



EduTrend Contents

P4C · EMOTIONS AND THE MIND · PRIMARY

Is It Ever Good to Feel Sad?

Do difficult feelings have a purpose?

Ages 8–11

Level: Developing

45 minutes

Whole class circle · up
to 30

Activity 02

Inside: activity at a glance · step-by-step session plan · facilitator notes · 3 pupil worksheets · assessment checklist

ACTIVITY 02 · AT A GLANCE

Is It Ever Good to Feel Sad?

Pupils hear an invented story about a planet where a machine takes away all sad, scared and angry feelings. At first everyone is happy, but then a child walks too near a cliff without fear and nobody notices when a friend is upset. Pupils create questions and enquire into whether difficult feelings can be good.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session pupils can:

- reason about the purpose of feelings;
- give examples and counter-examples;
- distinguish feelings from actions;
- build on others' ideas.

KEY WORDS

sad · scared · angry · useful · warn · care

CURRICULUM LINKS

PSHE: emotional wellbeing.

Science: how the body responds.

English: story discussion.

1	2	3	4	5	6
STIMULUS	THINK	QUESTION	ENQUIRE	BUILD	REFLECT
Share something to think about	Quiet thinking time	Create and choose a question	Reason together	Agree, disagree, add	Last words

Materials (per class)

- No-sadness machine story
- Feeling purpose cards
- Question and thinking-move cards
- Worksheets 1, 2 and 3

Before the session

- Read the stimulus and note possible concepts.
- Prepare question and thinking-move cards.
- Set out a circle so everyone can see each other.
- Print the worksheets.

SAFETY

Discuss the story, not personal experiences. Follow school procedures if a pupil raises concerns.

ACTIVITY 02 · SESSION PLAN

Step by step

Stay neutral: ask for reasons, examples and counter-examples rather than giving your own view.

Time	What happens	Say or ask
0–8 min Stimulus	Read the story of the no-sadness machine.	<i>"What did you notice?"</i>
8–18 min Questions	Pupils create questions in pairs and vote on one.	<i>"Which question is most interesting to talk about?"</i>
18–40 min Enquiry	Enquire into the chosen question, building on each other's ideas.	<i>"Is it ever good to feel sad?"</i>
40–45 min Last words	Each person says one last thought or passes.	<i>"Has your thinking changed?"</i>

CHALLENGE CARD (print or copy onto the board)

Explain one way a difficult feeling can help.

ACTIVITY 02 · FACILITATOR NOTES

The philosophy in brief

Many thinkers argue that emotions such as fear and sadness help us notice danger and loss and care for others.

Separating feelings from actions helps children see that feeling angry is different from acting unkindly.

Common ideas to listen for

- “Sad feelings are always bad.” They can help us.
- “Brave people feel no fear.” Bravery is acting despite fear.
- “Feeling angry means you are bad.” Actions matter more.

Adapting the activity

Support

Use one feeling only.

Stretch

Ask: should we ever try to change how we feel?

WORKSHEET 1

Our questions

Name: _____

Class: _____ Date: _____

Write questions the stimulus makes you wonder about.

Our questions

Question	Who asked	Votes

WORKSHEET 2

What is it for?

Think about each feeling.

What is it for?

Feeling	How it might help
Fear	
Sadness	
Anger	
Worry	

WORKSHEET 3

Last words

Before and after.

Would life be better without difficult feelings? Before the enquiry I thought...

Now I think... because...

FOR THE TEACHER

Assessment checklist

Use during the session. One sheet covers up to eight pupils; copy as needed.

Pupil	Asks a philosophical question	Gives reasons and examples	Listens and builds on others

Suggested codes: W = working towards · E = expected · G = greater depth

ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

Is It Ever Good to Feel Sad? is a sample activity from the EduTrend Contents P4C Emotions and the Mind programme (primary, level: developing). Every activity in the programme follows the same format: a practical challenge, a clear session plan, facilitator notes and ready-to-print worksheets, so that teachers, club leaders and parents can run it without extra preparation.

Full 15-, 20- and 32-week programmes are available from EduStore at edutrend.org.

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