

MERRELL'S

Pre-K

STRONG START

A Social &
Emotional
Learning
Curriculum

SECOND EDITION



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Danielle M. Parisi Damico
Foreword by Hill M. Walker





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Merrell's Strong Start—Pre-K

A Social & Emotional Learning Curriculum

Second Edition

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When You're Happy

SEL Competencies Addressed in This Lesson



Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this lesson is to teach students to feel happy and to comfort themselves when unhappy.

- Students will accurately identify features of people depicting the concept of happy.
- Students will describe how their bodies feel when they are happy.
- Students will accurately list synonyms for the word *happy*.
- Students will be exposed to the concept of Happy Talk.

Materials Needed

- Henry (stuffed animal mascot)
- A book from the literature list (or one of your choice)
- Chart paper
- Supplements 6.1–6.2 (PDF documents)
- Drawing paper
- Crayons
- Strong Start* Bulletin

Running Short on Time?

Consider breaking this lesson into parts. You could introduce the concept and body cues depicting “happy” with a book from the literature list. During another session, you could introduce the concept of Happy Talk. As usual, extension activities can happen at any time prior to the next lesson.

Teacher Notes

Instructor Reflection

To best prepare for this lesson, think about how you make yourself feel better. What comforts do you have to help you cool down when mad or sad? What are situations in your classroom in which you notice students having negative thoughts? What do the students do? How do you help them feel better? How do you share happiness or joy with your students?

Review

-  2 MINS. To activate prior knowledge, review and discuss previous topics and main ideas on the concept of anger from Lesson 5. Make sure to provide feedback and refer to the steps of the Stop, Count, In, Out strategy.

Sample Script

During our last meeting, we discussed feeling angry. Raise your hand if you can tell me Ways that Help you feel better when you are angry. How about a Way that Hurts?

Introduction

-  1 MIN. Communicate clearly the lesson's purpose and objectives.

Sample Script

Today, we will talk about feeling happy. Everyone feels happy sometimes. It is a good feeling. Today, we will talk about what happy looks like and what happy feels like. We will think about how we can make ourselves feel happy when we are mad or sad.

Optional Focusing Activity

Sample Script

Before we get started, let's calm our bodies. Sit very still, close your eyes, and take a big balloon breath.

Read a Book from the Literature List

-  10 MINS. Read a book from the following list of examples or choose your own book to share with students.




- *I Like Myself!* by Karen Beaumont
- *Fun Is a Feeling* by Chara M. Curtis
- *Stand Tall, Molly Lou Melon!* by Patty Lovell
- *Beautiful Oops!* by Barney Saltzberg
- *Super-Completely and Totally the Messiest* by Judith Viorst

As part of your reading, be sure to point out all of the actions or ways in which the characters behave when they are acting on their feelings. Use the following questions to guide your discussion:

- Which character was happy?
- Do you think it was a good or not so good feeling?
- What did the character look like when he or she was happy?
- What did the character do when he or she was happy?

Show and Define Happiness

-  5 MINS. • Use Supplements 6.1 and 6.2 to show children different examples of happy faces.



Sample Script

This is happy. Happy is a good feeling. What does happy look like in this picture? Raise your hand if you've ever felt happy. What did your body look or feel like?

- Point out facial features depicting happy in Supplements 6.1 and 6.2. Orient children toward smiling faces and similar expressions.
- Have students describe what their bodies felt like when they were happy. Examples include feeling comfortable, excited, and energetic.
- Help children understand words that are similar to *happy*. Examples might include *joy*, *glad*, and *cheerful*.

Happy Talk

-  5 MINS. Introduce the concept of Happy Talk. *Note:* This is a difficult concept for young children but is an important one that they can practice over time.

Sample Script

Today, we are going to learn about Happy Talk. Happy Talk is something that will help us to feel better when we are sad or mad. Remember, it is always okay to feel mad or sad. When we use Happy Talk, we can first Stop, Count, In, Out, and we can then remember that everything is going to be okay.



Act out the following scene with Henry to model an example and a nonexample of Happy Talk.

Scenario 1

- Henry:* “Hi. Could I play with your toy?”
- Teacher:* “Maybe later. I’m taking a turn with it right now.”
- Henry:* “She never shares. I never get to play with her toys.”

Scenario 2

Henry: “Hi. Could I play with your toy?”

Teacher: “Maybe later. I’m taking a turn with it right now.”

Henry: [Henry counts to 10 and takes a deep breath.] “That’s okay. I’ll get a chance to play with it another time. I’ll find something else to do.”

Summarize that Happy Talk may include working to keep our bodies calm and finding another activity that will make us feel good on the inside.

Closure

 1 MIN. Gather your students together, and review the lesson objectives.

Sample Script

Today, we learned about feeling happy and Happy Talk. Everyone feels happy. It is a good feeling. If we use Happy Talk, we can make ourselves feel happy even if we are having not so good feelings.

Activity: Happy

 10 MINS. ***Complete this activity prior to the next lesson implementation.***

- Provide students with paper and crayons. Encourage them to draw a picture of their own face showing happiness. Help children to think about what their mouths, eyes, and eyebrows might look like when they are happy.
- Play Stand Up, Sit Down with students. Use the following examples, and have students stand up if Henry is using Happy Talk and sit down if he is not.



Problem	What Henry does	Is he using Happy Talk?
Henry did not get to watch TV before dinner like he usually does.	Henry took a breath. He said, “That’s okay. Maybe I can watch TV later.”	Yes
Henry wanted to ride his bike. His mom said no.	Henry yelled, “I am never going to ride my bike again!”	No
Henry was hungry for lunch, but his mom had to make it first. Henry had to wait.	Henry took a breath. He said, “That’s okay. I’ll play with LEGOs until lunch is ready.”	Yes
Henry wanted to play with a friend who lived next door. His friend was not home.	Henry said, “He is not my friend, anyway! I don’t ever want to play with him.”	No

Applying What We Learned

Anticipate

Help your students to use Happy Talk when they are feeling bad. This may be particularly helpful before events that may cause negative feelings, such as partner activities, recess, and choice time.

Remind

If you find a student who is not using Happy Talk, tell him or her to take a deep breath and figure out a better way.

Acknowledge

If you are able to observe students using Happy Talk, be sure to applaud their application of this complex skill.

Extension Activity: Happy Rainbows

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this extension activity is for students to identify what makes them happy and to describe how their bodies feel when they are happy.

Materials

- Paper plates
- Cotton balls
- Rainbow-colored streamers or construction paper
- Glue
- Tape

Materials to prepare ahead of time:

- Cut paper plates in half.
- Cut streamers or construction paper to desired length.

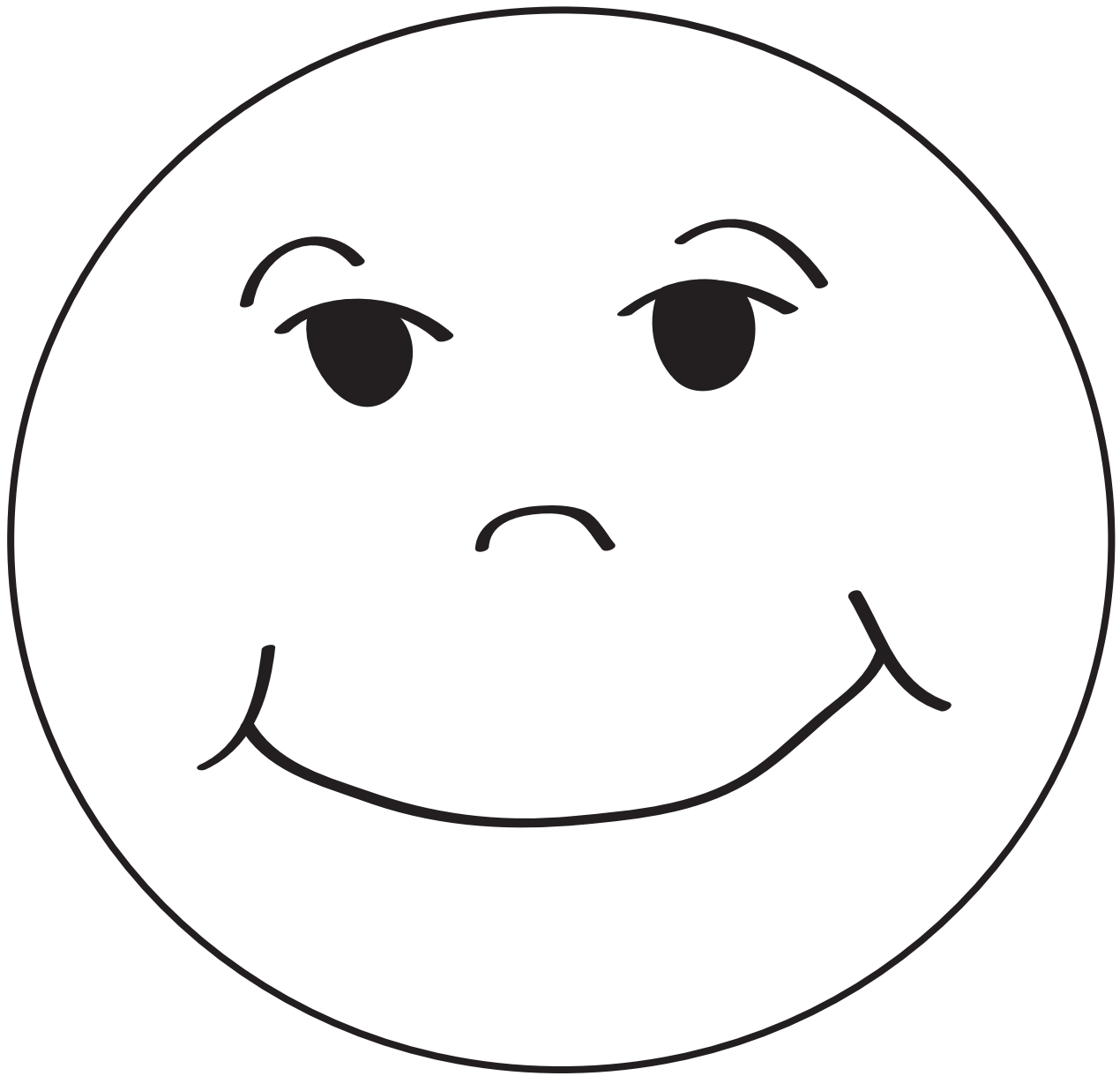
Procedure

1. Students write or draw pictures on the streamers of what makes them happy.
2. Students write or draw pictures on the streamers of how their body feels when happy.
3. Students glue streamers onto the straight edge of a paper plate.
4. Students glue cotton balls onto paper plates.

I'm Happy!



Basic Feelings



Happy



Strong Start Bulletin

Dear Family,

This week, our **Strong Start** lesson focused on teaching students about **happiness**. We discussed how our bodies feel when we are happy and what actions or situations make us feel happy. We also listed synonyms for the word **happy**.

In this lesson, Henry helped us understand **Happy Talk**. We talked about how Happy Talk can make us feel better when we are sad or mad. When we use Happy Talk, we can stop, count, and take a breath and then remember everything is going to be okay.

To better understand happiness, we read:

The following are great examples of relevant stories that you may want to read at home:

Super-Completely and Totally the Messiest by Judith Viorst

Fun Is a Feeling by Chara M. Curtis

Stand Tall, Molly Lou Melon! by Patty Lovell

When your child becomes sad or mad at home, help him or her to do the following:

Remind him or her to remember the Happy Talk strategy noted above. This can be hard, and your child might need your help to think about a problem in a better way. For example, if your child mistakenly breaks a toy, an example of Happy Talk might be, "That's okay. I have other toys," rather than "What will I do? I have nothing to play with now."



Thanks for all of your support in helping your child to be a positive thinker!

Fidelity Checklist



I. Review

- Refer to the previous lesson, **When You're Angry**.
- Review **Ways that Help** and **Ways that Hurt** in dealing with anger.
- Refer to the steps of the **Stop, Count, In, Out** strategy.

II. Introduction

- Communicate that students will talk about feeling happy.
- Communicate that students will learn what their minds and bodies feel like when they are happy.
- Communicate that students will learn about how to make themselves feel happy when mad or sad.

III. Read a Book from the Literature List

Book Title/Author: _____

- Help students to identify characters' feelings and behaviors.
- Use relevant questions to guide the discussion about feeling happy.

IV. Show and Define Happiness

- Use Supplements 6.1 and 6.2 or give examples of what happy faces look like.
- Encourage students to share what their bodies feel like when they are happy.
- Encourage children to share times when they felt happy.
- Have each student generate a list of words that make him or her think of happiness.

V. Happy Talk

- Introduce the concept of *Happy Talk*.
- Explain to students that positive thinking can make them feel better when they experience feelings that are not good. Provide examples.
- Describe how in Happy Talk children can first use Stop, Count, In, Out and then remind themselves that everything is going to be okay.
- Model (use Henry to role play) an example and nonexample of using Happy Talk.

VI. Closure

- Review with students that everyone feels happy sometimes.
- Remind students to use **Positive Thinking** when they are having not so good feelings.