



4: The Magic of Emotional Intelligence

PK-6

*A PK-6 Lesson on Understanding Feelings, Managing Reactions,
and Building Better Relationships*



Introduction for the Facilitator

This lesson introduces PK-6 students to the professional skill of **emotional intelligence**, which is the ability to recognize our own feelings, understand the emotions of others, and use that understanding to make good choices in how we respond and connect.

When children learn to name their feelings, manage their reactions, and empathize with others, they gain one of the most valuable lifelong advantages: **the ability to lead themselves and work well with others**. Emotional intelligence supports not only academic success and classroom harmony, but also deeply impacts the **lifestyle** they create, including the kinds of friendships, confidence, and experiences they build for themselves.

Practicing understanding people, communicating clearly, and making thoughtful decisions adds to students' **personal competitive advantage**. Emotional intelligence is the foundation for future teamwork, leadership, self-regulation, and problem solving.

This lesson is crafted for all ages PK-6 and includes:

- **A Social Story that brings emotional intelligence to life**
- **8 Group Discussion Questions with follow-up questions**
- **8 Journal Prompts (draw or write)**
- **10 engaging classroom Activities for understanding and practicing the skill**
- **A printable Worksheet to help students reflect and grow**

Let's guide our students toward the emotional awareness and strength that will help them thrive—one thoughtful step at a time.



Social Story: Aaliyah and the Feeling Puzzle

Aaliyah was a great friend and a great student. But sometimes, she felt things so strongly that she didn't know what to do with them. Like when she got skipped in a game, her stomach would twist and her face would burn. Or when her little brother broke her project, her chest felt tight and she wanted to scream.

One day, her teacher Mr. Li introduced a new activity: "Let's build our Feeling Puzzle," he said. "Emotional intelligence means being able to name our feelings, understand them, and make good choices even when they're strong."



Mr. Li gave each student a paper puzzle with five pieces:

- What am I feeling?
- What caused this feeling?
- What does this feeling make me want to do?
- What can I do that helps instead?
- How can I check in with someone else's feelings too?

Aaliyah thought about the time she had shouted at her brother. She filled out her puzzle: She felt angry. Because her project broke. She wanted to yell. But she could take a breath. Then ask for help. And maybe ask how her brother was feeling too.

That moment changed things. Aaliyah started using her Feeling Puzzle every time emotions got big. It didn't make the feelings go away, but it gave her tools to be in charge of them. And soon, she started noticing how other people felt too. She became the kind of person others trusted.

Aaliyah's emotional intelligence became a part of her **personal competitive advantage**. It helped her grow stronger on the inside and more connected to the people around her. It helped her live the kind of **lifestyle** she wanted: calm, kind, and confident.



Group Discussion Questions

1. What does emotional intelligence mean to you?

Follow-up: Why is it helpful to understand your own feelings?

2. What happens when we don't understand or name our emotions?

Follow-up: How does that affect our choices or relationships?

3. Why is it important to notice how others feel?

Follow-up: What does empathy look like in action?

4. Can strong emotions be helpful sometimes?

Follow-up: What's a time when a big feeling helped you learn or grow?

5. What helps you calm down when feelings get big?

Follow-up: How does that help your brain make better choices?

6. How does emotional intelligence help us build friendships?

Follow-up: What makes someone a good emotional teammate?

7. What's a personal competitive advantage?

Follow-up: How does emotional intelligence help build yours?

8. What kind of lifestyle do you want to live?

Follow-up: How does understanding emotions help you get there?



Journal Prompts

(Students can write or draw their answers based on age and ability.)

1. **Draw or write about a time when you had a strong feeling. What did it feel like?**
2. **What's one emotion you know really well? What does it look, sound, or feel like?**
3. **Describe a time when someone helped you understand your emotions.**
4. **If your feelings were colors, what color would each one be? Draw or label them.**
5. **What helps you move from a big feeling into a calmer space?**
6. **What do you do to check in on how someone else is feeling?**
7. **If you had a "Feelings Superpower," what would it help you do?**
8. **How does understanding your emotions help you build your personal competitive advantage?**



Activities

1. **Feelings Charades**
Students act out emotions while others guess. Add follow-up questions like "What could help in this moment?"
2. **Mood Meter Map**
Create a wall chart with zones for high/low energy and pleasant/unpleasant feelings. Students place their names as check-ins.
3. **Feelings Detective Journal**
Students observe characters in a story or real-life situations and record clues: "How do they feel? How do I know?"
4. **Emotion-Situation Match**
Match real-life events (e.g., "lost my backpack") to emotional responses and healthy reactions.
5. **Calm Me Cards**
Students design their own "calm cards" with personalized emotional reset strategies.
6. **The Five Steps Puzzle**
Students cut and glue puzzle pieces representing: Name It, Understand It, Pause, Choose, Empathize.
7. **Perspective Walk**
Read or role-play short stories and switch characters: "How does the other person feel? Why?"
8. **Inside/Outside Drawings**
On one side of a paper, students draw what a feeling looks like on the outside; on the other, what it feels like inside.
9. **Feelings Tree**
Each leaf represents a different feeling. Students write their name on one and share what helps them with it.
10. **My Feelings Superpower**
Students create a superhero version of themselves with powers like "Empathy Vision" or "Calm Force Field."



My Emotional Intelligence Map

Name: _____

Helpful Words:

- **Emotion** = a strong feeling like happiness, sadness, anger, or excitement
- **Emotional Intelligence** = using my feelings in smart ways
- **Lifestyle Goal** = the kind of life I want to live
- **Personal Competitive Advantage** = my special strengths and habits that help me grow

Directions:

Write or draw your answers to explore your emotions and how you manage them.

Use the back of this sheet if you need more space.

1. One big feeling I know really well is:

5. One way I notice how someone else is feeling is:

2. This is how it feels in my body:

6. Understanding my feelings helps me by:

3. When I feel this way, I usually want to:

7. This is how emotional intelligence helps my personal competitive advantage:

4. A better choice I can make is:

8. This is how emotional intelligence helps me live the lifestyle I want: