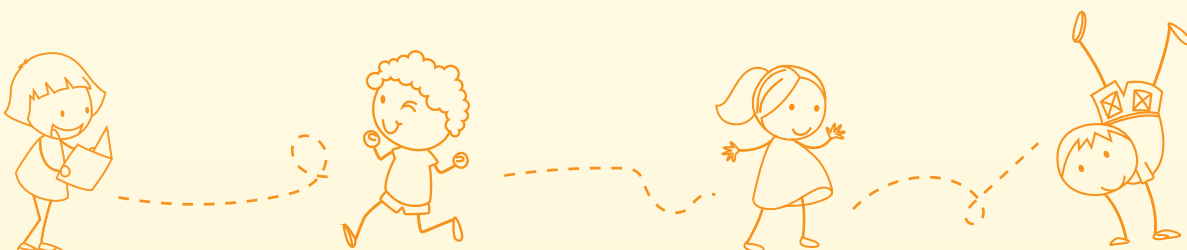
⬚ Lesson Steps

Step 1: Teachers brief the class on the exercise, highlighting a 'Moment of Happiness', and distribute the worksheet to be completed.

Step 2: Teachers collect completed worksheets and give each student a new worksheet, instructing them to use it to interview a classmate.

Step 3: Teachers compile the answers on a board or large paper and asks students questions based on the following prompts:

- Which words or phrases might students say to classmates who appear 'happy' or 'sad' or 'angry', etc.
- Discuss what sorts of ways to deal with various emotions, linking this discussion to later mindfulness lessons.

Step 4: Teachers lead a class discussion based on the following prompts:

- Did everyone understand the terms in the same way?
- Why do different students feel differently?
- Why is it important to know how one usually feels?
- Is it best to control emotions or share them in a group?

⊗ Teacher Guidance

This exercise can be effective after major emotional events in the class, helping to bring out different feelings.

Students' emotional vocabulary varies with age, and teachers may adjust the worksheet wording to be age appropriate.

Some students might answer differently when working alone and when being interviewed. The reasons for this can form part of the class discussion.

Help make students aware of what to say when they sense different emotions in their classmates (see the lesson 'Empathy Bingo').

Class discussion may end by asking students differences between words like 'Happy' and 'Excited', or by thinking up ways to boost happiness.

Source: Elias and Arnold (2006)
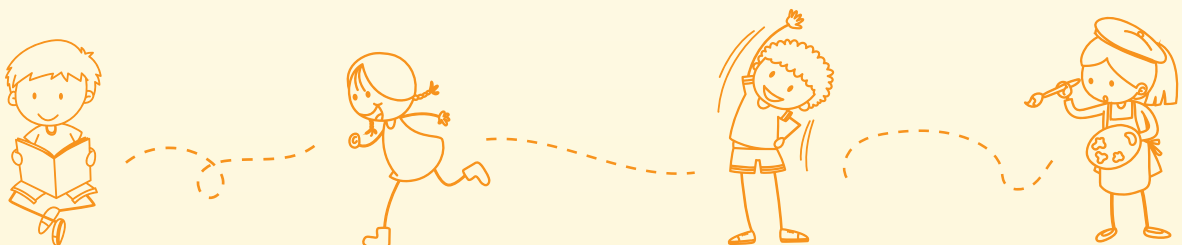
Emotions Survey

Complete the following statements, thinking about your school life:

1. I am most happy at school when _____
_____

2. Other students hurt my feelings most by _____
_____

3. In school, I do my best when _____
_____

4. I get angry at school when _____
_____

5. In school, I feel the most excited when _____
_____

6. I feel close to people in class when _____
_____

7. I feel ashamed at school when _____
_____

8. I most rely on other people in class when _____
_____

9. I feel sad at school when _____
_____

10. I feel most relaxed or calm at school during _____
_____

10

Emotions Survey
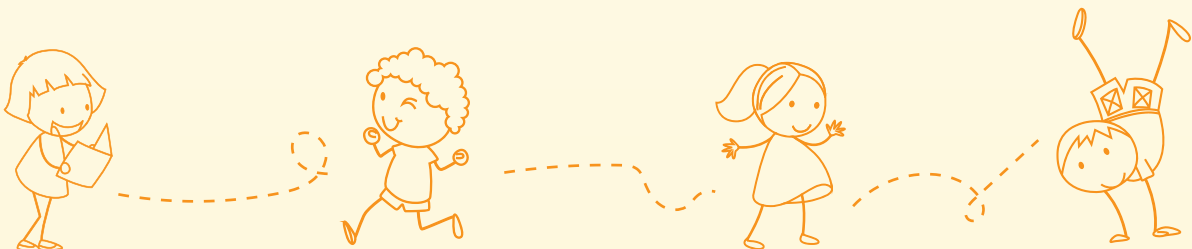
11. Daily Mood Chart

🔍 Summary

Students fill out the Daily Mood Chart, either on a specific day or once each day during the week.

🏳 Objectives

To help students link emotions and happiness to different times of the day, and link in-school emotion to out-of-school emotions.

⊘ Learning outcomes

- Students become personally aware of fluctuations in their daily mood.
- Teachers are able to use the Daily Mood Chart results to better understand how students' feelings change through the day or week.

📖 Subjects it can be applied in:

Health and Physical Education: this lesson can help students monitor their mental health by recording their moods, while also understanding how these can change at different times based on different factors (e.g. external situations, diet, exercise etc.).

📦 Materials and Preparation

- Daily Mood Chart worksheet

Happy Schools Criteria
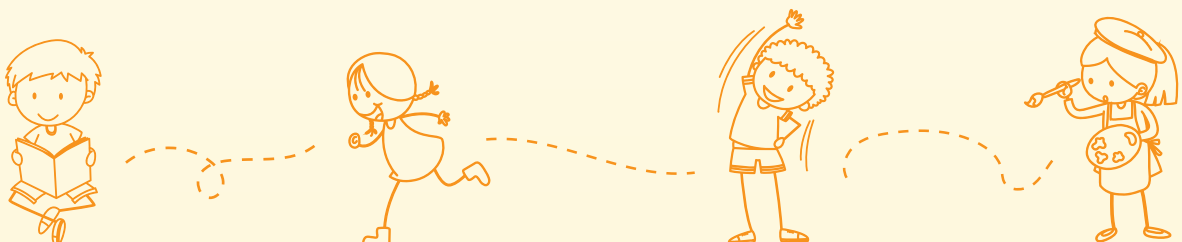
Workload

Learners

Mental Conditions

⊡ Lesson Steps

Step 1: Teachers distribute the worksheet and instruct students to complete by the next day or next week.

Step 2: Teachers brief students on how moods can change during different times of the day and facilitate both small group and whole-class discussions.

Small Group Discussion:
- What were similarities and differences within the group?
- Why did students answer in that way? Was it linked to a particular event?
- What was the happiest time? What was the least happy?

Whole-Class Discussion:
- Is anyone in the class always happy? Is anyone always unhappy?
- What were the similarities and differences between groups?
- Were there any common patterns?
- What were specific reasons for each mood?
- When were the strongest emotions felt?

Step 3: As an option, teachers may want to connect this exercise to journal writing, allowing students to focus on describing particular times of day (e.g. morning, late afternoon) and feelings (e.g. excitement or anxiety).

Step 4: Teachers lead a wrap-up discussion based on the following prompts:

- What is the relationship between 'happy' states and other moods?
- What can be done to shift more times/subjects to 'happy' states?

⊛ Teacher Guidance

Words discussed in the lesson 'Feeling Faces' can be used for this activity, allowing teachers to adjust the vocabulary according to age and the general feeling of the class.

If similarities exist on certain days, ask students why they think that is the case.

The teacher may wish to link this discussion to the Mood Meter, if they have conducted it for the class.

If teachers have any data about when students are most likely to be misbehave during the school day (e.g. directly after a break), they may introduce that at this time, initiating a class discussion.

Depending on the level of the students, the wrap-up class discussion might be time to introduce different forms of happiness, such as hedonistic and eudemonic happiness as explored in the Happy Schools Guide, or concepts such as balance and interdependence.

Source: TherapistAid (2013)
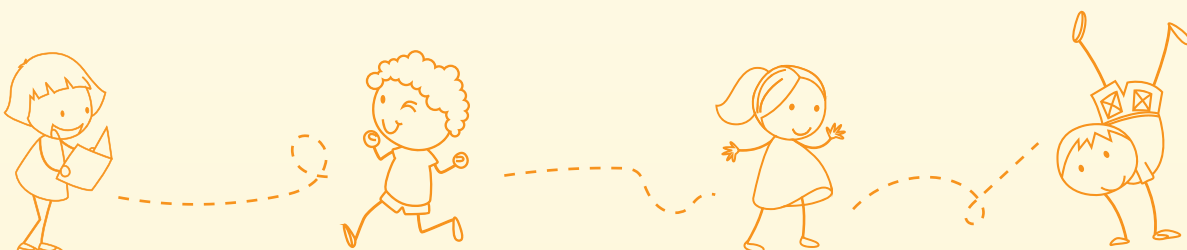
12. Anger Map

Summary

Students fill out the Anger Map and share with classmates; teachers draw attention to links between emotion and the body.

Objectives

To develop student awareness of how emotions are reflected and expressed in facial expressions, body sensations, words and thoughts, and how to regulate their emotions to find ways to respond rather than react when faced with anger.

Learning outcomes

- Students learn to identify anger in verbal and non-verbal ways.
- Students learn how to regulate their emotions through personal awareness to address disruptive emotions such as anger.
- Students learn how to respond (rather than react) when faced with anger.

Subjects it can be applied in:

Health and Physical Education: this lesson can help students identify emotions in their body, while using physical activities to process and release them.

Materials and Preparation

- Anger Map
- Colourful pens

Happy Schools Criteria

Mental Conditions

Values/ Practices

Class Environment
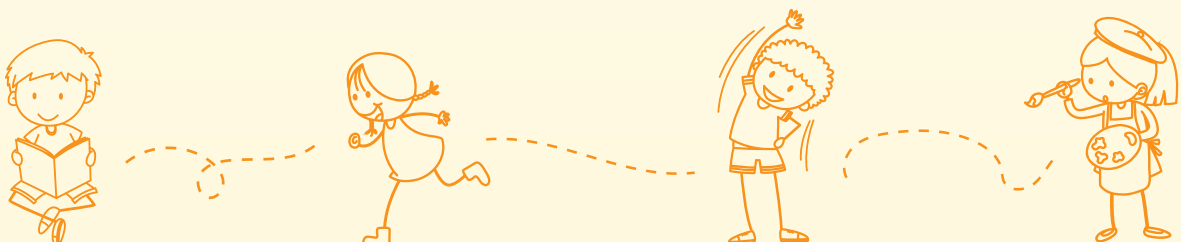
⊡ Lesson Steps

Step 1: Brief the students to think about and share a time, preferably in the last week, when they were very angry. Lead a class discussion to generate various ideas, enriching later self-study.

Step 2: Ask students to complete their worksheets in pairs, focusing on descriptive parts such as faces, behaviours, words and body sensations.

Step 3: Lead a class discussion, focusing on the more difficult questions:

- What could anger help you achieve?
- What have you learned about your anger?
- What helps when you're angry?

Step 4: Teachers may want to share their own experiences with students, or give various coping strategies, focusing on class and school interactions.

Step 5: If the teacher plans to later conduct mindfulness lessons, the teacher can give the students a preview of techniques that could be used.

⊘ Teacher Guidance

Teachers may wish to pick up on responses to the lesson 'Emotions Survey', and use this lesson afterwards. It could also be conducted after the lesson 'Daily Mood Chart'.

Among younger students, the range of answers to the descriptive question will be narrower, so the teacher may wish to do this in pairs or, to expand vocabulary and awareness, in a larger group.

Teaching students that emotions can also achieve positive results (for example, anger at injustice or bullying) is also important, rather than simply asking them to control their emotions.

Teachers may wish to display the Anger Map around the room to remind students during their times of anger.

Teachers can also create maps based on other emotions (whether positive or negative), and then create an

Emotions Wall.
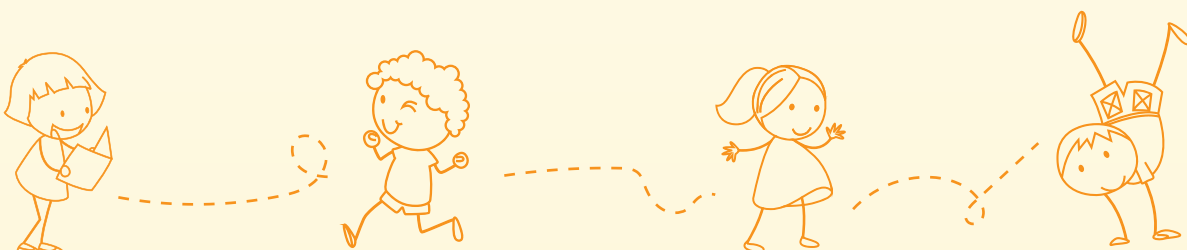
YOUR NAME

ANGER MAP

X

What kind of face do you have when you are angry? ▼
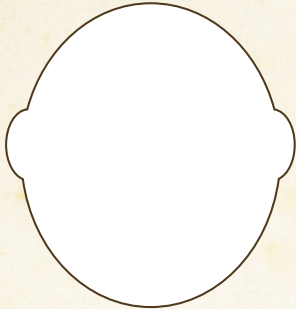
What things do you say? ▼

What happens to your body when you're angry? ▼

How do you behave when you're angry? ▼

Other ways of handling my anger ▶

What could your anger help you to achieve? ▼

Have you learnt anything about your anger? ▼

What helps when you're angry?
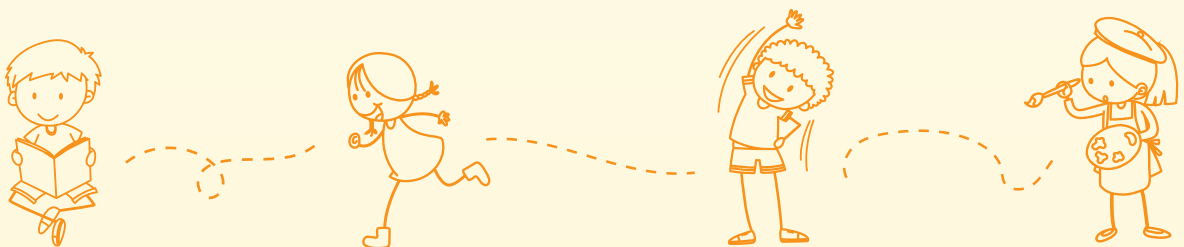
13. Meta-Moment

🔍 Summary

Teachers explain the Meta-Moment concept, then students are asked to imagine or discuss how they might use it.

✎ Objectives

To develop students' ability to recognize, observe, understand, label and express emotion, particularly strong emotions.

⊘ Learning outcomes

- Students learn to observe strong emotions.
- Students learn to counter emotions by imagining a different response.

▱ Subjects it can be applied in:

Science and Mathematics: can be applied in psychology and behavioural studies in studying the human capacity for self-awareness.

▢ Materials and Preparation

- Meta-Moment Images (distributed to class or displayed)

⊿ Lesson Steps

Step 1: Ask students to remember a time when they felt anger or anxiety, and explain that today's lesson helps them deal with those times.

Step 2: Define a 'Meta-Moment' for students by introducing its six steps:

1. *Something happens!* Triggers are something real or imagined that result in emotions based on our appraisals (how we perceive the trigger). The most common trigger emotions are anger and anxiety.

2. *Sense.* When triggered, shifts occur in cognitive responses (thoughts), physiological responses (body) and behavioural responses (facial expressions, body language, vocal intonations and actions). Students might recall the Anger Map exercise here.
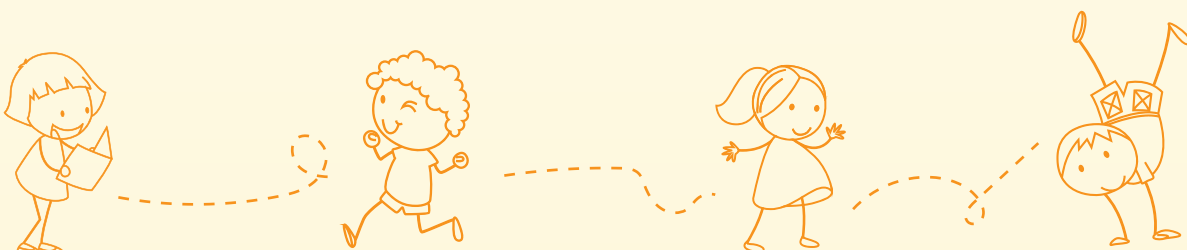
3. *Stop.* It is important to stop and to breathe to decrease our physiological response and to gain control over our reactions. Practice taking three deep breaths through the nose and using a positive 'mantra' – a word or phrase that is repeated in order to focus and release the mind.

4. *See Your Best Self.* Channeling the best self is a unique and critical step of the Meta-Moment. The best self often differs depending on the role (educator, parent or friend). The three components of the best self are:

   1) Ideal Self: how you want to be based on your values?
   2) Reputation: how you want others to view you?
   3) Outcome: how you would like the situation to turn out?

   Ask students: what are the characteristics of your best self as an educator (form a list of 5–10 adjectives)? What do those characteristics look like (in terms of behaviours)?

5. *Strategize.* Once we've activated our best self, we need to choose a strategy that aligns. Positive reappraisal and self-talk are two helpful strategies.

6. *Succeed!* The last step of the Meta-Moment is the successful execution of your strategy and the aligning of your behaviour (the way you respond to the trigger) with your values and best self.

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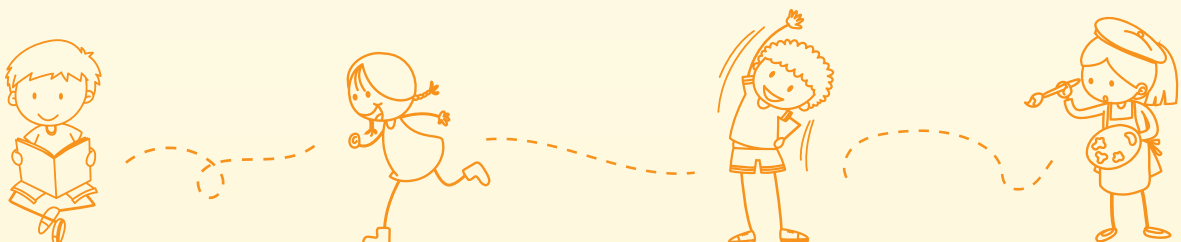
Meta-Moment

Step 3: Teachers lead a class discussion to explain pro-active (before an anticipated trigger) vs. responsive (after a trigger) Meta-Moments (optional).

Step 4: Teachers lead a role play, asking students to volunteer in role-playing a Meta-Moment, recalling a time when they felt anxiety or fear (optional).

Step 5: Final class discussion or reflection.

⊘ Teacher Guidance

Teachers may wish to link this to discussions of bullying or misbehaviour in school, as it focuses on personal self-regulation of disruptive emotional actions.

This exercise may be most effective after major events of anger or anxiety are shared by the class.

Teachers may link this to the lesson 'Anger Map', emphasizing that the focus is on how to deal with anger and other strong emotions.

Teachers may wish to role-play these different stages, or simply explain them visually.

Students can be asked to describe their various responses, thus making the class more interactive, through pictures showing facial expression and body language.

A mantra is a word or phrase, which is repeated over and over, which helps gives the mind a message to focus on while the emotion passes and releases.

Teachers interested in this technique can read more, and explain more specific concepts to the students.

Teachers may wish to use the term 'Take a Meta-Moment' in subsequent classes, to help students recognize when they have been triggered by strong emotion.

Source: Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence (2013)

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Meta-Moment
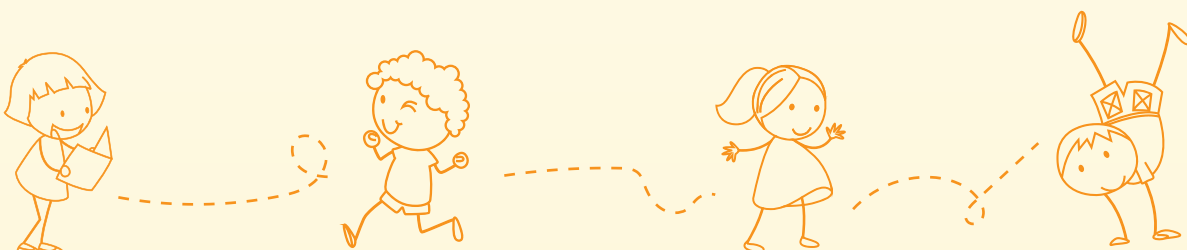
14. Happiest Person I Know

🔍 Summary

Students interview the happiest person they know, then share their results with the class, comparing answers.

✍ Objectives

Students explore the meaning of happiness, and understand what it means to different people, how it comes from different sources and identify a happiness role model.

⊘ Learning outcomes

- Students develop an understanding of happiness from personal self-awareness as well as from people around them who are happy.
- Students learn that happiness means different things to different people, and comes from different sources at both individual and collective levels.

✐ Subjects it can be applied in:

History and Social Studies: this lesson could be adapted to learn about a prominent historical figure or social personality, especially those renowned for their optimism.

▢ Materials and Preparation

- Happiness Interview Worksheet
- Four large pieces of paper

Happy Schools Criteria

♡
Relationships

Learning Approach

Learning Content

⛏ Lesson Steps

Step 1: Teachers prepare the class several days in advance. They tell the students to think about the happiest person they know, someone from home, school or community (possibly setting an age range, so that students ask older people). Students then interview that person using the Happiness Interview Worksheet:

- What contributes most to your experience of happiness?
- What lessons about happiness have you learned during tough times in life?
- What advice do you have for my generation about living a happy life?

Step 2: Once the interviews are complete, teachers prepare four large sheets of paper, each with one of the questions written on top, and the fourth for 'additional questions' or thoughts.

Step 3: Students are asked to come to the front to fill out their answers in bullet point form (shortened). Or teachers can facilitate this as a whole class discussion.

Step 4: Once the charts are complete, the teacher leads a class discussion:

- What are the similarities and differences?
- What are the key lessons from this?
- Do you agree with this Happiness Advice that has been given?
- Is this Happiness Advice different from what is presented in the media?

Step 5: Teachers wrap up the discussion with final reflections: How does this relate to earlier discussions of happiness? Based on this advice, how might students change now?

⊗ Teacher Guidance

Teachers may limit the interviews to people connected to the school. Yet as some schools are small and interview time is limited, it is advisable to seek a wider set of interviewees.

Teachers may add questions to this list that might better reflect the local context (for example locations facing natural disasters, conflict or high poverty levels).

Sheets of paper are preferable to a board, as these papers can later be displayed on the walls of the classroom, to keep students' attention on the lessons.

With the increased availability of cell phones, they can be used to record a 1–2-minute clip of the Happiness Interview, focusing on a very short summary of that person's 'Happiness Advice' which can be shared with the class.

Source: O'Brien (2010)
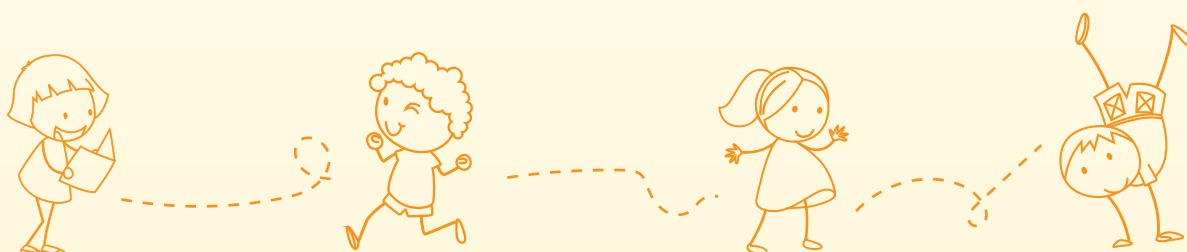
Happiness Interview

Identify the Happiest Person You Know, then ask him or her the following questions. Write down their answers. Once finished, try to summarize their answers, then reflect on what you can do, based on their advice, right now in your own life:

Name of the Person: _____

Personal Information (Age, etc.):_____

1.   What contributes most to your experience of happiness?_____

_____

2.   What lessons about happiness have you learned during tough times in life?_____

_____

3.   What lessons do you have for my generation about living a happy life?_____

_____

Summary of Answers_____

What I can do, based on this advice, right now in my own life to be happy:_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____
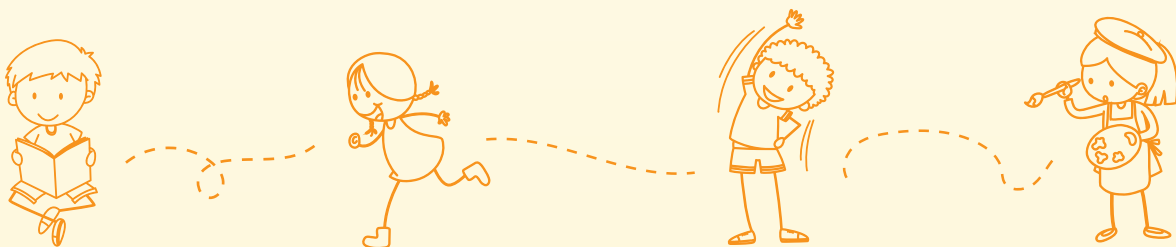
15. From Failure to Growth: Mindset

Happy Schools Criteria

- Learning Content
- Learning Approach
- Mental Conditions

🔍 Summary

Various methods are used including journalling, teacher-led explanations and discussion of quotes of famous people who have growth mindsets.

🏴 Objectives

Students learn to overcome negative ideas about their own abilities and/or their mistakes through developing a Growth Mindset.

⊘ Learning outcomes

- Students focus on what they can learn from their mistakes.
- Students embrace the process of continual learning through a Growth Mindset – shifting them away from fear of failure to belief in their efforts.
- Students learn a new approach to personal self-regulation focusing more on shifting negative self-appraisal to motivation.

◇ Subjects it can be applied in:

Science and Mathematics: this lesson can be used to support students struggling in mathematics through positive and growth-supporting language to overcome limiting beliefs about their capabilities (e.g. switching I am not good at maths for I can learn with effort).

▢ Materials and Preparation

- Learning Zone Image
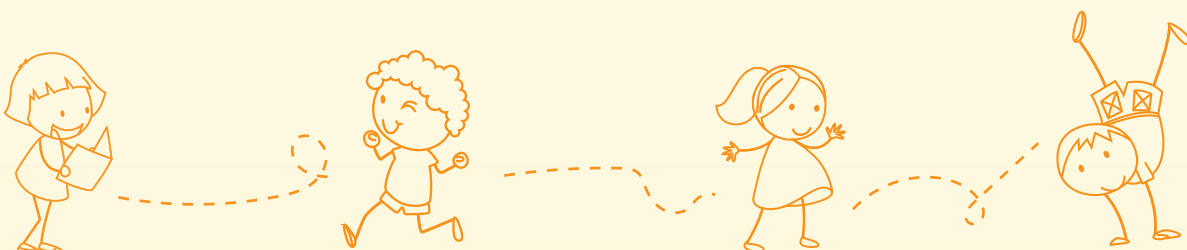
⬚ Lesson Steps

Step 1: Ask students to either journal or discuss the following:

- Recall a time when you failed. What was your response? How did you feel?
- What were the most common responses to failures and disappointments?
- Why do people feel embarrassed, disappointed, or give up when they fail?

Step 2: Teacher asks students to connect what they wrote with Motivational Sayings displayed around the classroom, or on the board.

Step 3: Teacher explains Growth Mindset, using the Learning Zone Image:

Frustration Zone
"I can't do it"

Learning Zone
"I can do it, with a little help"

Comfort Zone
"I can already do it."
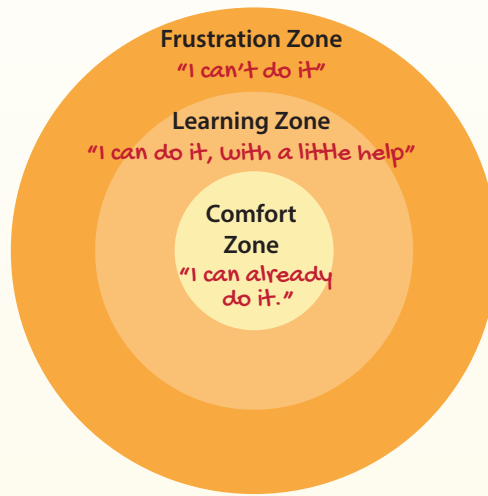
Step 4: Wrap up the class through further journaling, Discussion, Online Videos.

⊘ Teacher Guidance

To make this lesson more concrete, the teacher may want to pick a specific event experienced by the class such as the loss of a sporting event or failure on a test.

Ideally quotes should be selected by someone that students are most familiar with.

Teachers may wish to use this discussion to encourage students to explore concrete ways to shift to a Growth Mindset.

As part of this discussion, teachers may wish to highlight phrases or proverbs in their own traditions linked to mindset.

Source: Oliver (2018); Dweck (2018).
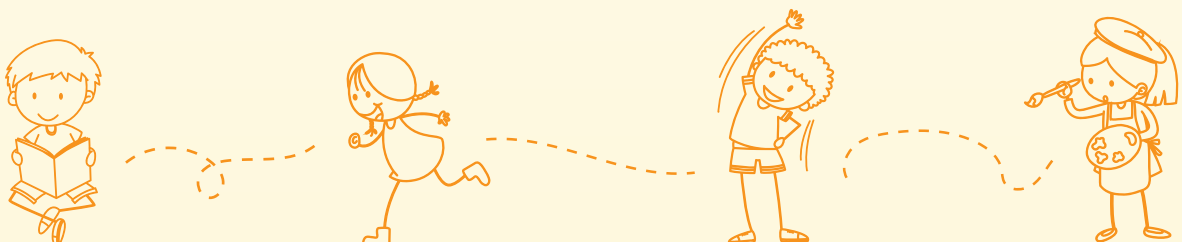
16. Morning Meeting

Happy Schools Criteria

Teamwork

Class Environment

School Vision

🔍 Summary

Teachers devote 10–15 minutes at the outset of the day (or week) to focus attention on happiness-related themes.

✏ Objectives

Students begin their day thinking about their happiness, well-being and emotions, are provided with space for short activities (lessons), and help convey the school vision/plan for Happy Schools.

✓ Learning outcomes

- Students learn to begin their day focused on important themes – happiness, togetherness, mindful awareness.
- Students develop substantially more of these qualities throughout the day.

📖 Subjects it can be applied in:

Civics and Moral Education: this lesson can be incorporated as part of morning routines relating to civics and moral education such as flag-raising and singing of the national anthem to also include individual check-ins with learners on their emotional state.

📦 Materials and Preparation

- Inspirational quotes
- Video clips
- Emoji monitoring board

⌐ Lesson Steps

Step 1: At the beginning of the day, students are asked to sit in a circle. Teachers and students greet one another, focusing on establishing and modelling the behaviours of a Happy School.

Step 2: Teachers introduce short, focused activities, video clips, or discussions focusing the students on happiness or well-being. These meetings can be arranged based on a different sub-theme, for example:

- Compassion and Empathy
- Connections, roles, responsibilities
- Happiness, emotion, self-awareness

Step 3: Teachers can also use materials from previous lessons such as 'Feeling Faces' or 'Daily Mood Chart' to record their moods, or even engage in short mindfulness-based activities.

Step 4: Teachers may wish to introduce a quote as a 'Morning Message' related to the highlighted theme that day, or call attention to previous work the class has done on happiness and well-being.

Step 5: Teachers encourage students to keep that perspective throughout the entire day, providing various cues to bring them back to the theme of that day.

⊘ Teacher Guidance

Although scheduling may be difficult in some cases, it may be possible to use the first 10 minutes of the homeroom or first session to do this.

There are many innovative ways to get students speaking and sharing amongst themselves.

On any regular day students are prepared in the morning with announcements about lunch, schedules or homework, but this meeting refocuses students on their happiness and well-being.

The focus of the meetings is not so much providing new information, but reminding students of what they have learned before about happiness and well-being.

Some of the most effective Morning Meetings are simple: combining a quote with a session of student self-reflection on how they can apply it that day in school.

Numerous ideas for structuring Morning Meetings can be found online, but in the Happy Schools approach these should be focused on happiness and well-being.

Source: Adapted from Edutopia (2015)

17. Mindful Breathing and Attention

Happy Schools Criteria

Mental Conditions

Learning Approach

Health, Food

🔍 Summary

Students sit and focus on building awareness of their breathing and the sound of the bell.

🖋 Objectives

To increase concentration, focus and attention to what is happening in the here and now, to relax and help relieve stress.

✅ Learning outcomes

- Students harness the positive effects of mindfulness practices in education for their mental and physical health.
- Students develop the attention necessary for personal self-awareness and self-regulation.

✉ Subjects it can be applied in:

Science and Mathematics: this lesson can be taught within the context of experimental design and methods in psychology research.

Health and Physical Education: mindfulness and breathing exercises can be taught within the context of mental health and well-being.

📦 Materials and Preparation

- Teachers with experience in breathing meditation
- Chairs, cushions or mats
- Mindfulness bell and inviter (optional)

⌐ Lesson Steps

Step 1: Teachers ask students to sit in a comfortable, relaxed position. They may wish to turn off lights or limit sounds (such as fans and clocks).

Step 2: Teachers ask students to close their eyes and soften their gaze, guiding them through the exercise with the following prompts:

- Become aware of the breath, tell students to observe, not control
- When the mind wanders, bring it back to the breath
- After several minutes have passed, ask students to focus on physical sensations
- Watch the whole length of the in-breath and out-breath
- Place hands on belly and watch rising and falling

Step 3: Teacher invites the mindfulness bell

- Ask the students to listen for as long as possible
- After no sound is heard, take three breaths
- Ask students to gently open their eyes (if closed)

Step 4: Teachers guide reflection with the following questions:

- What happened? How did if feel? Did anything change?
- How easy is it to focus on the breath? Did the mind wander?

⊗ Teacher Guidance

Practices can also be done lying down or standing.

Some students might find it easier to start this activity with their eyes open, teachers should offer this as an option.

Remind students from time to time that when the mind wanders, it is natural, reminding them to gently come back to the breath.

'Inviting' is similar to striking, but by using this word, the teacher is priming students to think in terms of passive awareness of the outside world.

For younger children, one option is to have younger children raise their hands when they can no longer hear the bell.

With practice, students will see more clearly when they are lost in their thinking and when we they are directly aware of their sensations (breath).

Many of these practices began in the Asia-Pacific, and might already be familiar.

Source: Hanh and Weare (2017)

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Mindful Breathing and Attention
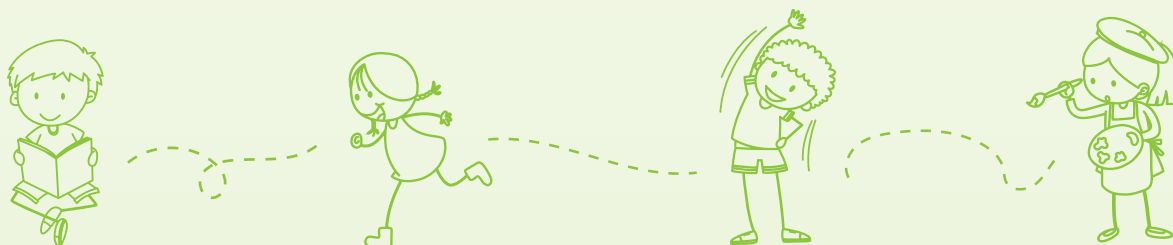
18. Mindful Walking

Happy Schools Criteria

Mental Conditions

Learning Approach

Health, Food

Summary

Students walk mindfully, then reflect individually and as a group.

Objectives

To cultivate awareness of the body and the links between emotions and movement, increase attention, learn to slow down and not rush, and become aware of the wider environment.

Learning outcomes

- Students learn to adapt mindful breathing to active movement.
- Students learn to focus on personal awareness.
- Students learn to use mindful walking within the school environment, such as school assemblies, transitions between classes, or going to and from the bathroom.

Subjects it can be applied in:

The Arts: this lesson could be adapted to other forms of movement than walking, such as dancing and expressive movement.

Health and Physical Education: this lesson offers the opportunity work on the psycho-somatic mind-body connection through mindful movement.

Materials and Preparation

- Teachers with experience in walking meditation
- Mindfulness bell and inviter (optional)

⬚ Lesson Steps

Step 1: Teachers ask students to stand in a circle. Students then step backwards twice to expand the circle so there is sufficient space to walk around without bumping into other students. Teachers may want to turn off lights or limit sounds such as fans and clocks.

Step 2: Teachers begin by recalling the Mindful Breathing Activity, and begin with one sound of the bell. They then ask each student to take three deep breaths after the sound ends.

Step 3: Teachers then instruct students to walk together clockwise, following the person ahead of them. On the in-breath they take a step with left foot, and on the out-breath with the right foot.

Students should walk calmly and peacefully, with their concentration directed at the contact the foot makes with the ground.

When students arrive back to the starting position or hear the bell, teachers instruct them to stop, continue breathing and notice their feelings.

Step 4: Teachers invite the mindfulness bell and ask the students to listen for as long as possible. After no sound is heard, take three breaths. Ask students to gently open the eyes (if closed).

⊘ Teacher Guidance

This lesson should ideally be done after students have experienced the lesson 'Mindful Breathing', so that it will becomes more familiar.

Remind students that the breath and the contact of their feet on the floor are ways to bring back the wandering mind.

Hanh and Weare recommend that students can be instructed to 'walk as if you are kissing the earth with your steps'.

'Inviting' is similar to striking, but by using this word, the teacher is priming students to think in terms of passive awareness of the outside world.

Some teachers may wish to discuss with students what they experienced. They may also link back to previous lessons, asking students what emotions or sensations they experienced.

Source: Hanh and Weare (2017)

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mindful walking

19. Mindful Eating

Happy Schools Criteria

Mental Conditions

Learning Approach

Health, Food

🔍 Summary

Students mindfully eat a piece of fruit and reflect on how the experience is different to how they normally eat.

⬙ Objectives

Help students become mindful of what and how they eat, develop a sense of gratitude about where food comes from.

⊘ Learning outcomes

- Students develop a mindful attitude towards eating.
- Students develop personal awareness around their eating habits.
- Once instructed, this lesson can be integrated into a school day without major disruption simply by asking children to be mindful during lunch or snack periods, and even when drinking water.

⬙ Subjects it can be applied in:

Health and Physical Education: this lesson can be used in teaching nutrition focusing on the way that food is eaten.

⬙ Materials and Preparation

- Mindfulness bell and inviter (optional)
- One tangerine or local fruit per student
- Paper towels and sanitizer to clean hands before and after

⬙ Lesson Steps

Step 1: Teachers should prepare the food, and may want to turn off lights or limit sounds such as fans and clocks.

Step 2: Teachers start by asking students to get in a circle, telling them they will eat together after everyone is mindfully silent.

Step 3: Teachers begin by recalling the lesson 'Mindful Breathing', and begin with one sound of the bell, focusing on breath.

Step 4: Teachers hand out the tangerines or local fruit with the following instructions:

- Focus students' attention on the feel of the fruit in their hands.
- Read the first two lines of the Food Contemplation Guide (see Teacher Guidance)
- Ask students to reflect on what brought the fruit to them

Step 5: Teachers then instruct students to carefully examine the fruit:

- Look as if you have never seen one before (color, shape, etc.)
- Be aware of the smell (how is it experienced in the mouth or nose?)
- Touch it and peel it, and listen to the peeling sound.

Step 6: Teachers ask students to place part of the fruit in their mouth and eat:

- Tell students to not chew or swallow, just to notice the mouth response first.
- Roll fruit around in the mouth, noticing texture, flavor, etc.

Step 7: Eat rest of the fruit, then sit quietly watching the breath.

Step 8: If time allows, class discussion is advisable. Possible reflection questions may include:

- What was the experience at different points in the process?
- Was it different than how we usually eat? How?
- How did it feel to contemplate where the food came from?

⊕ Teacher Guidance

This activity should be done after students have experienced the lessons 'Mindful Breathing' and 'Mindful Walking' to become more familiar with mindfulness.

Hanh and Weare (2017) provide a full-length Food Contemplation guide, which might be modified or adopted for the particular cultural and linguistic context.

The first two lines of the contemplation are: 'This fruit is a gift of the whole universe: earth, sky, rain and sun. We thank all the people who brought this fruit to us especially the farmers and people at the market.'

Once done as a full lesson, this can be integrated into any activity of eating or drinking.

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Source: Hanh and Weare (2017))))

Mindful Eating
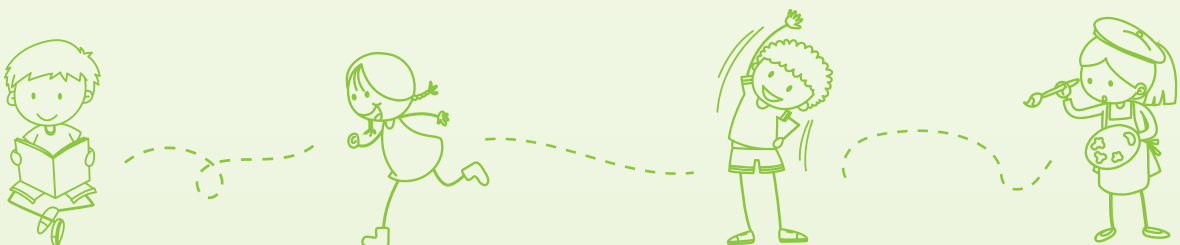
20. Mindful Relaxation

Happy Schools Criteria

Mental Conditions

Learning Approach

Health, Food

🔍 Summary

Students lay down (or are seated), and become aware of their breath and bodies for approximately 10–15 minutes.

✈ Objectives

Students increase calm, and relax their body and minds.

✓ Learning outcomes

- Students learn to decrease stress and anxiety, increase calm and become aware of how their body and minds are connected.
- Students learn to regulate their emotions.

◇ Subjects it can be applied in:

Health and Physical Education: this lesson can be used to work on body awareness and recovery after vigorous exercise.

▱ Materials and Preparation

- Clean floor or mats and blankets
- 'Do Not Disturb' sign for the door
- Teachers with experience in breathing meditation
- Mindfulness bell and inviter (optional)

⊿ Lesson Steps

Step 1: Teachers ask students to lie down on their backs and close their eyes. They may want to turn off lights or limit sounds such as fans and clocks. The teacher then starts with three sounds of the bell.

Step 2: Teachers ask students to begin with an awareness of their breath, and relax into their body. They will guide them to breathe into each part of the body in the following order:

- Whole body,
- Abdomen (rising and falling)
- Eyes
- Mouth
- Shoulders, arms, heart, belly.
- Hips, legs, feet, toes.
- Whole body

Teachers remind students that when the mind wanders, to return to the breath and the body.

Step 3: Let the class know the session will end soon, and that the bell is coming. The teacher then invites (sounds) the mindfulness bell, asking students to listen as long as possible, and gently open their eyes (if closed).

⊘ Teacher Guidance

Teachers give students time to get settled and comfortable.

Students may take longer to get settled if just coming from lunch or recreational breaks.

When speaking, the teacher should allow the space of at least one full in- and out breath, making sure to speak slowly.

With practice, students can learn to both relax and become aware of the alternation between mind wandering and relaxation of the body.

Some teachers may wish to end with either a gentle song or a set of reflection questions such as: How do I feel right now? How much did the mind wander? How different do I feel?

Source: Hanh and Weare (2017)

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Mindful Relaxation

21. Happy Dance

Happy Schools Criteria

Learners

Mental Conditions

Play Spaces

🔍 Summary

Students listen to songs, and working together, create a dance that expresses different emotions.

✒ Objectives

Students understand the relationship between body sensations and external stimulus in creating emotions and happiness.

⊘ Learning outcomes

- Students develop personal awareness based on body sensations.
- Students develop the ability to express themselves through movement, and to overcome shyness in moving in front of their peers.

▱ Subjects it can be applied in:

The Arts: this lesson can be used to allow for learners' individual creative expression.

Health and Physical Education: this lesson can draw attention to the body awareness, and psycho-somatic release of stress and anxiety through movement.

▱ Materials and Preparation

- Clear tables and chairs to make space for students to move around
- Various happiness (or emotion-related) songs
- Colourful scarfs or other props for students to use

⌐ Lesson Steps

Step 1: Teachers play a featured song for the students, for example, 'If You are Happy and You Know It' or 'Happy' by Pharrell Williams, explaining that they will try to dance to the song on the second round.

Step 2: Teachers then play a second round, and ask students to dance, prompting students to focus on which moves make them most happy, and then leading the whole class in performing these moves.

Step 3: Teachers build off this initial dance in various ways through the following prompts:

- Asking students to form small groups and develop a Happy Dance that they perform together (with scarfs or other props if available).
- Ask students, in individuals or pairs, to create dances for other emotions found in songs (teacher may find songs or students may suggest them).
- Have students draw a big happy face on one side of the paper, and big sad face on the other, then play various songs asking students to pick the face they feel from the music.

Step 4: Lead a class discussion on the relationship between music and happiness, or other forms of emotion. Ask students how they use music to change their emotions.

✎ Teacher Guidance

This lesson is most effective if the song is in the local language and well-known. Since different cultures have varying types of children's songs focused on emotion, the teacher is required to customize this lesson as appropriate.

Several well-known songs have been translated to different languages.

Teachers should emphasize the ways that the body, movement and emotions are connected.

As many students love music, they are likely to be good sources for teachers to locate songs that appeal to different emotions and are current.

Once this lesson has been done once, various songs can be played at different points of the day for a quick 'happy moment' for the class to enjoy. Instead of mindfulness which elicits calm, short class breaks filled with a Happy Dance can relieve stress and contribute to learner fun to create a warm classroom environment.

Source: O'Brien (2010)

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Happy Dance

22. Happiest Places and Moments at School

Happy Schools Criteria

Class Environment

Security

Play Spaces

Summary

Students reflect on their happiest places and moments, they then take photos or create drawings, then present it to the class to share why this brought them happiness.

Objectives

Students identify the places or moments where they feel happiest during the school day.

Learning outcomes

- Learners are able to identify the places and moments where they feel their well-being is highest.
- Learners develop both personal and social sensitivity to space and time.

Subjects it can be applied in:

The Arts: this lesson can be used for students to create artwork, drawings or paintings that reflect their happiest places and moments in school.

Moral and Civics Education: this lesson can be applied to explore philosophical concepts around time, space and social environments.

Materials and Preparation

- Happiest Place at School Handout
- Devices to take photos and/or materials for drawing and presentation

⌐ Lesson Steps

Step 1: Prepare the class several days or a week in advance, asking them to take time to reflect on a place or moment which makes them feel the happiest at school.

Step 2: Instruct learners on how to create a 'Happiness Portrait' through photos and drawings, while focusing on this place or moment. They can also write a short essay to describe their feelings in this place or moment. They should be encouraged to include small, specific details including sensations, emotions, behaviours, expressions and interactions.

Step 3: Learners take turns presenting their Happiness Portrait to the class while the teacher pins the happiest 'places' onto a school map, and the happiest 'moments onto a school schedule.

Step 4: Class discussion to share perspectives on the Happiness Portraits presented:

- What are the similarities and differences between the happiest places and moments?
- Were these linked to individual or collective experiences or environments?
- Were these places and moments liked to connection, satisfaction, reward or performance?
- How can these happy places and moments be incorporated into daily school life to maximize their potential to increase learner happiness.

⊘ Teacher Guidance

This activity can be used before the lesson 'A Day at My School' to introduce the idea of emotions based on places, or it can be used after to focus the overall discussion on happiness.

For older students, teachers may want to start by explaining the differences between various aspects of happiness, such as satisfaction, positive affect (lack of negative affect), or calm. They may also want to discuss the distinction between hedonistic and eudemonic views of happiness as explored in the Happy Schools Guide. The idea is to encourage learners to be specific when discussing the general term 'happiness'.

Class discussion is focused on developing a richer sense of happiness among the students, encouraging them to see these different aspects of happiness.

Teachers may want to display these Happiness Portraits in their classrooms or elsewhere in the school to make them part of the wider school environment.

Schools may wish to organize a contest or event to present the Happiness Portraits with the rest of the school community.

The Happiest Place at School handout can be adapted to reflect upon specific moments rather than places.

Happiest Place at School

Over the next week, as you move through school, think about where you are happiest. Think about how you feel when you are there. Try to explain that feeling to your classmates, starting with attaching a photo or drawing a picture of that place.

Attach 1–2 pictures that reveal why you are happy in that place or illustrate this in a drawing.

1. Describe the specific emotions that you feel the most in that place (excitement, calm, pride)? Try to use stronger words than just 'happy'. Describe your emotions, how your body feels, and what you do there, in as much detail as possible.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. Who else is there with you? How do they contribute to or reduce your happiness?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. Is it possible to go to this place more often? Why or why not?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

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Happiest Places and Moments at School

23. A Day at My School

Summary

Students create a photo or picture story, then share it with the class. Students develop a list of activities to boost happiness based on their findings.

Objectives

Students become aware of how various parts of the school produce different emotions within them, and discuss how to improve.

Learning outcomes

- Students learn to develop personal awareness.
- Students identify a range of emotions that are tied to different parts of the school, and how to improve their student experience.

Subjects it can be applied in:

The Arts: this lesson can be used to create a story through drawings, photos or collages.

Health and Physical Education: students can identify different practices and activities beneficial for their physical and mental health in creating their lists.

Materials and Preparation

- Map of the school (including one large map)
- Devices to take photographs and/or materials for drawing.

Happy Schools Criteria

Extracurricular

Learners

Class Environment

⌐ Lesson Steps

Step 1: Teachers brief the class to explain the outlines of the project, focusing students on how they feel in certain parts of the school such as the homeroom, sports ground, hallways, bathroom or lunchroom.

Step 2: Instruct students how to create a photo or picture story (length, number of photos or pictures), focusing on linking certain places to different emotions.

Step 3: Ask students to walk mindfully around the school, watching the various surroundings, and how it makes them feel, selecting one keyword to capture that emotion.

Step 4: Students take turns presenting their photo or picture, while the teacher draws the routes and related emotions on the large map.

Step 5: As an optional writing activity, teachers can ask students to imagine that their school will receive a visitor, and that they must write a letter to introduce the school to them. Students will first think carefully about the atmosphere of the school (routines and activities) and then write a letter advising on where to find the happiest parts of the school and why.

⊘ Teacher Guidance

Begin by encouraging students to focus on the various places in the school as a way to warm-up.

For students with devices, pictures can easily be taken, then uploaded to a computer to be presented. Hand drawn sketches may be more descriptive.

The class discussion seeks to create a 'Geography of School Happiness'. Teachers may ask about areas of the school that none of the students discussed.

The letters can be shared at the classroom level or at the school level. Students from different grades may wish to read letters written by their peers, observing how the school looks to them from other perspectives.

Source: UNESCO (2016b)

24. Happiness Literacy

Summary

Students collect cut-outs from maga-zines or online social-media posts, then analyse whether they promote happiness.

Objectives

Students understand media messages that are helpful or harmful to the happiness and well-being of the community and individuals.

Learning outcomes

- Students are able to learn about happiness and well-being through the media (including social media), and develop awareness of how they are affected by those images.
- Students learn to apply what they learned from earlier lessons through this more cognitive than emotional activity, while focusing on the systemic level.

Subjects it can be applied in:

History and Social Studies: lessons focused on media and communications can apply this lesson to allow learners to analyse what emotions are being communicated through different messages.

Language and Literacy: this lesson can be used to analyse the emotive power of words in different genres of literature.

Civics and Moral Education: this lesson can be applied to analyse definitions of happiness in moral and philosophical texts. It could also be used to introduce main lessons and ground them in current social conditions.

The Arts: this lesson can be used to create collages or drawings to display different views of happiness.

Materials and Preparation

Numerous examples of media that portray happy and unhappy behaviours can be used:

- For older students, prior to the class ask students to collect 2–3 images from media (print or social-media) portraying different views of happiness and unhappiness.
- For younger students, teachers will prepare these materials in advance.
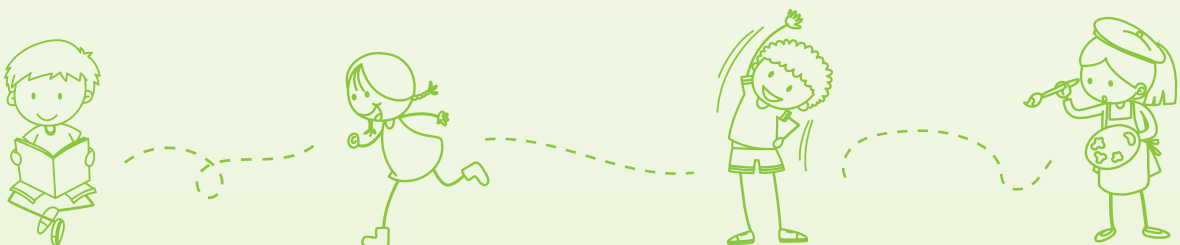
Happy Schools Criteria

Learning Approach

Learners

Learning Content

⊐ Lesson Steps

Step 1: Teachers collect images, mixing them up, then redistributing them to the students, giving them time to reexamine the pieces they received.

Step 2: Teachers then write 'Helpful' or 'Unhelpful' on either side of the board or 'Good for Our Happiness' and 'Not Good for Happiness'.

Step 3: Teachers ask students to come to the front and stick their image under the appropriate heading, possibly asking them to explain.

Step 4: Teachers lead a class discussion on the differences between the two columns, trying to build students' media literacy around happiness.

Step 5: (Optional) Students work in groups to create a media message poster to encourage 'Helpful' Happiness. Here students need to identify a target audience and cultural language.

Step 6: Teachers lead a discussion of Happiness Literacy.

⊘ Teacher Guidance

This lesson is most effective if the media cut-outs are in the local language and well-known. Yet it might be interesting to compare and contrast across cultures, particularly global media to ensure different perspectives.

Social-media posts are easy to find, and are likely to appeal to students more than print media.

Teacher may wish to contrast the results of this lesson, with the findings from the lesson 'Happiest Person I Know', with the images presented in the media selected.

For older learners, teachers may want to focus attention on how pictures convey messages even without words.

Cross-cultural comparisons are often useful in this final stage, as aspects like smiles, communities (individuals

versus families), or body images connected to happiness can be very different.

Source: O'Brien (2010)

25. Empathy Exit Tickets

Summary

Students write out an Empathy Exit Ticket at the end of class, and if time allows discuss them with the rest of the class.

Objectives

Students spend the last few minutes of a lesson reflecting on both what was learned, emotions they felt, and focus on developing empathy.

Learning outcomes

- Students focus their attention on happiness and well-being after an academic class, particularly on the social aspect of recognizing others.
- Teachers gain valuable feedback on empathy at classroom level and how the class performed beyond academic outcomes.

Subjects it can be applied in:

All: This lesson can be applied at the end of any subject.

Materials and Preparation

- Paper slips or Empathy Exit Tickets

Happy Schools Criteria

Values/ Practices

Teamwork

Recognition

⛏ Lesson Steps

Step 1: In the last 5 minutes of a lesson, teachers distribute an Empathy Exit Ticket and ask students to write down one thing they learned from the exercise, one emotion that best describes class, and one person or idea that most helped them.

Step 2: (Optional) Teachers ask them what they could do differently to be 'happier' in the class, or to communicate more effectively.

Step 3: If time allows, a few students can share their Empathy Exit Tickets with the class, asking them if they felt 'happy' or 'unhappy', listening carefully to the reasons, and modelling interactions.

Step 4: Allow the students to leave after they submit their tickets.

⊘ Teacher Guidance

The use of the Empathy Exit Tickets will help embed emotions even with the most academic subjects and puts the final emphasis back on how students experienced the class.

Get creative with the questions. Students can also be asked to write who was helpful to them (if they took part in group activities that day) or identify what aspects of an activity created different emotions.

Consider using the Empathy Exit Tickets to start the next class to provide a continuity of focus on happiness related themes.

The Empathy Exit Tickets consume less time than journalling, and are useful for teachers to obtain a snapshot of how the class is feeling.

Source: Ashoka (2020)

Question	Answer
1. One new thing I learned in today's lesson...	
2. One person or concept that helped me...	
3. The following face best describes this lesson... 🤩 😒 😡 😆 😵 😎 😌	Why?

Conclusion

In the context of COVID-19, it seems vital for policy makers to pay attention to aspects of mental health and well-being among students and learners in schools. According to a report by the United Nations, COVID-19 has aggravated mental health issues in many parts of the world especially in developing countries because it has caused an immense degree of stress and distress.[1] In the same vein, the World Happiness Report (2021) specifies that the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns have negatively affected people's morale and mental health around the world.[2] On the other hand, the children consist of the most vulnerable individuals in terms of mental health challenges and issues.

At the same time, UNESCO highlights the need for "building back better" of education around the world in order to compensate the learnings losses caused by COVID-19.[3] Thus, in the post-COVID context, the need for an agenda of happiness at schools seems more and more crucial in order to achieve the goals of learning loss compensation for learners. Consequently, not only the happiness and wellbeing are intrinsically important for children, but they also enhance the efforts of the governments for building a high-quality education.

As the 2016 report of UNESCO Bangkok office specifies, there seems to be a strong correlation between the quality of education and learners' happiness at schools (UNESCO, 2016a). According to the report, the improvement of the quality of education can further enhance the happiness of the learners, especially in developing countries. In the same vein, UNESCO Bangkok office (UNESCO, 2021a) mentions that the quality of education, the advancement of sustainable development goal (SDG) 4, and especially the agendas of GCED and ESD (which are part of SDG 4.7) would further enhance the wellbeing and happiness of learners.[4] As the agenda of GCED mostly consists of activities which rely on interpersonal relations and interactions among the students, it may enhance students' social wellbeing and individual happiness.

In another report and in line with the above-mentioned reports, UNESCO Bangkok office (UNESCO, 2021a) demonstrates the mutual and interactive relations between happiness of learners and their quality of education. According to this report, not only the high-quality education impacts the happiness of students,

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1   https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-05/UN-Policy-Brief-COVID-19-and-mental-health.pdf

2   World Happiness Report. 2021. The World Happiness Report 2021. New York, UNSDSN. https://worldhappiness.report/

3   https://en.unesco.org/news/build-back-better-education-must-change-after-covid-19-meet-climate-crisis

4   UNESCO (2021). "Happy Schools: Capacity Building for Learner Well-being in the Asia-Pacific Findings from the 2018-2020 Pilots in Japan, Lao PDR, and Thailand", Bangkok, UNESCO.

but the latter also enhances the quality of education of students.[5] In the same way, as world happiness report specifies, the trust of individuals towards their entourage and also their social connectedness consist of the factors which boost one's happiness and wellbeing.[6] Thus, the practice of social connectivity at schools within the framework of UNESCO activities related to "building back better" may improve the learners' happiness and wellbeing.

Finally, it should be highlighted that future studies may reflect on the mutual impacts of in-school activities of learners and their family life. In this regard, the scholars and policymakers can work on study of how in-school practices can positively impact the learners' relationships with their family members. On the other hand, future reports may study the impacts of national and regional cultures on the implementation of happiness activities by the schools. Based on the literature reviews and United Nations reports, there seems to be huge divergences among countries in terms of how they implement the activities related to happiness and wellbeing of students.

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5   UNESCO (2021). "Happy Schools in Asia-Pacific, Activities for Learner Well-Being and Happiness", Bangkok, UNESCO.

6   World Happiness Report. 2021. The World Happiness Report 2021. New York, UNSDSN. https://worldhappiness.report/

Additional Resources

For those teachers and school leaders wishing to learn more, the following list of resources provide a starting point. There are an increasing number of practice-focused works in the English language which provide a range of lesson plan ideas. There are also a number of popular books on understanding the link between happiness, well-being and schools – some written specifically for teachers and others for a general audience. For those who wish to go deeper, there are also interesting and easy to understand research works. The ones highlighted in this section focus on the Asia-Pacific, and include some of the new directions in research, such as works that go beyond positive psychology and positive education developed in Western contexts. Recent years have also seen the publication of a number of frameworks for understanding social and emotional learning, a field that substantially overlaps with happiness. Finally, recent UNESCO reports connect to and expand on themes central to the Happy Schools Framework and its integration into schools and classrooms.

Practice-Focused Lesson Plans

1. **Happy Teachers Change the World: A Guide for Cultivating Mindfulness in Education.** Thich Naht Hanh and Katherine Weare, 2017. Berkeley, CA: Parallax Press.

   Teacher-friendly guide that clearly describes how to conduct various mindfulness activities in the classroom. Four of the activities from this book are included in the Happy Schools Guide and Toolkit.

2. **The Educator's Guide to Emotional Intelligence and Academic Achievement: Social-Emotional Learning in the Classroom.** Maurice J. Elias and Harriett Arnold. Thousand Oaks, CA.: Corwin Press.

   Teacher-directed guide that describes various approaches to teaching emotion, as well as the basic ideas behind social and emotional learning as understood in the USA.

3. **A Toolkit for Promoting Empathy in Schools. Ashoka, 2015.** Available online: https://www.ashoka.org/en-us/files/startempathytoolkitpdf.

   Provides a set of 'tool cards' that features the experience and ideas of teachers who have been successful in implementing empathy-based approaches to their classrooms.

4. **Making Well-Being Practical: An Effective Guide to Helping Schools Thrive.** Luke McKenna, 2019. Melbourne, Australia: Publicious.

   Describes the Positive Psychology/Education approach of PERMAH, as well as lays out 30–40 classroom activities.

General Books

1. **Teaching Happiness and Well-Being in Schools: Learning to Ride Elephants.** Ian Morris, 2015. London: Bloomsbury Education.

   Written by a teacher who has run a well-being programme at his school, the book discusses the place of well-being and happiness in education, and provides a deeper look at some of the philosophical and religious issues involved.

2. **The Happiness Dictionary: Words from Around the World to Help Us Live a Richer Life.** Thomas Lomas, 2018. London: Piatkus.

   Focuses on the different ways that feelings such as contentment, pleasure, love, connection, appreciation, ambivalence and understanding are understood in various languages. An easy to read book, it will help those coordinating the Happy Schools project to think more deeply about what happiness means to them.

3. **Flourishing: A Visionary New Understanding of Happiness and Well-Being.** Martin Seligman, 2012. New York, Free Press.

   Written by the founder of Positive Psychology, it discusses how to think about well-being, and lays out the ideas for Positive Education including 'signature strengths' and the 'three good things exercise'. Positive Education is gaining increasing attention worldwide, and this US-based approach focuses much on the individual.

Research-based Works

1. **The Positive Psychology of Buddhism and Yoga: Paths to Mature Happiness.** Marvin Levine, 2011.

   Recognizing the limits of Positive Psychology, this book describes some prominent Asia-Pacific views (Buddhist-Yogic) approaches to happiness. The author contrasts and compares this approach to Western psychology, but draws attention to the emphasis on the reduction of suffering and focus on compassion in the Buddhist tradition.

2. **Translating Happiness: A Cross-Cultural Lexicon of Well-Being.** Thomas Lomas, 2018. Cambridge, MA, MIT Press.

   A more technical and research-rich version of the **Happiness Dictionary**, *by the same author. Focuses heavily on the relationship between language, culture and emotional understanding.*

3. **The Japanese Preschool's Pedagogy of Feeling: cultural strategies for supporting young children's emotional development.** Akiko Hayashi, Mayumi Karasawa, and Joseph Tobin, 2009. Ethos, Vol. 37, Issue 1, pp. 32–49.

   Written in an easy to understand and engaging manner, this short research article shows how emotions are developed in Japanese schooling. It helps make readers aware of how culture and pedagogy is central to how students learn to understand their emotions.

4. **Culture and Self: implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation.** Hazel Markus and Shinobu Kitayama, 1991, Psychological Review, Vol. 98, Issue 2, pp. 224–253.

   Written jointly by world leading American and Japanese scholars, it shows how cultural values influence not just ways of thinking, but how emotion is understood, and what motivates people. One of the most important research articles in the past 30 years.

5. **Understanding Happiness: A Critical Review of Positive Psychology.** Mick Power, 2015. London, Routledge.

   Written by a professor of psychology based in Singapore, this book reviews much of the recent research on happiness, and argues that negative emotions can be a very important motivator in our lives.

6. **Second Wave Positive Psychology: Embracing the Darker Side of Life.** Itai Ivtzan, Tim Lomas, Kate Hefferon, Piers Worth (Eds.). 2015. London, Routledge.

   Describes how positive psychology has recently turned to greater awareness of the role of negative emotion, and how negative emotions can be key to positive flourishing.

7. **Positive Education: positive psychology and classroom interventions.** Martin Seligman, Randal, Ernst, Jane Gillham and Mark Linkins. 2009. Oxford Review of Education, Vol. 35, Issue 3, pp. 293–311.

   One of the most important articles written on positive education, highlighting the link between learning and positive emotion.

Frameworks and Conceptual Models

1. SEE **Learning: Social, Emotional, and Ethical Learning**
2. **Core SEL Competencies. Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) 2019.** https://casel.org/core-competencies/
3. **PERMA Model, in Flourish. Seligman, 2011. New York, Simon & Schuster.** https://positivepsychology.com/perma-model/
4. **EASEL Lab Taxonomy Project.** https://easel.gse.harvard.edu/taxonomy-project

UNESCO Reports

1. **Happy Schools! A Framework for Learner Well-being in the Asia-Pacific.** UNESCO. 2016. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000244140
2. **Rethinking Learning: A Review of Social and Emotional Learning for Education Systems.** UNESCO–MGIEP. 2020. New Delhi, UNESCO-MGIEP. https://mgiep.unesco.org/rethinking-learning
3. **Schools in Action, Global Citizens for Sustainable Development: a guide for students.** UNESCO, 2016. Paris, UNESCO. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000246352
4. **Schools in Action: Global Citizens for Sustainable Development: A guide for teachers.** UNESCO, 2016. http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002468/246888e.pdf
5. **Learning to Live Together. Education Policies and Realities in the Asia-Pacific.** UNESCO, 2014. Paris, UNESCO. http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002272/227208E.pdf
6. **Learning: The Treasure Within.** UNESCO, 1996. Paris, UNESCO. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000102734
7. **Learning to Be: the world of education today and tomorrow.** UNESCO, 1972. Paris, UNESCO. https://www.voced.edu.au/content/ngv%3A39654

Happiness Curricula, Projects, and Reports from around the Region (in English)

1. **Development of Student and Teacher Measures of Happiness Curriculum Factors.** Care, E. et al. 2020. Center for Universal Education. Washington, DC, Brooking's Institute. https://www.brookings.edu/research/development-of-student-and-teacher-measures-of-happiness-curriculum-factors/
2. **Happy Schools in Vietnam.** Eurasia Learning Institute for Happiness and Wellbeing. 2020. https://elihw.org/march-2020-report-happy-schools-in-vietnam/
3. **Model for Positive Education.** Geelong Grammar School. 2020. https://www.ggs.vic.edu.au/Positive-Education2/Model-for-Positive-Education
4. **Education in Bhutan: Culture, Schooling, and Gross National Happiness.** Singapore, Springer. Mathew Schuelka and T.W. Maxwell. 2016. http://www.education.gov.bt/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Education-in-Bhutan-Culture-Schooling-and-Gross-National-Happiness.pdf

5. **Innocenti Report Card 16: Worlds of Influence – Understanding What Shapes Child Well-Being in Rich Countries.** UNICEF. 2020. Florence, UNICEF. https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/Report-Card-16-Worlds-of-Influence-child-wellbeing.pdf

6. **Learning for Empathy: Experiences from Bangladesh.** UNESCO Bangkok. 2019. https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/guideline_the_learning_for_empathy.pdf

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Happy Schools Guide and Toolkit

A Resource for Happiness, Learners' Well-being and Social and Emotional Learning in the Asia-Pacific Region

The Happy Schools Guide and Toolkit is designed to support teachers and school leaders in primary and secondary schools across the Asia-Pacific region, in thinking about how they can create their own Happy School. It has therefore drawn from aspects of the Happy Schools Framework, which can be most readily addressed at the school level. While the Happy Schools Guide is targeted towards school leaders and teachers at the school level of administration and pedagogy development, the Happy Schools Toolkit is conceived for teachers at the classroom level.

The Happy Schools Guide is composed of a series of booklets, each introducing key themes and concepts in relation to happiness and learner well-being, while also including several workshop-style activities that school leaders and teachers can use to explore how to incorporate happiness into their schools and everyday routines. It also examines happiness in teachers and school management, and provides information on how to (i) conduct an assessment of school practices that either support or hinder happiness; (ii) develop an annual Happy Schools Action Plan; and (iii) monitor happiness at both the school and classroom levels.

The Happy Schools Toolkit is composed of 25 lessons grouped under the following three themes: Happy Learners, Happy Classrooms, and Happy Environments. These lessons are ready to use and can be efficiently integrated within existing school subjects, and within the normal school day, entailing minimal time and effort. Each lesson has an overarching objective, corresponding outcomes and teacher guidance, while also allowing flexibility for adaptation to different learner needs and contexts.

Stay in touch

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4 QUALITY EDUCATION

Sustainable Development Goals