

FEELINGS CIRCLE



FOURTH GRADE


WHAT IS IT? A group meeting to share feelings.

WHAT IS IT ABOUT? Building feelings vocabulary and emotion knowledge.

WHY DO THIS?



MATERIALS

 None required.

THE BIG IDEA

Coming together to talk about our feelings helps us learn about emotions and build our feelings vocabulary. Talking about feelings helps us to better understand ourselves and build stronger relationships.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Choose a time to do this 15-minute routine (suggested: morning meeting, pre-academics, after recess).
2. Gather students to sit or stand in a circle and greet them as they join. You might begin the circle with a mindfulness or visualization activity.
3. Start by saying **THE BIG IDEA** and then take a few minutes to discuss the following: “What are feelings? How do you know how you’re feeling? What does it feel like in your body?”
4. After some discussion, ask, “How are you feeling today?” Ask volunteers to share why.

» **MUST DO:** Go around the circle and give everyone the opportunity to share. Expand feelings vocabulary by introducing more complex feelings words over the year (e.g., trepidation, shame, uncertainty, glee, enamored, elated).

↪ **CAN ADAPT:** Use emotion words (e.g., happy, sad, scared, mad), or metaphoric expressions (e.g., weather metaphor: sunny, cloudy, partly cloudy, etc.), or rate your mood on your fingers (5 fingers = excellent mood; 1 finger = terrible mood).



AFTER THE ACTIVITY, DEBRIEF:

- What was it like to share your feelings? Are there times you don't want to share your feelings?
- Can you tell what another person is feeling? How can you tell?
- What times at school or home do you need to share how you're feeling? Why is it important that you do this?
- What's the difference between [feeling 1] and [feeling 2] (e.g., sad and worried)? Do they feel the same in your body? What are some other words that describe [feeling 1]? How about [feeling 2]?

TIPS FOR SUCCESS



Allow or encourage responses in home languages.



For those who might need extra time, share the prompt ahead of time so they can think about their answer.



Allow students to share or pass on their turn depending on their level of comfort.

OVER THE YEAR...

Fourth grade is a time to continue exploring the causes and consequences of emotions, and link them to problem solving and conflict resolution. A learning objective for the fourth grade year is to understand how feelings influence our thoughts, words and actions, as well as those of others.

To start, focus on building familiarity with different feelings words. Create a feelings word wall and add new words to it throughout the year. Refer to it when you're reading, writing, or solving a problem. This is a way to connect feelings words to other times of the day and build a rich and sophisticated vocabulary. Support students to identify how they are feeling when a conflict arises, for example by giving an "I Message" and using words on the word wall, if needed.

Throughout the year, encourage students to use feelings words in classroom situations when conflict, disagreement, or challenges arise. Add into your circle time a discussion about how students can use a rich feelings vocabulary to better understand their own experiences and the experiences, views, perspectives, needs, and wants of others: *"Describing how you feel to your peers helps them understand you better and support you when needed."* Take turns giving "I Messages" and saying it back, to encourage empathy and perspective taking. Then take turns coming up with possible "win-win" solutions that work for everyone involved.