



Lesson Time: 15–25 minutes

Managing Emotions

Objectives & Outcomes

Lesson Objectives: Students will create a graph that shows the efficacy of specific coping mechanisms for managing a range of emotions.

Lesson Outcomes: *Students will be able to...*

- explain the connection between emotions and conduct.
- name coping mechanisms that work for managing each of a list of emotions.

Subject Area Connection: Math, Language Arts

Background

Our emotions influence everything we do, from the words we speak when provoked to the way we perform under the pressure of an exam. Coping mechanisms are the conscious and unconscious ways we employ to help us manage our emotions and handle stress in order to respond optimally to every situation. People develop coping mechanisms over time as they mature and learn what does and does not work for them.

This lesson will highlight the connection between emotions and conduct. Students will discuss various coping mechanisms and how they can be utilized to manage different emotions. Students will be motivated to employ coping mechanisms to regulate their responses.

“Students will be motivated to **employ coping mechanisms** to **regulate their responses.**”

Getting Ready

Teacher Preparation: To prepare for this lesson, write a list of emotions on one side of the board: anger, happiness, worry, excitement, surprise, anxiety, pride, annoyance, embarrassment, amusement, guilt, jealousy, relief, fear, sadness, hope, irritation, discouragement, etc.

Materials Required:

- chalkboard or whiteboard
- chalk or marker
- pencils
- large drawing paper
- rulers

Introduction and Modeling

Begin by calling out the following scenarios. For each one, ask students to say how it would make them feel and how they would react.

- Someone spilled a drink on you at lunch.
- Your best friend threw you a surprise party.
- You're trying to study and your brother refuses to turn down the volume on the TV.
- You have a big exam coming up that is worth half your grade.
- You tripped and fell in the hallway at school.

Point out that different situations evoke different feelings. Then make the connection between the emotion and how the student would react (e.g., You said you would feel annoyed and because you were annoyed, you would yell at your brother).

Key Vocabulary

emotion: a state of feeling.

self-discipline: managing your own words and actions.

coping mechanism: a way to handle emotions and stress.

Procedure

1. Explain that our emotions influence everything we say and do, but we don't have to allow our emotions to control us. There are things people do, both consciously and unconsciously, to help them be in control of their emotions and therefore of their words and actions. These things are called coping mechanisms.
2. Write *coping mechanisms* on the board. Ask students if they can name some coping mechanisms. Write students' ideas on the board.
3. Add to students' ideas so that your list includes at least 15 coping mechanisms: take a deep breath, count to 10, listen to music, talk to a family member, exercise, volunteer, spend time outdoors, watch TV/go to a movie, talk to a friend, spend time with animals, clean and/or organize your space, talk to a teacher or coach, read, play an instrument, draw/paint, take a nap, build something, etc.
4. Explain that some coping mechanisms work for some people and not for others. Additionally, some coping mechanisms will work when you are experiencing a certain emotion, but not for other emotions. (e.g., Exercise may help when you feel anxious, but not when you feel sad. Listening to music may help you calm down when you are angry, but not when you are anxious.)
5. Discuss as a class or in small groups which coping mechanisms students have used and which emotions they work to control. Then ask students to name which coping mechanisms they have not tried, but might work for them.
6. Pass out large drawing paper, rulers, and pencils.
7. Show students how to set up a graph so that the coping mechanisms listed on the board are the X-axis and the emotions listed on the board are the Y-axis. Explain that students' graphs should show which coping mechanisms work for which emotions by marking the point where the two intersect.

Discussion Questions

- Which emotion is the hardest to control? (Make sure to point out there isn't one right answer to this question.)
- Did you ever do or say something you regret because you allowed your emotions to control you?
- Which coping mechanisms can be used any time, and which may have to be delayed?
- When you talk to someone about your feelings, do you want them to just listen or to offer you advice?
- Which of the coping mechanisms we talked about are best for managing overall stress?

Evaluation

Students should be able to explain the connection between emotions and conduct. Students' graphs should show that they know which coping mechanisms work for them to manage certain emotions.

Tips for Tailoring this Lesson

For Higher Grade Levels

- Ask students to keep a journal that details the connection between emotions and conduct and tells which coping mechanisms students tried in various situations.
- Ask students to draw up a plan of action for someone who has trouble managing his or her anger, anxiety, etc. Which coping mechanisms should he or she try?

For Lower Grade Levels

- Have students set goals to try the coping mechanisms they haven't tried before and update their graphs as new information becomes available.

Alignment to Standards and Frameworks

Common Core State Standards: College & Career Readiness

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Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening

CCRA.SL.1 Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

CCRA.SL.5 Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.

Anchor Standards for Language

CCRA.L.1 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate.

Social and Emotional Core Competencies

Social and Emotional Core Competencies: the five interrelated sets of cognitive, affective and behavioral competencies associated with social and emotional learning as identified by CASEL. Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning www.casel.org

Self-awareness

Students are asked to recognize that their emotions influence their decision making and conduct. Students are asked to analyze factors that can cause stress or negative emotions and lead to poor self-management.

Self-management

Students are asked to explain the benefits of various coping mechanisms and make a connection between specific coping mechanisms and the emotions they can be used to control. Students are equipped to apply strategies to manage emotions and stressful situations.