

Best Practices of Happiness in the Classroom

**We, as adults, have designed educational systems.
But how happy our children are within these systems?**





PROJECT: Happiness - simple solution to complex problems

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Quote from the cover page:

“We as adults have designed educational & school systems for children. But how happy are children within these systems? This question requires us to consider the critical linkage between happiness and our current education system” (UNESCO, 2016).

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Introduction

The challenges in the EU schools have gone far beyond the academic results and the learning standards. Students go to school with different social and emotional burdens, showing vulnerability to physical and mental health risks. Insecurity, stress, social comparisons, low self-esteem and indifference can lead to deviation and imbalanced growth, the consequences of which should be alarming for our societies.

The latest research shows clearly that secondary school students feel insecure about their future. For the last few years, they have lived in a health and economic crisis caused by the COVID-19 virus. The unusual situation threatens both their well-being and social life. It intensifies the existing problems in educational systems all over the globe. As a result, students experience anxiety, stress, and depression far more often compared to their life before the pandemic and suffer from demotivation. They had to adapt to the new distance learning systems and the social distancing rules, which took an immense toll on their mental health. Our society and educational systems should help students manage life experiences no one prepared them for before COVID-19 changed their lives.

What is happiness?

Happiness is a state of well-being in which individual functions at their fullest potential. Happiness is not just about having positive emotions but also includes positive thinking and behaviours, engagement, meaning and purpose, accomplishment, and social connections.

Sonja Lyubomirsky has estimated that 50 per cent of a given human's happiness level could be genetically determined, 10 per cent is affected by life circumstances and situations, and a remaining 40 per cent of happiness is subject to self-control. We aim to work on those 40 per cent of the students' happiness perception, which is a subject of their control.



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What is this booklet about?

Our booklet was created through a collaborative effort between the eight partners involved in the **Erasmus + project 2021-1-BG01-KA220-SCH-000031568 Happiness - a simple solution to complex problems**. We used three methods to collect the best practices - internet research, surveys, and interviews with teachers and students. We collected 80 good practices, and after evaluating them in the partnership, we chose the best 33 of them in our booklet. It can be used by any teacher who wants to improve their students' social and emotional skills and happiness levels in the classroom. The booklet includes 33 good practices based on four existing happiness methodologies: positive psychology, growth mindset, GRIT, and social metacognition. These methods have improved happiness levels in both adults and children.

The selected best practices on the EU level can be easily implemented in the classroom with no or less prior preparation or training. Each practice describes what it is, how to do it step by step, the benefits, and possible challenges.

We believe that this booklet will help raise teachers' awareness about the importance of happiness and assist them in starting to include happiness training in their classrooms.

We hope you find it useful, and we wish you happiness in your teaching journey!



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BEST PRACTICES

Collection of Tools to Increase Well-being of Students



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METHODOLOGY:

- Positive psychology
- GRIT

Letter to Myself

COUNTRY ORIGIN:

Poland

RESOURCE:

Interview with teachers

DESCRIPTION

The method is based on writing a personal letter to yourself. You can use this in various situations and moments in school education. Students write letters to themselves "from the future" in the short or long term, depending on the specific objectives. An essential element of this work is to encourage students to self-analyse their resources, needs, difficulties and strengths to establish and plan activities for the next month, quarter or school year (depending on the assumptions) with a vision of themselves at the end. The method encourages students to gain insight into themselves and plan and exercise their persistence and effectiveness in achieving goals. The letter increases students' motivation to act.

ACTION IDEAS

Students write letters to themselves "from the future" in the short or long term depending on the goals set. Writing a Letter You can propose, for example, 100 days to the Matura exam, to start the school year, or in other circumstances, not necessarily only in the case of very important events. Another possibility is to write letters to summarise student achievement - a kind of celebration of success and strengthening of positive habits, hardship, persistence that the student writes for himself.

Students have tremendous freedom in writing letters. This is an opportunity for creativity and solid planning with a vision of the end. An important task is to determine what point the student wants to get to and what actions he wants to take to be practical. It is worth encouraging students to consider what difficulties may arise, but also to imagine their feelings when the goal is achieved.

Composing a letter is an original method that the teacher can use in many ways depending on the needs. Letters can be read aloud in class, they can be secret. It is essential for the teacher to collect the letters and hand them over at the appointed time. Letters can be sent to students by traditional mail at a specified time by the teacher. They are then a surprise for students and an opportunity to verify the behaviour, achievements and broader reflection on oneself.



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KEY TAKEAWAY

- The ability to set goals
- Planning skills
- An exercise in perseverance
- Self-awareness of strengths and weaknesses
- Seeing the world up close and far

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

The method shows students that life is in their hands. It shows that long-term goals are achievable but require good organisation, planning and persistence. The method shows that everyone is responsible for themselves and their actions. It is good to have goals that bring happiness and fulfilment. This is the greatest reward for the effort invested.



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METHODOLOGY:

- Growth Mindset
- Social Metacognition

Not Yet

COUNTRY ORIGIN:

Different EU Countries

RESOURCE:

<https://bit.ly/3HltPnf>
<https://bit.ly/3M77PQM>

DESCRIPTION

Professor Carol Dweck talks about a powerful message: “not yet”. Her studies demonstrate that when students understand that learning occurs on a continuum and simply have “not yet” mastered a concept, they develop a “growth mindset” that leads to significant learning gains. Professor Dweck notes that students with a “growth mindset” engage with the material and develop a passion for learning. They want to see how far they can push themselves. They realise they can improve and have to figure out how to do so. This growth mindset engages neurons – a physiological process that paves the way to significant learning gains. Learning outcomes allow us to create a growth mindset in ourselves and our students. Learning outcomes remind us that our job is to facilitate student growth along the learning continuum. They are a tool to help students learn how to think deeply about the processes and strategies necessary to tackle new material and challenges throughout their careers. They help students move from “not yet” to “I got this step, bring on a new challenge”.

ACTION IDEAS

Implementing the “not yet” method is easy. Instead of entering low grades or informing the student that he has not passed the material, we give the message “not yet”. “Not yet” is an opportunity for development - it simply means that the student has some difficulty and a challenge ahead. A challenge that can be overcome.

Receiving low grades can lead to depression, low self-esteem, and a reluctance to learn among students.

“Not yet” informs that the student is in the learning process and needs to work more to achieve the required results. The student must understand the causes of the difficulties and discover possible solutions.

For the teacher, it is also information that the student may need support from the teacher. Low grades do not support, do not motivate, and are an opportunity for comparisons and complex emotional state in students. Therefore, it is worth considering whether or not to start using the method proposed by prof. C. Dweck.



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KEY TAKEAWAY

- Build growth mindset
- Ability to think about own learning process
- The ability to deal with difficulties
- Determination

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

The student learns that difficulties are there to be solved, not avoided. The method makes students reflect on their learning process and encourages them to find the best ways to learn.



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METHODOLOGY:

- Positive Psychology
- Social Metacognition

Walking-talking

COUNTRY ORIGIN:

Poland

RESOURCE:

Interview with teachers

DESCRIPTION

Education at school is primarily related to sitting at a desk. Walking-talking is a method that is based on the use of movement, integration with the group and action, preferably outside, close to nature (if possible).

ACTION IDEAS

The method is straightforward and can be used in many different ways. Its basic form is that students walk in pairs and talk (on the indicated topics). A task can also be a group challenge. Good organisation and effective use of time are essential.

Examples:

- You can use this method as the first lesson after reading a book in your mother tongue. Prepare questions that require complex statements, sharing reflections and opinions, such as which character of the book you liked the most and why, how do you evaluate a specific action scene; if you could finish the book any other way, how? These questions encourage sharing conversation, and there are no wrong answers.

- You can use the walks as a summary of the chapter to consolidate a student's knowledge. Students receive a list of questions, and if they do not know the answers, they look for them among their classmates. At the end of the lesson, it is vital that everyone collects all the information and thus repeats the educational material.

- You can organise themed walks and create opportunities to get to know each other better. Walks can be free. You can also designate a route, stops, sequence, time. It all depends on your creativity.

The method is conducive to reducing tension, building positive classroom cooperation, and allowing students to catch a new perspective and breathe during the long days at school.



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KEY TAKEAWAY

- Critical thinking
- Communication skills
- Learning to learn
- Creativity
- Cooperation

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

The method is used to practice communication, both speaking and listening. It trains students in thinking, analysing their way of looking at the world, and getting to know different perspectives.

It helps to be open, kind to otherness, and understand yourself better.



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METHODOLOGY:

- Growth Mindset
- Social Metacognition

Mood Meter

COUNTRY ORIGIN:

England, Bulgaria

RESOURCE:

<https://bit.ly/33ZHVxa>

<https://bit.ly/3tgITyC>

ACTION IDEAS

Materials needed: a large sheet of paper/cadastre, sticky notes, markers and felt-tip pens. Place the poster in a prominent place in the classroom. Think of a name for it ("EMOTION METER", "Thermometer" of emotions/moods, "Today I feel ...").

Draw a square on a large sheet of paper and divide it into four. Colour the individual parts in different colours:

- Red: angry, anxious, frightened, furious
- Yellow: Happy, proud, self-confident, excited, full of energy
- Green: calm, accepted, humble, balanced
- Blue: sad, tired, depressed, desperate

Discuss in advance with the students to which square (colour) what type of emotion/feeling refers, but do not write them on the poster (those in The picture are examples). Students judge where they fall in two directions - the level of energy they invest and whether the feelings are pleasant or unpleasant.

Invite students at the beginning of the day to determine which square they are in today. Let them do the same at the end of the day. Allow those who do not want to share how they feel about leaving an anonymous note or not participating at all. The poster will give you a perfect visualisation of the overall atmosphere in the classroom. It will help children think and determine their emotional state and explore where they concern their classmates, compare their daily moods, and look for their reasons.

Try to regularly refer to the board and initiate a discussion when you deem it appropriate. The board will allow you to monitor the group's mood and each student's. If you notice something too disturbing in the mood of a particular child, talk to him individually. Call a school specialist or contact the child's parents if you need support.



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DESCRIPTION

The Mood Meter is one of the “anchors of Emotional Intelligence” in the RULER program. It helps people develop the core RULER skills: Recognizing, Understanding, Labelling, Expressing, and Regulating emotions. The Yale Centre for Emotional Intelligence describes it as follows:

The Mood Meter develops emotional intelligence over time. Learning to identify and label emotions is critical to cultivating emotional intelligence. Using the Mood Meter can help you become more mindful of how your emotions change throughout the day and how your emotions affect your actions. Using the Mood Meter can help you develop self-awareness and self-regulation. It's essential to understand the full scope of your emotional life.

KEY TAKEAWAY

This will help students learn to recognise, categorise and control their emotions. It is much easier for students to achieve academic success, communicate fully with their classmates and make lasting friendships when:

- Know their own emotions;
- They know how to express themselves;
- They manage to regulate and control them;
- Recognize other people's emotions;
- Know how to react to them;
- Show empathy

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

- Children who are emotionally balanced, more attentive, work harder, effortlessly memorise new information, process it and connect it logically with what they already know (Lori Desautels). This inevitably leads to better results in school.
- Children who can control their emotions find it easier to deal with conflict, control aggression, and show lower anxiety levels (John Gottman).
- Knowing personal feelings and sensations will help children recognise other people's emotions. In this way, they will develop empathy and adopt socially acceptable behaviour.



METHODOLOGY:

- Social Metacognition

Realising the Value

COUNTRY ORIGIN:

England

RESOURCE:

<https://bit.ly/33VzZNh>

DESCRIPTION

Realising the Value was an 18-month programme that aimed to consolidate what is known about the person- and community-centred approaches for health and wellbeing and make recommendations on how they can have maximum impact. This learning catalogued sets out practical examples of good practices from the five Realising the Value local partner sites. This catalogue of learning has been produced in close collaboration with the sites, drawing on evidence combined with their practical learning and tips to others seeking to get to grips with the practicalities of person- and community-centred approaches.

ACTION IDEAS

The teacher can create a strong sense of community using these steps:

1. Explain that every student is unique and therefore have a specific approach to their learning and assignments
2. Explain that every student needs to be aware of that uniqueness when working in groups
3. Explain that with that awareness and treating their class as a community, studying becomes more accessible as well as working together
 - The teacher should educate students that they have a role in their classroom, to help each other
 - Teachers should use their pedagogical insights in their classroom to put the community in the centre of it



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KEY TAKEAWAY

- Social Awareness within a community or group (classrooms)
- Emotional Intelligence

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

- Knowing how to value each other's presence
- Importance of being able to work alongside successful and hardworking people, which will make potential bullies use their energy upon something better and more productive (turns them away from becoming bullies in the process)
- Youth workers and the entire community, in general, are going to benefit from more younger people that are willing to engage and help out through volunteering.



METHODOLOGY:

- Positive Psychology

Practising Gratitude

COUNTRY ORIGIN:

Poland

RESOURCE:

Interview with Teachers
+ <https://bit.ly/3M3x6eC>

ACTION IDEAS

1. Three Good Things - ask students to record positive things that happen each day. The key to this activity is identifying rewarding experiences and considering how or why they happened.

2. Gratitude Letter - this exercise prompts writing a letter of thanks to someone and giving it directly to that person. Ask your students to think of all the people at school who have been kind to them this year, choosing one particular person to recognize (e.g., another student, a custodian, a teacher). You might also consider the power of students sharing notes of thanks in the classroom setting or publicly acknowledging school staff in an assembly. These are more powerful than simple thank you notes because all writers share them in person and have the opportunity to surprise their benefactor by reading their letter aloud.

3. Gratitude Journal

Of course, a letter-writing activity or brief exercise may not have the same power as a more sustained practice. If you are hoping for a more sustained shift in perspective among students and staff at your school, consider using gratitude journals. The Gratitude Journal for Students provides a simple structure for slowly shifting one's perspective toward the positive. Students regularly track good things that happen in their lives, like finishing all of their homework or getting extra time to spend with a good friend.

4. Jar of happy moments

A jar of happy moments - students or the teacher prepare a vessel to throw cards with happy moments in class and school life. Students write on different days and are encouraged to pay attention and catch joy at school. From time to time, you can read the content in front of the entire class and celebrate these moments together again. The method can be implemented creatively, just as the teacher and students develop.

5. Round of gratitude

At the beginning of the class, the teacher starts with a round during which the students express what they are grateful for today. It is vital that only those students who want to speak out. It is helpful to encourage students to find joy in little things.



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DESCRIPTION

With the gratitude research conducted in schools and colleges to date, you will see evidence that gratitude may contribute to a greater sense of social support, school belonging, and satisfaction with the school experience while lessening students' stress and depression. Sometimes it may feel like a struggle to find something positive to note—particularly for youth in your class who might be facing genuine threats to their well-being. Practising gratitude can help them cultivate resilience, which—along with other qualities like self-compassion and hope—could help plant the seeds for gratefulness.

KEY TAKEAWAY

- Positive attitude
- The ability to enjoy life

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

- Training gratitude helps you find happiness in the here and now. This is an important skill for supporting well-being.
- Greater ease in establishing contacts, maintaining good relationships, resolving conflicts and striving for happiness for yourself and others.
- A positive attitude promotes persistence in learning from mistakes.



METHODOLOGY:

- Positive Psychology
- Growth Mindset

Journaling For Teenagers

COUNTRY ORIGIN:

England, Slovenia

RESOURCE:

<https://bit.ly/3C1asPA>

<https://bit.ly/3sq6bBR>

DESCRIPTION

Research diary, which will help the child or a teenager develop their emotional competencies.

The writer encourages the user to think profoundly and explore his inner and outer world. It lets them know who he is and who he wants to become.

During the journey, the user will discover his dreams, learn about emotional storms, articulate his wishes and bravely write down his/hers victories.

ACTION IDEAS

- Make a yearly journal for all students in the class with different challenging tasks. Teach them how to reflect on their feelings, emotions, situations, people, thoughts.
- Ask the students to dedicate the last sheet of their notebook to their so-called "Diary of Success".
- At the end of each week have them write down 5 things they succeeded in doing - they could include school achievements or general life achievements that happened in the last 7 days.
- Instruct them to colour and make the pages of the Diary engaging for themselves and for any external readers they would like to have
- At the end of each term have them review the past weeks and ask them to reflect on the reasons behind their achievements. Ask what they can take from this for future reference.
- Have they learned something?
- Is there some trait they have discovered in themselves that could help them achieve even greater things in the future?
- What is one common thing they can find among all of their stories of success?



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KEY TAKEAWAY

- Self-reflection
- Self-love
- Self-development
- Empowerment through past success
- Reflection
- Introspection
- Self-awareness
- Belief in their own abilities
- Goal setting

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

Students will be more aware of themselves and their wishes for the future. They will learn how to self reflect. Journaling will open the opportunity for the students to build a positive attitude towards themselves, towards the outside world in the safe shelter of an adult, and thus grow into independent, self-confident, happy individuals.



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METHODOLOGY:

- Positive Psychology

Emotional Self-portrait

COUNTRY ORIGIN:

Bulgaria

RESOURCE:

[Interview with Mrs. Yolova-Vardzhieva](#)

DESCRIPTION

At the beginning of the class, Mrs Yolova-Vardzhieva asks her students to draw their current emotional state together with an animal with which they identify. Have a short discussion on this topic.

Students then "discover" a similarity of their emotional image in the German textbook. They discuss the similarities and differences between their emotions.

In the second part of the task, students look at pictures of their peers experiencing a variety of emotions. Thus, they observe, compare and evaluate the emotional state of students from Germany. By comparing themselves with images, children realise that emotions are universal and "human."

ACTION IDEAS

I ask each of you to draw a face that expresses how you feel at the moment. Add an animal you identify with right now.

How does the animal you drew relate to your current emotion? And what can you do to feel positive emotion?

Now let's look at the images in the textbook. Which image is closest to the one you drew? Why? How does that make you feel?



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KEY TAKEAWAY

- Positive psychology
- Emotional intelligence

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

- Recognize and name their emotions and identify their own emotional state;
- Identify the emotional state of others;
- Discover the variety of positive emotions they can experience in everyday life;
- They realise that their positive emotional state depends largely on their own actions.
- Depicting the emotional state helps students to realise and name their emotions. And visualising emotions by drawing a specific animal helps them share more openly and better analyse their emotional state.



METHODOLOGY:

- Growth Mindset

I listen to You!

Feedback for Performance by Criteria

COUNTRY ORIGIN:

Bulgaria

RESOURCE:

<https://bit.ly/3sscEfS>

DESCRIPTION

This strategy of giving constructive feedback can happen at any age or subject. It develops the attitude "It depends on me" and the ability of students to give constructive feedback. It consists of several steps:

- Distribution of students
- Choice of skill and evaluation criteria
- Sharing the criteria with the students
- Rehearsal of the evaluation by criteria and giving feedback
- Conducting the evaluation and giving feedback

KEY TAKEAWAY

The attitude "It depends on me", Self-awareness; Learn and work autonomously and collaboratively

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

Giving assessment and feedback on criteria is the key to students learning consciously and setting goals for themselves.



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ACTION IDEAS

Distribution of students

At this stage, we need to clarify who is giving feedback to whom. It is a good idea to divide the students into pairs.

Choice of skill and evaluation criteria

When choosing a skill to develop, it is essential to consider students' needs, not our preferences. Then choose which manifestation of this skill we want to evaluate.

For example, we have found that students need to develop their communication skills, and we want to assess their progress. But communication skills have many elements. That is why we decide that it is essential for our students to present to an audience - one of the manifestations of good communication skills. Then we present the criteria by which we will understand that our students have learned to present successfully to an audience.

Example of criteria for assessing presentation skills:

Speak smoothly;

Stands confidently in front of an audience (does not stand with his hands in his pockets, etc.);

Speak loud and clear;

Responds respectfully to questions and more.

Sharing the criteria with the students

It is essential to share and clarify the chosen criteria with the students. We need to make sure they understand the criteria. We ask if they want to add more criteria that they think are important.

Rehearsal of the evaluation by criteria and giving feedback

Patently in small portions in the classes, we allow students to give feedback to each other. The aim is to get used to giving feedback based on criteria. In this way, the teacher himself can trace the ambiguities in the classroom.



ACTION IDEAS 2

Conducting the evaluation and giving feedback

Step 1 - Preparation

On the day of the evaluation and giving feedback on the criteria, we prepare the room by hanging a board with the criteria in a prominent place or writing them on the board. We distribute worksheets to students who also have the assessment criteria written down.

At the beginning of the class, we return to this:

What's next, and why are we doing it?

How is this valuable skill for everyone?

What to watch out for when giving feedback to their classmates etc.

Step 2 - Evaluation

Students evaluate their performance by giving feedback on why they are making that assessment and how it can be improved.

Step 3 - Reflection

It is essential to have reflection after each such activity because it increases the conscious learning of students.

We can do a "control" reflection at the end of the class and ask the students ", What are you doing well?" and "What needs to be improved?"



METHODOLOGY:

- Positive psychology
- Growth mindset
- GRIT

Empowering through Words

COUNTRY ORIGIN:

Bulgaria

RESOURCE:

<https://bit.ly/3soKjGV>
<https://bit.ly/3lwoRpe>

DESCRIPTION

Taking the time to select and implement instruction vocabulary that encourages growth mindset values such as focusing on efforts and results and avoids implying fixed mindset values such as focusing on results only.

KEY TAKEAWAY

- Self-confidence,
- Positive attitude towards learning,
- Curiosity,
- Focus on efforts

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

Students develop a more positive attitude for the process of learning and become more open to the teacher's guidance. Removing barriers to instruction is immensely helpful to both the teaching process and the long-term results of academic achievement and positive self-image of young people.



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ACTION IDEAS

By praising students for improving by taking into consideration their pace and progress and avoiding general comparison to the class as a whole;

Example: "You have made such big progress compared to your level last month.", "I notice/admire your efforts.", "I know this exercise was hard for you, but I see you did your best."

By taking the time to provide constructive feedback on both verbal and written exercises by describing in a positive and detailed way areas where improvement is both necessary and beneficial. Example: "Good job doing... I believe you can do even better if you focus more/ read more about...", "You can check out.. for more information, and next time your result will be even better."

Re-examining the existing assessment scales and including a way to encourage effort and improvement for every possible mark - must be done carefully to avoid discouraging students who already perform well and by supporting those who find the subject or the examination more difficult. Employ specific ways of encouragement depending on the student's level of effort into achieving a specific result.

- If a student struggles despite effort: encourage the student to recognize the failure as an opportunity to learn, suggest new strategies to solve the problem, praise the student for investing so much effort, etc.
- (ii) If a student succeeds with effort: praise the student's effort and persistence, praise the student's behaviour (e.g., time management, strategies), point out how much progress the student has made, etc.
- (iii) If a student succeeds without much effort: suggest a task that is more challenging, ask the student to help others with the task, look for another skill that the student can work on, etc.
- (iv) If a student does not succeed due to a lack of effort: explore what barriers the student is facing and offer help to overcome them, talk about more attractive learning goals, suggest new strategies, etc.
- (v) If a student lacks specific skills to improve: suggest new strategies, give further information, encourage the student to try and not to be afraid of mistakes, etc.
- (vi) If a student makes progress: praise the student's strategies and hard work, remind the student of the difficulties at the beginning, point out how much progress the student has made, etc.



METHODOLOGY:

- Growth Mindset

Personal Growth Plan

COUNTRY ORIGIN:

Bulgaria

RESOURCE:

[Interview Report](#)

DESCRIPTION

This classroom practice is mostly oriented to language classes and form teacher classes where the students can take the time to focus on the activity and practice other skills developed at school.

ACTION IDEAS

Ask the students to make an online document or to use several sheets of paper to make their own Personal Growth Plan.

They should indicate:

- 1) What they are good at already;
- 2) What are their strong qualities;
- 3) What areas in their life they would like to improve;
- 4) Which of their strong qualities they can use to do this;
- 5) How they believe they can achieve the improvement.



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KEY TAKEAWAY

- Goal-setting
- Prioritising
- Self-Awareness
- Metacognitive abilities

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

Through this practice, students can learn how to plan for desirable outcomes and how to observe and navigate their own thought processes.



METHODOLOGY:

- GRIT

A Walk in the Gallery

COUNTRY ORIGIN:

Different EU Countries

RESOURCE:

[5 Best Practices](#)

DESCRIPTION

An idea to encourage communication between students and their participation in the classroom.

The main goal is not a test of knowledge, but an opportunity to initiate a discussion and see the different points of view on a given problem. Good communication between students will make the class more cohesive, and hence the students themselves will be happier while together at school.

KEY TAKEAWAY

- Development of communicative skills

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

Students benefit from the opportunity to put the ideas from the walk together. This can be accomplished through discussions and when you break up the original groups into new groups helps for more dynamic analysis. Additionally, students often complete individual analysis activities such as a Venn diagram or visual tool to analyse the information.



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ACTION IDEAS

Who is the game suitable for junior high school and high school students?

Conducting time: 20 minutes (depending on the number of tasks).

What you need: flipchart sheets, pre-prepared assignments.

The teacher puts tables/pictures around the room with a question at the top of the sheet and a place to answer below it. They can be mathematical problems, tables with missing numbers/words, questions related to the study material in the respective subject; paintings; photos; charts. The more diverse the formats, the more engaged the students will be.

You can design "stations" to position on the walls, desks, even on the floor.

It is essential to leave enough free space on the task sheet and provide the necessary space for students to move around the room.

Students walk around and write their answers on the flipcharts.

Students choose whether to put their name below or leave an anonymous answer. If they prefer, they can place a symbol.

The whiteboards on the wall allow students to see all the answers in one place.

If the teacher and the class decide that the answers are not anonymous, the check is performed by a classmate who passes, reads and says if he agrees with what he has read. The teacher can indicate who the students are to read the answers or randomly count or draw a card. The focus is on the discussion.

"Walk in the gallery" can also be made in the form of a competitive team game.



METHODOLOGY:

- Positive Psychology

Support Network of Positive Psychology

COUNTRY ORIGIN:

Different EU Countries

RESOURCE:

[Blog](#)
[Group Work](#)

DESCRIPTION

The efficacy of psychological interventions to increase well-being is, in many ways, the heart of positive psychology.

While positive psychology can be beneficial in a multitude of individual and group contexts, incorporating concepts such as virtues, strengths, and mindfulness into your work with groups can help create a supportive framework for growth and development.

This support network has the potential to increase well-being, connectedness, hope, life purpose, and vocational calling – and that is just the tip of the iceberg.

ACTION IDEAS

Gratitude training

- Teachers should use the linked resources to find exercises on the website, which include exercises on how to implement thankfulness on a daily basis

Accountability groups

- Teachers should pair or group up students during the learning year
 - Tell the students to discuss in pairs/groups their goals and challenges
 - Tell them that they need to support and keep each other accountable to achieve their success
- A support network that allows learning positive approaches to challenges
- Helps individuals



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KEY TAKEAWAY

Reaching happiness is much easier when you take a positive approach to life.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

The goals of the Positive Psychology good practice is:

- Improving the mental wellbeing of the population
- teaching and advocating for positive psychology concepts like gratitude training, developing strength and virtues, emotional intelligence;
- Improving the positive psychology concepts to be happy;
- raising awareness of the importance of teaching these concepts to others, individually and in groups;



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METHODOLOGY:

- Positive Psychology
- Social Metacognition

Building a Positive Classroom Climate

COUNTRY ORIGIN:

Different EU Countries

RESOURCE:

[Blog](#)
[Group Work](#)

DESCRIPTION

The school and classroom climate has a significant impact on the functioning of students, their willingness to learn and develop, well-being in school conducive to learning, and creating of social relationships. The classroom climate, referred to as the learning environment or the classroom atmosphere, is defined differently. It is the intellectual, social, emotional and physical environment students learn. All the rules of work and life in the classroom that the teacher imposes and strengthens while solving current didactic and educational situations. The predominant type of interaction between students and between teacher and students. The class climate expresses the degree to which the student is satisfied in the class, if the students understand each other sufficiently, what the degree of competition and competition is among them, and to what extent the class is cohesive and solidarity. A positive classroom climate is the basis of a healthy school that provides good educational conditions for students and school staff.

The teacher has the most crucial role in creating the classroom climate.

The critical elements of the class's social climate are:

- Experiencing understanding and acceptance by the student;
- A sense of emotional ties with the teacher;
- Openness in mutual relations;
- Mutual respect between the educator and the pupil;
- Awareness of boundaries in life and development;
- Sharing the responsibility for achieving changes in the upbringing process.



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ACTION IDEAS

How to build a positive climate in the class:

- Collaborate with students to establish simple, clear rules in positive language
- Build and model respectful relationships with students
- Provide clear expectations about work tasks (schedules)
- Follow predictable routines to reduce spontaneous and disruptive behaviour
- Provide adequate resources for activities to avoid disputes
- Ensure tasks are set at an appropriate level for students
- Maintain positive expectations of behaviour
- Provide frequent opportunities for success
- Give positive feedback freely and often
- Teach social skills incidentally by modelling and also informal lessons
- Teach relaxation techniques such as meditation
- Use tactical ignoring, where appropriate
- Remind and restate rules in a firm but positive tone
- Provide simple choices
- Offer alternative behaviours and activities
- Re-establish relationships as soon as possible after an incident (be restorative).

The most important thing is to focus on the behaviour, not on the individual.

A positive classroom climate is largely related to the teacher's well-being. The atmosphere filled with space to act, empathy, and the opportunity to express yourself is very motivating. Meetings in a circle, modelling pro-social attitudes in integration with the introduction of new subject material, elements of mediation, mutual assistance, cooperation in the preparation of various projects, and efficient interpersonal communication as well as observation of students' needs and finding answers to them are important aspects of building a positive climate in the classroom.

KEY TAKEAWAY

- Communication skills
- Team work
- The ability to take responsibility for actions
- Ability to regulate emotions
- Confidence

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

Building a positive self-image and a positive attitude towards others. Openness to interpersonal contacts. Ability to build positive relationships.



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METHODOLOGY:

- Positive Psychology
- Social Metacognition

Create an Emotional Map

COUNTRY ORIGIN:

Bulgaria

RESOURCE:

[Page 39 to 44](#)

DESCRIPTION

It is often practised in Bulgaria as part of foreign language learning. It consists of a set of quiz questions that will allow the students to define their negative emotions correctly and explain what kind of reaction they provoke in them.

For a person to be able to successfully deal with his/her emotions, it is essential that these emotions are recognized.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Self-awareness and awareness of emotions and reactions of other people.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

At the conclusion of this activity, participants will be able to:

- State their negative emotions
- Explain why they have such emotions
- Manage their emotions
- Enrich their vocabulary



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ACTION IDEAS

Before conducting the activity, the teacher must prepare a list of the following sentences, which students must complete:

- I like myself because...
- I am good at...
- I feel good because of...
- My friends would say I have a great...
- My favourite place is...
- I am loved by...
- People say I'm good at...
- I have been told that I have a beautiful...
- I think I'm good at...
- The thing that gives me the most pleasure is...
- The person I admire the most is...
- I have a natural talent to...
- My goals for the future are...
- I know I will achieve my goals because I am...
- People compliment me...
- I feel good when...
- I have achieved success in...
- I smile when I think of...
- I admire the following traits of my character the most...
- I am calm when....

Each student must receive a question sheet written above. The teacher sets a specific time to answer the questions, having the freedom to leave some of them unanswered. After everyone has finished the activity, the teacher allows the students to share what they have written (optional). The teacher can write some keywords from the given answers on the board.

After that, students discuss the following questions:

- What do you and your classmates have in common?
- Why is it essential to have self-confidence?
- Do you know what your talents, abilities, skills and strengths are?
- How did you feel during the activity? Better or do you feel worse than before?
- Is it easy to realise what your positive features are? Is it easy to express them out loud?
- Do you believe what you said?
- What is confidence? Why is it important? How to strengthen it?
- Have you discovered something new for yourself or someone from your classmates?



METHODOLOGY:

- Positive Psychology
- Social Metacognition

Partnership Development

COUNTRY ORIGIN:

Bulgaria

RESOURCE:

[Source](#)

DESCRIPTION

A list of games focusing on developing social skills and encouraging partnership.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Self-confidence; skills for development of partnership

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

Games are the environment in which people develop their language, intellectual, social and personal skills. They are directly related to the development of the whole personality and the ability to feel joy and be happy.



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ACTION IDEAS

1. Rhythm

The group stands in a circle. The presenter begins to clap his hands in a rhythm chosen by him. The others join him at the same pace until everyone starts clapping. Once everyone starts clapping, the facilitator calls by name a member of the group who changes the pattern of the rhythm. The others must follow him. The game continues until all participants are listed in the rhythm change group.

2. Group figure

The participants in the game stand in a circle, facing each other, and hold hands. The presenter offers them to imagine that they are connected with a standard line and sets them to outline together with the contours of various geometric shapes without letting go of the hands. Initially, participants may be asked to do a circle. The task is gradually complicated by delineating other shapes: triangle, square, rectangle, trapezoid, hexagon, etc.

Option: Instead of geometric figures, the students can be offered to “write” letters.

3. A walk with a mood

All participants walk around the room. The facilitator names different atmospheric conditions: “Windy”, “sunny”, “rainy”, “foggy”, etc., and the participants aim to continue their walk, reacting with appropriate movements, gestures and facial expressions, which, according to them, correspond to changes in the atmospheric conditions.

Options: The facilitator can name different adjectives reflecting relevant moods, such as: “happy”, “sad”, etc., and the participants must express them appropriately.

The facilitator can offer a name of a celebrity to be imitated or can indicate various events, for example:

“You meet a brief acquaintance”, “You step on gum”, “An evil dog stands in your way”, “Be careful not to step on it”, and others.



METHODOLOGY:

- Social Metacognition

A Merry-Go-Round

COUNTRY ORIGIN:

Bulgaria

RESOURCE:

[Source](#)

DESCRIPTION

A game for improving social skills and for engaging students improvisational, theatrical and interpersonal skills.

ACTION IDEAS

Two participants improvise a scene.

- A third person joins the scene, and one of the first two exits it. The other two continue.
- Another person joins, and the other leaves.
- Finally, the teacher asks the group what happened and how they reacted and handled the change.

The game often provokes questions and different subjects for conversation.



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KEY TAKEAWAY

- Social skills
- Improvisational skills
- Imagination
- Concentration
- Team work

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

By playing this game students improve their awareness of others' thought process and learn to adapt to change in conversation and environment. It is very beneficial for supporting the group dynamics and for encouraging students with different character traits to demonstrate their abilities.

METHODOLOGY:

- Growth Mindset

5 Strategies To Develop A Growth Mindset

COUNTRY ORIGIN:

Different EU Countries

RESOURCE:

[5 Strategies](#)

DESCRIPTION

The concept of a growth mindset, pioneered by Carol Dweck, PhD, Lewis and Virginia Eaton, Professor of Psychology at Stanford University, is continuing to impact education and rising to the forefront of pedagogy due to recent advances in neuroscience.

As students head back to school, educators are preparing to address learning gaps and drive student engagement and restore confidence after various unexpected changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a complementary component to intervention, a growth mindset could do the trick to assist educators.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Students will be able to:

- Build and increase their resilience.
- Self-awareness and motivation.
- Self-confidence.
- Positive reinforcement.

Teachers will work on their practices as professionals, through a growth mindset and positive reinforcement.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

Students will encourage motivation to learn, strengthen happiness and satisfaction and they will be able to reduce anxiety and stress.



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ACTION IDEAS

1. Buy in wholeheartedly

The first key to establishing a growth mindset in your classroom is believing in yourself. Take time to reflect on your attitudes about learning. Are there subjects or activities you avoid or dislike because you aren't "good" at them? A fixed mindset can quickly breed the belief that if you are not immediately successful at something, there is no point in putting forth any effort in the future. This kind of attitude could be harmful not only to your success but also to your students. Giving in to the idea that if something is difficult to learn, you "just aren't going to get it" deprives you of valuable learning opportunities and experiences. When you catch yourself falling into a fixed mindset, try to switch up your thinking and carry that new attitude into your classroom.

2. Encourage hard work, not cleverness

Who doesn't love being told they are smart? It's a great feeling—and one everyone deserves to experience. But, while it's essential to be supportive of students, applauding them for cleverness alone may not be beneficial in the long run. Instead of telling your students something like "you're smart" when they accomplish something, compliment their process and progress. Although a growth mindset recognises that not all students will have the same abilities across all subjects, acknowledging the work they put into learning something rather than their inherent abilities helps encourage a sense of accomplishment in students instead of pride. In turn, they'll be more motivated to continue improving.

3. Recognize the opportunity in failure

Sometimes, for any number of reasons, students fail. It's an unavoidable part of learning (and life) and frustrating at that. Failure and mistakes can create anxiety, mainly when they occur in an environment where something negative, like a bad grade, embarrassment, or even punishment, could happen. Fear of failure can prevent students from stepping outside their comfort zone and may even cause them to avoid challenges or shut down when faced with certain obstacles. But, handled in the right way, failure holds many opportunities.

When students are unsuccessful in a particular lesson or skill, remind them they are not "failing"—they just haven't succeeded yet. Remind your class that failure or mistakes are not outcomes; they are a chance to start over or try again.



ACTION IDEAS 2

4. Step out of your comfort zone

As education becomes more and more innovative, educators must demonstrate the power of some wisely calculated risk-taking by stepping out of their comfort zones in the classroom. Open yourself to trying out new teaching practises now and again, and if you try something new with your class that doesn't work out, be straightforward with your students about what you think worked, what didn't, and what you can improve. Invite them to give you feedback and apply it when possible. Your students look up to you, and by setting the example that when things don't work out perfectly, that means there is an opportunity to improve, you're showing them how to practise a growth mindset.

5. Don't forget about formative assessment

Formative assessment is a strategy perfectly designed to foster a growth mindset in your classroom. Formative assessment activities are designed to be quick, low-pressure checks for understanding. Not only do they help you keep tabs on students' progress and make adjustments, but they'll also encourage students to be upfront about what they're struggling with and ask for help when it's needed. Exit tickets, journaling, and other creative formative assessment tactics are great ways to build a feedback loop in your classroom that fosters continuous improvement.



METHODOLOGY:

- Positive Psychology
- Growth Mindset
- Social Metacognition

Find Out Your Character Strengths

COUNTRY ORIGIN:

Different EU Countries

RESOURCE:

[Personality Test](#)

DESCRIPTION

Your character strengths are the positive parts of your personality that impact how you think, feel and behave.

The VIA Survey is the only free, scientific survey of character strengths globally. Take this simple, 15-minute character test and discover your greatest strengths. Research shows that knowing and using your character strengths can help you:

- Increase happiness
- Find meaning and purpose
- Boost relationships
- Manage stress and health
- Accomplish goals

The survey comprises 96 questions and takes about 15 minutes to complete. There are no right/wrong answers, and there are no better/worse answers. The key is to be authentic to derive the most from experience. After taking the survey, you will rank your 24 strengths. Print it out if you can, and keep track of your top 5 strengths. Your top 5 strengths are typically your signature strengths, the characteristics that make you feel energised and engaged.

Discuss your strengths and how they contribute to your life and relationships. Research shows that knowing and using your character strengths can strengthen relationships, boost happiness and improve well-being. After taking the test, you will rank your 24 strengths. Make sure to document your top 5 strengths.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Self-awareness, self-assessment, the reflection of feelings, emotions and thoughts as well as actions in their life.



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BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

- Increase happiness
- Find meaning and purpose
- Boost relationships
- Manage stress and health
- Accomplish goals

ACTION IDEAS

This test can go perfectly with Practice: USE YOUR CHARACTER STRENGTHS TO BOOST HAPPINESS.

Ask Each student to fill in the survey.

Debrief on the results in the group:

Did you know about your core strengths?

How do you use them in your daily life?

Can you recall when you used your strengths, and it made you happy?

What do you do when you feel down? Are you using one of your strengths to make you feel better?



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METHODOLOGY:

- Positive psychology
- Growth mindset
- Social metacognition

Use Your Character Strengths To Boost Happiness

COUNTRY ORIGIN:

Different EU Countries

RESOURCE:

[VIA Institute](#)

DESCRIPTION

FEW WAYS TO USE YOUR STRENGTHS

One of the most popular exercises in the science of positive psychology (some argue it is the single most popular exercise) is referred to as “use your signature strengths in new ways.” Studies repeatedly show that this exercise is connected with long-term benefits (e.g., six months) such as higher levels of happiness and lower levels of depression.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Self-awareness, self-assessment, the reflection of feelings, emotions and thoughts as well as actions in their life.

Planning skills, self-management, growth mindset.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

- Increase happiness
- Find meaning and purpose
- Boost relationships
- Manage stress and health
- Accomplish goals



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ACTION IDEAS

*This exercise goes together with the character strengths test.

Ask students to:

1. Select one of their highest strengths – one of their character strengths that is core to who you are, is easy for you to use, and gives you energy;
2. Write this activity on the top of the paper;
3. Consider a new way to express the strength each day (In school or outside of it);
4. Make a list of activities that helps to express this strength;

This point might be challenging. For this reason, you can discuss what could help them to PUT THE EXERCISE INTO PRACTICE.

The teacher can start with a description: “In practice, however, people sometimes find it surprisingly challenging to come up with new ways to use one of their signature strengths. This is because we are very accustomed to using our strengths. We frequently use our strengths mindlessly without much awareness. For example, have you paid much attention to your use of self-regulation as you brush your teeth? Your level of prudence or kindness while driving? Your humility while at a team meeting? For some strengths, it is easy to come up with examples. Want to apply curiosity in a new way? Below is a sample mapping of what you might do. Please keep it simple. Make it complex. It's up to you!

- On Monday, take a new route home from school and explore your environment as you are going back home.
- On Tuesday, ask one of your classmates a question you have not previously asked them.
- On Wednesday, try a new food for lunch – something that piques your curiosity to taste.
- On Thursday, call a family member and explore their feelings about a recent positive experience.
- On Friday, take the stairs instead of the elevator and explore the environment as you do.
- On Saturday, as you do one household chore (e.g., washing the dishes, vacuuming), pay attention to 3 novel features of the activity while you do it. Example: Notice the whirring sound of the vacuum, the accumulation of dust swirling around in the container, the warmth of the water as you wash the dishes, the sensation of the weight of a single plate or cup, and so on.
- On Sunday, ask yourself two questions you want to explore about yourself – reflect or journal your immediate responses.
- Following Monday....keep going!



ACTION IDEAS 2

In some instances, you might feel challenged to come up with examples. After choosing one of your signature strengths, consider the following ten areas to help jolt new ideas within you and stretch your approach to the strength.

How might I express the character's strength:

- At school
- In my closest relationship
- While I engage in a hobby
- When with my friends
- When with my parents or brothers/sisters
- When I am alone at home
- When I am on a team
- As the leader of a project or group
- While I am walking
- While I am eating
- Bringing in psychology

You can also consider any of the 24 character strengths from the psychological perspective since, after all, each strength is a capacity for thinking, feeling, and behaving:

- Thoughts: What does perspective think like? When I'm expressing perspective, what thoughts go through my mind? What thoughts are present when I am acting prudently? A kind way?
- Emotions: What does bravery feel like? How might I notice humility as a feeling in my body...what bodily sensations align with the expression of humility?
- Behaviour: What does it look like for me to express gratitude? When I enact judgement/critical thinking, how am I coming across? What is the action involved when I am expressing fairness?

These examples and explanations can help demonstrate to students how to think about this task.

1. Ask students to finish their list.
2. Ask students to express their strength in a new way each day for at least one week (use the previously made a list.)
3. You can ask students to write down their thoughts about this journey.
4. In a week - discuss what happened? What changed? What changes do students see in their moods? How easy/hard was it to develop ideas and then fulfil them.



METHODOLOGY:

- Positive Psychology
- Social Metacognition

Class "Photo"

COUNTRY ORIGIN:

Bulgaria, England

RESOURCE:

[Source](#)

DESCRIPTION

Making a poster with "photos" of the class, drawn by the students themselves and attached with a list of compliments of every student in the class

ACTION IDEAS

1. All participants are given felt-tip pens and sheets in the upper part.
2. Everybody must draw a "photo" of themselves or give a symbol related to their personality.
3. Each participant must write something positive in the sheets of the other participants - quality, skill, and behaviour that they like.
4. When finished, everyone takes their sheet and in front of everyone reads the listed things, starting with the phrase: "I am ...".
Necessary: The group encourages everyone who reads the compliments, makes sure each compliment begins with "I am ..." and finally applauds everyone who reads their compliments.
5. The sheets are applied to the poster under the name of each student



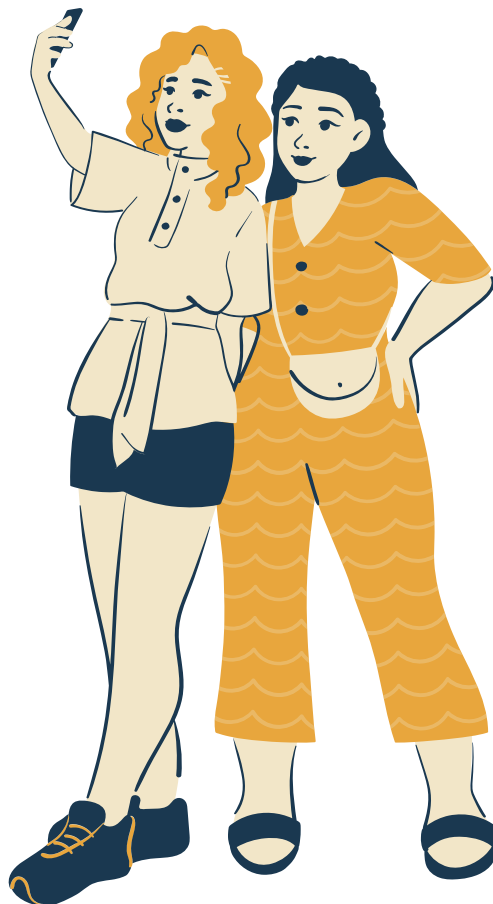
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KEY TAKEAWAY

- Social skills
- Improvisational skills
- Imagination
- Concentration
- Team work

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

By playing this game students improve their awareness of others' thought process and learn to adapt to change in conversation and environment. It is very beneficial for supporting the group dynamics and for encouraging students with different character traits to demonstrate their abilities.



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METHODOLOGY:

- Social Metacognition

Field Teaching

COUNTRY ORIGIN:

Bosnia and Herzegovina

RESOURCE:

[Questionnaire](#)

DESCRIPTION

The happiness of field teaching comes from being out in nature, taking a class out into the field to teach them about shapes or fossils or various other subjects. One of the most rewarding things teachers can do is take their students outdoors and teach them a lesson there. Being outside brings happiness to both teacher and student alike as they learn from each other and bond through this experience.

Field teaching can be fun, but it is also helpful for teaching children. Their happiness from learning something new in the great outdoors develops their happiness and builds their character. It also helps keep them fit and healthy by exercising whilst they learn. By taking students outdoors, teachers can create happiness for themselves and their students. The teacher's happiness from seeing their pupil's happiness is enough to make them burst with happiness. It also builds trust between students and teachers as they spend time together out in nature.

ACTION IDEAS

Teaching students how to be one with nature, respect, care, and keep a safe environment in which we live. Create student groups. Every group has an assignment for various photo and artefact collections. They were finally presenting the findings of their given topic.

Happiness activities create happiness from field teaching. These can include going on a hike, learning about how certain animals hunt and gather food, building sandcastles of different shapes, playing games involving teamwork, to name a few of the happiness activities possible. Teachers should always make sure students have time for happiness breaks; happiness activities should be interspersed with happiness breaks.

Taking the class outside allows them to learn about the world they live in. Being out in nature provides happiness for everyone involved. Teaching happiness and taking happiness breaks will continue this happiness throughout the lesson.



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KEY TAKEAWAY

- Interaction
- Friendliness
- Willingness to cooperate

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

- Learning about nature
- About environment protection
- How to treat and take proper care of the environment
- Socialising in nature
- Project classes
- School trips



METHODOLOGY:

- Positive Psychology
- Growth mindset

Growth Mindset Posters

COUNTRY ORIGIN:

Different EU Countries

RESOURCE:

[Source 1](#)

[Source 2](#)

DESCRIPTION

Teaching students to have a growth mindset has been proven by research to be effective. We cannot have a one-day lesson plan on growth mindset with students and then expect them to have it. Instead, it takes a paradigm shift, and to do this, we need to set up an environment conducive to the growth mindset. An environment that helps students become aware of their thinking, their abilities and allows them to question and reframe their doubts.

There are many ways to support the growth mindset environment in the classroom. Growth Mindset Language, Student Metacognition & Reflection, Process Over Product are just a couple of ways to boost students' growth mindset daily. With all that said, one of the easiest and most effective is - Visible Growth Mindset Environment.

Growth mindset posters are available in many different shapes and forms and can be used differently.

The inspirational messages in posters can help students think positively about themselves, build self-confidence and develop a growth mindset! The motivational posters are great visual reminders for students that a positive mindset, hard work and dedication can help them improve themselves and their abilities. These positive mantras can help shape students' inner dialogue, inspire them and give a character to the classroom.

ACTION IDEAS

Decorate your learning space with the growth mindset posters.

When appropriate, choose one of the posters and discuss it with students. Let students express their feelings and thoughts about the quote. Analyse the quote together with the student. Ask questions about their experience with situations mentioned in the quote.

Use language from the posters in your daily interactions with the kids.



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KEY TAKEAWAY

Self-confidence, ability to adopt positive inner dialogue and growth mindset.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

- Manage stress and health
- Accomplish goals
- Get inspired
- Improved self-esteem



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METHODOLOGY:

- Positive Psychology
- Social Metacognition

Emotionary - Say What You Feel

COUNTRY ORIGIN:

Spain

RESOURCE:

[Source 1](#) [Source 3](#)
[Source 2](#) [Source 4](#)
[Source 5](#)

DESCRIPTION

The dictionary of emotions can be seen as fundamental pedagogical support. It provides tools for children, teenagers and adults to learn about, identify and express their feelings. It describes forty-two emotional states. The book has been translated into Catalan, Basque, Galician and English. Palabras aladas's website provides diaries, guides, and worksheets as part of the "say what you feel" itinerary and free content.

KEY TAKEAWAY

- Learning and identifying each emotion.
- Improving well-being.
- Developing empathy.
- A healthy way of thinking and dealing with situations.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

The students can express emotions and feelings, using everyday examples, inviting them to look for small elements in life that can lead to gratitude.

Finding them will help them to form a more positive view of their experiences. In this way, they get used to always seeing positive aspects in almost every situation. This is a great practice in dealing with frustration, disappointment and even anger.

ACTION IDEAS

Happiness

To explore this emotion, you can start with a series of questions about the different elements represented in the illustration:

- Which elements appear in the image?
- Which elements are smiling, and why do you think they are smiling?
- What movement does the moon make to the Earth and the Earth for the sun? Do you think they find it satisfying to make these movements?
- What is a wooden horse used for? What does the wooden horse carry on its back? Do you think the wooden horse finds this satisfying?
- What elements decorate the picture's background that does not belong to the firmament? What arts or activities can you relate them to? Can you relate them to?
- Have you ever practised any of these activities or seen or heard of others practising them? Have you seen or heard of others doing them? How did it make you feel? Make you feel?
- What general feeling does the image give you?

Disappointment

To guide the further reading of the text, the image can be explored by asking the following questions:

- What characters are in the picture? Where are they?
- What is the fox holding? Why do you think it has this object?
- Why do you think he has this object?
- What do you think the fox thought when he took the little boat home?
- What do you think the fox thought when he took the little boat to his house?
- What did he find when he got to the pond? What consequences does this have for his plans?
- How do you think he feels and why?
- Another way to work with this picture is to ask the students to narrate what happens. Finally, it would be interesting to ask readers to suggest overcoming disappointment.



METHODOLOGY:

- Positive Psychology
- Social Metacognition

Qigong

COUNTRY ORIGIN:

Different EU Countries

RESOURCE:

[5 Mindful Movements](#)

DESCRIPTION

Mindful movement practices are essential when teaching mindfulness in schools because our students sit so much daily.

Qigong meditation is an ancient Chinese healing practise that combines controlled breathing, gentle movement, and meditation to promote good mental, physical, and spiritual health. It has become trendy in the EU nowadays, as it is straightforward to implement.

In this video, you can see four mindful movements and a game:

1. Beach Ball Breathing
2. Smile & Shake
3. Drawing the Bow
4. Qi Showers
5. Quarter Pass Game

All the movements in the video students can do wearing regular clothes. Students don't need yoga mats. It can be done right in the classroom even if students don't have a ton of room, and You can adjust all the movements for students who don't want to stand or might have a physical limitation—they can do them seated if they prefer.

ACTION IDEAS

Ask students to get up, find a safe space in the classroom where they will not bother each other and follow your movements (Or the movements from the video). To offer this practice in a trauma-sensitive way, make sure that students choose if there is a movement they don't want to do. They can pick another stretch so that the whole class is moving together and engaged while allowing students to interact and engage with physical practice in a way that feels safe and comfortable for them. You can do these movements at any time during the class, but try to start your classes with them.



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KEY TAKEAWAY

Emotional self-management, Self-confidence, discipline and ability to concentrate and focus.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

Psychological Benefits

- Improves Quality of Life. Quality of life measures a person's "perceived physical health, psychological state, personal beliefs, social relationships and relationship to relevant features of one's environment."
- Improves Self-Efficacy.
- Reduces Stress Biomarkers.
- Decreases Depression and Anxiety.
- Increased focus

Physiological Benefits (If practised often)

- Increases Bone Density.
- Improves Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Function.
- Improves Balance.
- Immune System Health. Qigong has been linked to several positive immune responses.
- Improves Somatic Symptoms.



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METHODOLOGY:

- Positive Psychology

Positive Emotions and Positive Psychology

COUNTRY ORIGIN:

Different EU Countries

RESOURCE:

[Source 1](#)

[Source 2](#)

DESCRIPTION

A good practice to identify positive emotions.

Positive emotions' doesn't just mean feeling happy all the time. A range of other emotions can also increase focus and success and, over time, improve student wellbeing. These emotions include joy, amusement, hope, pride, interest, compassion or gratitude. Every student will display these emotions differently, and there is no 'one-size-fits-all' approach. Being mindful of the different types of positive emotions is the first step in encouraging them among students in your classroom.

The support network *ReachOut Schools* provides free educational resources, digital tools and practical tips to encourage the development of positive mental health and wellbeing across schools and extend the impact of existing programs.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Define and identify a range of positive emotions, as well as self-awareness.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

The students will build their resilience, which will have a positive impact on their overall well-being and decrease feelings of stress and reduce negative emotions.



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ACTION IDEAS

There are many different ways to bring positive emotions into focus in the classroom. The following are a few suggested activities you could use.

1. Identify positive emotions

Because everyone is different, the first step is to ask your students to stop and think about the things that make them feel positive:

- Build a list of positive emotions together as a class.
- Ask students to pick five emotions and then write about moments that make them feel these emotions in their daily lives.
- Complete activities specific to a positive emotion – for example, writing letters of gratitude or sharing things that give students joy.
- Teach students about emotional awareness and self-regulation to help them identify the effects of positive emotions themselves.

2. Take notice

Your students might already be experiencing and demonstrating a range of positive emotions, but it can be hard to identify them unless we all take notice. Here are some suggestions for things you can do:

- Help students find the 'silver lining' in what they otherwise see as a negative experience.
- Provide positive feedback to students when they use positive emotions such as optimism, pride and compassion.
- Use examples from topics that make students feel confident.
- Use mindfulness exercises or meditation to help the class reflect on things they are grateful for.

3. Ask: 'What went well?'

Dedicate some time in your class's routine to reflecting on things that went well. This could be whole-class or individual reflection. Some ideas for doing this include:

- Ask each student to write a WWW (What Went Well?) at the end of a lesson.
- Brainstorm all the things that have gone well during a particular week, lesson or weekend.
- Following a challenging time or task, ask students to think about any positive aspects of the experience.

METHODOLOGY:

- Positive Psychology

Guess Who is So Good

COUNTRY ORIGIN:

Bulgaria

RESOURCE:

[Source](#)

DESCRIPTION

Making a positive portrait of a classmate.

ACTION IDEAS

1. One of the participants is asked to go out of the room
2. The rest of the class have to make a verbal portrait of another participant in the room. It is necessary to record the qualities, interests, and activities the described student can best be represented.

While the group is working, it is necessary to encourage the facilitator to give positive characteristics to the person they are describing. The condition that negative characteristics are not given may be introduced in advance.

3. After finishing the group's work, the participant who was out of the room returned and had to guess whom the group described.

- 4 The game is repeated several times so that all students in the class have a chance to receive their flattering portraits.



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KEY TAKEAWAY

Students will identify and understand the positive human qualities

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

Encouraging mutual interest, self-knowledge and positive self-esteem



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METHODOLOGY:

- Growth Mindset
- GRIT

Oxford Debate

COUNTRY ORIGIN:

UK, Poland, other EU countries

RESOURCE:

[Debate Material](#)

DESCRIPTION

The Oxford debate is a special, formalised type of discussion between two teams - a proposal and an opposition - on the thesis put forward, which should be in the form of a declarative sentence. There are four teams in the Oxford debate. The proposal defends the thesis of the debate, while the opposition is trying to overthrow it.

Importantly, the thesis is given to the teams a few days or weeks before the debate. So that each team could substantively prepare for the discussion. Here, concrete matters: definitions, facts and statistics, individual observations and opinions of debaters about the surrounding world, not hastily invoked.

KEY TAKEAWAY

- Communication skills
- Courage to speak up in the forum
- Self-organisation
- Cooperation
- Ability to respect different people and their opinions

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

Debates teach students to argue their position in oral and written statements more fully. They show how theoretical skills influence the recipients of statements. It is possible to discuss with each other culturally and objectively - without aggression and personal arguments, with respect for the interlocutor and his views, often different from ours.



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ACTION IDEAS

Teams come to the debate prepared for discussion. However, they do not know whether they will defend the thesis or disprove it. The drawing of positions takes place on the day of the debate. Teams are given several minutes to review their notes and choose the most valid arguments.

The Marshal chairs the debate, sometimes with the assistance of the Secretary. He gives the floor to other members of the proposal and the opposition team. The first speaker of the proposal side to speak is the first to speak, followed by the first speaker of the opposition. Then the voice returns to the opposition - now is the time of the second speaker, then the second speaker of the opposition follows, etc.

Each team member has a specific role to play:

The first speaker - it is good if he introduces his team, welcomes the opposing team, the Marshal, the group of Experts, the audience; his primary task is to define the thesis of the debate - that is, to explain how his team understands it. If he has time, this speaker can also give his first arguments.

The second speaker - gives arguments for the thesis (Proposal) or against the thesis (Opposition). Of course, he justifies the arguments, not only lists them.

The third speaker - refutes the arguments of the opposing side.

The fourth speaker - sums up his team's arguments first of all.

Each speaker has a few minutes to speak - usually four. The parties may ask each other questions or provide information. The number of questions and information the team has to accept is determined by the rules of the debate, while the voice of people who want to ask or add something is usually given by the Marshal. Points may be deducted for arbitrarily speaking out of the team.

A debate is a discussion for which points are awarded. In addition to the teams, the Marshal, and the audience, a group of Experts assessed by both teams is also present during the debate. The Marshal may assess the content and rhetorical layer, body language, language culture, the speakers' performance, and their behaviour. Points can also be lost, such as using ad hominem arguments, being uncultured towards the opposing team, and speaking out without the Marshal's permission. The teams' task is to discuss the thesis, not to convince the Experts to adopt a specific position.

METHODOLOGY:

- Positive Psychology
- Social Metacognition

Morning Meeting

COUNTRY ORIGIN:

UK, Poland, other EU countries

RESOURCE:

[Source](#)

DESCRIPTION

Responsive Classroom Morning Meeting is an engaging way to start each day, build a strong sense of community, and set children up for success socially and academically.

Each morning, students and teachers gather together in a circle for ten to thirty minutes and interact with one another during four purposeful components:

- Greetings.
- Sharing.
- Group Activity.
- Morning Message.

Morning meetings can be used in every age group, although the activities, time spent on it and sharing vary according to age.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Communication skills, interactions with peers, self-awareness, sense of belonging, a boost of confidence and awareness of group dynamics.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

This provides daily opportunities for children to practice skills such as greeting, listening and responding, speaking to a group, reading, group problem-solving, noticing, and anticipating. Teachers integrate aspects of the classroom curriculum into the routine, which helps students transition to school and sets a tone of interactive and engaged learning from the outset of the day.

It encourages a safe environment and opportunity for students to have designated time to connect with others and share what is happening in their lives/emotions.



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ACTION IDEAS

Every morning before the start of the academic day, to have a designated time for sharing and "getting on the same page".

- **First, start with greeting:** Students and teachers greet one other by name. Example: 2 min of mingling around and shaking each other's hands. (or any other type of greeting-you can have a different greeting every morning).
- **Then get to the part of sharing:** Students share information about important events in their lives. Listeners often offer empathetic comments or ask clarifying questions. You can do this in different ways - open a microphone (anyone can share whatever they like), everybody answers the same question, only a couple of students share their pre-arranged announcements.
- **Followed by group Activity:** Everyone participates in a brief, lively activity that fosters group cohesion and helps students practise social and academic skills (for example, reciting a poem, dancing, singing, playing a game, having an energizer).
- **And ended with a Morning Message:** Students read and interact with a short message written by their teacher. The message is crafted to help students focus on their work in a school that day.



METHODOLOGY:

- Social Metacognition

Using Short Movies in Teaching Process

COUNTRY ORIGIN:

Bosnia and Herzegovina

RESOURCE:

[Source](#)

DESCRIPTION

Use film as part of the teaching curriculum and visualisation techniques of conscious and connected thinking techniques. Short films can be used in the teaching process to inspire happiness and conscious happiness techniques. It is just a matter of making the best choice. There are short movies that represent happiness in its rawest form, without any added sugar or any extra unnecessary things you might say.

Suppose we can help our students to learn happiness in its rawest form. In that case, we will make them more successful in future - happiness can create lots of good feelings around it, and happiness is the number one power that makes people feel better about themselves. Films are a great way to achieve that happiness through visualisation techniques of conscious and connected thinking.

ACTION IDEAS

The students prepare themselves with specific topics about valued topics which contain significant value to society. Recognising human values and using them in your life can contribute to students' happiness.

Short-film happiness begins with students trained to find happiness in their lives. How can you teach happiness? One way is through watching short videos that will help the student understand the topic of happiness. Here are several ideas of short films related to happiness below, which can be used as teaching materials for elementary and high school students.

- The happiness hypothesis - how much happiness do you need?
- The happiness hypothesis- happiness and health.
- The happiness hypothesis - happiness and money.
- The happy secret to better work.



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KEY TAKEAWAY

Developing interest and love, accepting and overcoming difficulties in work, accepting a different opinion

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

- Movie making skills
- Socialising
- Researching universal human values
- Teamwork



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METHODOLOGY:

- GRIT
- Social Metacognition

Group Work for Happiness

COUNTRY ORIGIN:

Bosnia and Herzegovina

RESOURCE:

[Source](#)

DESCRIPTION

Group work for happiness has several significant advantages. First, happiness is more easily acquired through group work than individual work. Therefore happiness can be learned more effectively when practised in a group. Second, happiness is the product of argumentative thinking and critical appraisal (Nussbaum & Sen, 1993). Therefore happiness can be acquired through class discussion and analysis of literary characters with a critical mind. Group Work not only provides opportunities for happiness, but it also facilitates happiness. Third, happiness is difficult to acquire due to inexperience or lack of practice (Michalos, 2008). Therefore happiness can be learned through practising happiness. Group work allows students to practice happiness by solving particular problems or completing particular tasks. Fourth, happiness is usually the result of positive emotions (Gable, Reis & Impett, 2004). Therefore happiness can be acquired by analysing literary characters with joy and optimism (Wilkinson, 2012). Group Work encourages happiness by sharing happiness with all members of the group.

- Use pair or group work.
- Set papers and project assignments
- Encourage argumentative, critical thinking about happiness.
- Students whose exposure is the subject of critical appraisal thus practice emotion control
- Sometimes organise competitive quizzes, children have a hard time coping with failure, so they practice that skill.
- Through the analysis of literary characters - expressing a critical opinion, argumentative debate.

KEY TAKEAWAY

- ability to recognize and name positive behaviour or successful work in other people
- ability to analyse deficiencies
- ability to work in a team
- control of personal emotions and ambitions
- developing a sense of belonging to a group

ACTION IDEAS

In the motivational part of the lesson, the teacher can tell or read a short story or a song about happiness and comment on it briefly. They will then divide the students into groups. The name of the groups is based on the terms: happiness, contentment, love, empathy, joy ...

On the tables in the envelope, all groups have tasks for group work that they will solve within the group on a given topic according to the name of their group. Group work is limited in time, and group work rules are followed. After completing the work on the joint task, each group presents their work on a chart block that they did together and places their work as a poster on the board. Other students can ask questions and comment. After the presentation of all groups, common conclusions will be reached.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

- Students feel happy when they are working in group activities.
- They feel purpose in pair works, cooperation, working together
- The most significant benefit of these activities is that students feel through mutual support with their peers, meeting others and strengthening new friendships.



METHODOLOGY:

- GRIT

Role Playing

COUNTRY ORIGIN:

Bosnia and Herzegovina

RESOURCE:

[Source](#)

DESCRIPTION

Role-playing, unfinished sentences, group cohesion games, an hour of emotions ... everything that puts students in a different pattern than usual.

For most students, role-playing is an opportunity to do something different than usual. Some would see a chance to get out of work. Others find a great tool to learn and have fun. While the latter might not enjoy their happiness lesson, happiness role-playing can be very productive. As popular as role-playing happiness games are with happiness teachers worldwide, they aren't always successful in reaching their goals. For happiness lessons that include role-playing to improve happiness levels among their participants, there has to be a good quality teacher running them. This doesn't just mean being familiar with standard templates and techniques used when teaching happiness skills but also adapting one's style according to each group's individual needs.

Role-playing helps improve literacy skills among young children because it allows reading comprehension and literature appreciation to take on a new dimension, making the learning process more dynamic and engaging. Reading stories would come alive for children who will learn about real-life situations through role-playing if they were given opportunities to act these out themselves. For older children, role-playing activities help them improve their social skills such as planning, making decisions, coming up with ideas or solutions for problems. It can also teach them how to deal with other people in different situations, especially when understanding emotions and feelings.

KEY TAKEAWAY

- Acting
- Socialising
- Freedom of expression
- Movement



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ACTION IDEAS

To begin with, role-playing creates a psychological community. Monitors who provide what role and, depending on that, creates a concept of work, rarely encourage active students to be more visible and learn the structure to those students who typically disrupt it.

Roleplay is learning where students learn by taking on a chosen role and behaving as if they are in that situation. Role-playing is a great way to get students to pay attention, have fun or do creative activities.

In the classroom setting, teachers can use role-play to teach children how to behave in different situations, such as meeting someone new, sharing ideas, apologising, etc. In the ESL classroom, this activity is used by teachers while teaching English conversation classes to let their students have fun while learning new words and expressions. Teachers may also go over pronunciation with the help of these creative techniques.

For international students who need practice speaking English with native speakers, role-playing activities allow them real-life experiences using the English language. Role-playing is not only limited to the teachers and students. Still, it can also be introduced as a form of activity where students play roles of different characters in a story, which encourages learning by doing and creating together.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

- Playing various life roles
- Getting put into certain individuals' life perspectives in order to understand them better
- Better understanding life through role-playing
- Courage to be involved



METHODOLOGY:

- Positive Psychology
- Social Metacognition

Fostering Kindness and Empathy in Children and Youth

COUNTRY ORIGIN:

Different EU Countries

RESOURCE:

[Source 1](#)

[Source 2](#)

DESCRIPTION

Volunteering is one effective way to foster empathy and kindness in children and youth. Dr Kimberly Schonert-Reichl, an investigator in this study and internationally recognized developmental psychologist, offers a list of practical actions that science has shown to build the skills and strengths that help children be kind.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Empathy and kindness

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

Helping others is good for society, social and emotional development and health! Volunteering shows higher levels of empathy, altruism and even a lowered risk of heart disease.



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ACTION IDEAS

1. Talk about your student's feelings and the feelings of others that are communicated through facial and body expressions. When your student is sad or happy, you might say, "I can tell how you are feeling because your face and body are telling me." When a student's friend or sibling is showing a feeling (such as sadness), point out that the student's feelings are expressed through facial and body expressions. Discuss the experiences and situations that lead to the various types of emotions.
2. Use a wide variety of emotional words in your interactions with young students. When talking to your young student, use several different emotional words to talk about situations or events. Point out the emotions of others and use opportunities to expand your student's emotional vocabulary, including guilt, satisfaction, pride, anxiety, fear, and excitement.
3. Engage young students in activities that help you and others. Like all of us, students want to help and contribute.
4. Demonstrate caring and kindness through your actions. As we often know, students often can learn more from our actions than our words. Acknowledge your mistakes with your students (e.g., say "I am sorry"). Show forgiveness to others and your students.
5. Talk about kindness and the good feelings when doing kind things for others. When your student is helping, tell them how good it feels. Communicate your pride and happiness to your student for their helpful behaviour.
6. Promote gratitude. Encourage your students to give thanks. Model gratitude and point out to your students all they have to be thankful for in their lives.
7. Use a positive and restorative approach to discipline and model empathy when your student has done something wrong. When your student has done something wrong, use this as an opportunity for discussion, using a child-centred approach in which you take your student's perspective – that is, put yourself in their shoes and view the world from that point of view. Engage your students in problem-solving – and discuss how they could do something different in the future that would end more positively. You might say, "What could we do if this happens again? What would be a way to solve this problem?" Also, help your students develop a restorative approach – that is, to find ways to repair harm when harm has been done. For example, if they have harmed another student intentionally or by accident, ask them what they could do to help the other student feel better.
8. Help your students develop a "caring" identity. When your students are engaging in activities that are caring and kind, you should recognize that behaviour as part of his or their identity – "you are such a kind and caring student because you did [the behaviour that demonstrated kindness and caring]."





Glossary

This glossary explains some of the happiness-related terms used in the booklet.

Assertiveness is the ability to stand up for oneself while still respecting the rights of others.

Awareness of others is comprehending and reacting appropriately to societal and interpersonal difficulties. Being socially aware means accurately interpreting the emotions of people with whom one interacts (Cerezo & McWhirter, 2012). These skills have been associated with better social adjustment and responsible decision making (Van Huynh, 2018).

Communication skills include understanding knowledge and ideas and expressing them effectively in verbal, nonverbal, and written communication. These skills include the ability to negotiate, persuade, transmit and interpret knowledge (Lippman et al., 2015)

Critical and creative thinking skills (DiYanni, 2016) can be developed through practice and have been found to impact student academic performance (Hove, 2011). Focus on students' creative thinking skills rather than only on subject knowledge helps students to explore and discover alternatives rather than simply memorise (Beghetto & Kaufman, 2014)

Critical thinking is an essential life skill that enables one to adapt to changes in today's world - Lucas, B., & Spencer, E. (2017). Teaching Creative Thinking: Developing learners who generate ideas and can think critically (Pedagogy for a Changing World series). Crown House Publishing Ltd.

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is the capacity to be aware of and manage one's own emotions and the emotions of others. EI has been found to contribute to successful academic performance (Parker, Salovey, & Maynard, 2003).



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Empathy can be defined as the affective and cognitive ability to feel and understand another's emotional state or condition (Eisenberg, 2003). It can contribute to altruistic and prosocial behaviours and is associated with psychological health. Healthy relationships with peers, parents and teachers can help enhance psychosocial development and emotional well-being, including optimism, empathy, self-esteem and self-efficiency (OECD, 2015).

Gratitude is the feeling of happiness and appreciation that comes from counting one's blessings. It has been found to contribute to increased happiness, satisfaction with life, and mental and physical health (Emmons & McCullough, 2003).

GRIT is a positive, non-cognitive trait based on an individual's perseverance of effort combined with the passion for a particular long-term goal or end state (a powerful motivation to achieve an objective).

A growth mindset is a belief that intelligence can be developed and improved through effort, good teaching, and persistence. People with a growth mindset see failures as opportunities to learn and grow instead of setbacks.

Metacognition, or reflection, refers to the skills of “thinking about thinking,” facilitating individuals' awareness of their cognitive processes and strategies (Winne & Nesbit, 2010). People with good metacognitive skills are aware of their strengths and weaknesses and can better evaluate their capacity (Sperling et al., 2012). A positive relationship has been found between metacognitive skills and academic performance (Taraban, Rynearson, & Kerr, 2000)

Mindfulness is hypothesised to help participants feel a sense of calm, happiness, well-being, and engagement with others. It can also enhance exploration, imagination, inquisitiveness, and the ability to develop relationships, contributing to success in school and beyond (Scoffham & Barnes, 2011).

Positive psychology is the scientific study of happiness. It focuses on what makes people happy and how happiness can be increased.

Resilience is the ability to cope with stress and adversity.



Self-development is continuously improving oneself to reach one's full potential. It involves setting goals and taking action to achieve them. Self-development can increase happiness and satisfaction with life (Nguyen, 2017).

Self-awareness is how the mind receives and reacts to experiences; it involves paying attention to oneself and knowing one's strengths and weaknesses. Self-awareness skills are thought to reduce attention and behaviour problems and anxiety symptoms in children (Semple, Lee, Rosa, & Miller, 2010).

Self-confidence is the belief in one's own abilities and is associated with increased happiness and success in life (Bandura, 2006).

A sense of belonging is the feeling of connectedness to a community or group.

Social Awareness within a community can help individuals take on leadership roles and work together to solve problems (OECD, 2018).

Social metacognition is the ability to think about one's own thoughts and emotions and to understand and regulate them. It also includes the ability to understand and manage the thoughts and emotions of others.

Social-emotional skills enable individuals to recognise and manage emotions, appreciate the perspectives of others, establish and maintain positive relationships, make responsible decisions and handle interpersonal situations constructively. Evidence suggests that these skills contribute to the development and use of cognitive skills (OECD, 2017)

Stress management is the ability to manage one's stress levels in order to stay healthy and productive.

Well-being is a state of happiness and satisfaction. It is not merely the absence of illness but a positive feeling of physical, psychological and social health (WHO, 2018).



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