

# Exploring Needs and Feelings

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this learning experience is to begin exploring the relationship between needs and feelings. By listening to a story and identifying the needs of the character and what they are feeling, students will practice

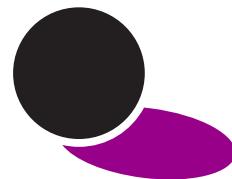
recognizing another's needs and noticing the connection between needs and feelings. They will learn that feelings can be both physical sensations in the body and emotions that we feel about a situation.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will:

- Explore the basic human needs for happiness, life and learning.
- Explore the relationship between needs and feelings.

## PRIMARY CORE COMPONENTS



Attention &  
Self-Awareness

## LENGTH

20 minutes

## MATERIALS REQUIRED

- Whiteboard or chart paper and markers
- Nelson's Day at Grandma's House story
- List of shared needs
- A green marker
- A blue marker

## CHECK-IN | 3 minutes

- "Let's do some resourcing and grounding to calm and relax our bodies.
- First we'll take a comfortable and upright posture. Then we'll keep our eyes on the ground or close them.
- Now let's choose a resource. It can be one from your resource kit, a new one, or you can imagine one.
- Let's bring our resource to mind and pay attention to it for a few moments quietly.
- If you'd rather do grounding, you can do that too. [Pause.]
- What do you notice inside? If you feel pleasant or neutral, you can rest your mind on that.
- If you feel unpleasant, you can shift to a different resource, or you can ground. You can also change your posture but try not to disturb anyone else if you do that. Otherwise, just keep your attention resting with your resource." [Pause.]

End here, or if time allows, continue with a practice for strengthening attention:

- "Now let's become aware of our breathing. Let's see if we can pay attention to the breath as it enters and leaves our body.
- If you find paying attention to the breath uncomfortable, then feel free to go back to your resource or grounding, or just take

a small break, making sure not to disturb anyone else. [Pause for 15-30 seconds.]

- If you ever get distracted, you can just return your attention to the breath. You can also count your breath. [Pause for a longer time, such as 30-60 seconds or longer.]
- You can strengthen your attention by focusing on sensations or by focusing on the breath. It's your choice - it's always up to you.
- What did you notice?" [Share aloud.]

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## INSIGHT ACTIVITY | 13 minutes

### Recognizing Needs

#### Overview

In this insight activity, your class will read the story "Nelson's Day at Grandma's House," and discuss how Nelson is feeling. The group will consider Nelson's needs and the feelings associated with met and unmet needs.

#### Content/Insights to be Explored

- We have many needs as we go throughout our day.
- Our needs can be met or go unmet.
- We generally feel one way if our need is met, but a different way if our need is not met.
- Considering a person's needs can help us understand what they are going through and why they are feeling certain emotions.

## Materials Required

- The list of shared needs created in the previous lesson
- Chart paper
- 1 green marker
- 1 blue marker
- The story: Nelson's Day at Grandma's House

## Instructions

- Tell students that you will read the story "Nelson's Day at Grandma's House." Last time we heard about Nelson, it was about his difficult day. This story follows our friend Nelson at his Grandma's house.
- As you read the story, pause where there are fill-in-the-blanks for Nelson's feelings, and ask students to share how the blanks should be filled in. You will write the feeling words they suggest on a piece of chart paper using the blue marker. Then ask students about Nelson's sensations, and write those words on the chart paper using the green marker.
- At the fill-in-the-blank points in the story, ask students one or more of the following questions:
  - How do you think Nelson is feeling right now?
  - What sensations might he be having in his body?
  - What does he need right now? [Refer to the shared needs list if necessary. Add the

student's suggested need to your list by writing it on the board.]

- How do you think he will feel if he gets what he needs?
- How do you think he will feel if he doesn't get what he needs?
- After you finish reading the story, go over your shared needs list. Did Nelson have any of those needs also?

## Teaching Tips:

Students can raise their hand when they perceive a need or feeling Nelson might have. If they do not, use the asterisks as moments to pause and explicitly ask them the above questions.

## Sample Script

- Who remembers the story of Nelson we read before? What was the activity we did with that story last time? Yes, we looked for sparks and discussed how he moved through the zones.
- We're going to read another story about Nelson. This time, we are going to focus on Nelson's feelings and how they relate to what Nelson might need.
- What does it mean for a need to be met or unmet? Well if Nelson needed friendship, his need would be met if he had friends around him. But if he needed friendship and he doesn't have any friends, then his need would be unmet.
- I'm going to read the story and pause at moments when we come to a feeling or need.

[Begin reading the story, provided below. When you come to a blank, ask some or all of the following questions:]

- How do you think Nelson is feeling right now? What sensations might he be feeling in his body? (Like his heart beating fast, feeling sweaty, feeling hot, feeling cold, feeling tired.) [Write these sensation words in green on the board.]
- What emotions might he be feeling about this situation? Is he feeling mad, sad, happy, surprised, or afraid? Or something else? [Write these emotion words in blue on the board.]
- What would make him feel better? (Point to the shared needs list if necessary.)
- Why might he need that?
- How might he feel if that need was met—if he got what he needed?
- How might he feel if that need was not met—if he didn't get what he needed?
- Is there something he could do now to help him get what he needs?
- Good. Let's continue the story. [Continue with this format, pausing at each blank.]
- [When done, point out the two types of feelings: sensations and emotions.]
- Did you notice that I wrote two lists of things Nelson was feeling? What's the difference between these lists?
- Yes, this is a list of sensations. Those are things we feel in the body. This other one is

a list of emotions. These are things we feel about a situation. They're usually not just in one part of the body. We're going to learn more about emotions later.”

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### DEBRIEF | 4 minutes

- “How did Nelson generally feel when he had an unmet need?
- How did he feel when his need was met?
- Who helped Nelson meet his needs?
- How would we find out what someone needs, like in our classroom? [We would be able to be happier, live better/healthier lives, and learn more].
  - Do you ever notice needs that other people have?
  - What would happen if we all noticed each others' needs more?”

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### Story: “Nelson’s Day at Grandma’s House”

“Nelson woke up suddenly. He heard car horns in the street making loud noises. Beep! Beep! Beep! It was very unusual to hear car horns loudly honking on the country street where Nelson lived. He rubbed his eyes and then noticed that the furniture in the bedroom didn't look like his own. For a moment, Nelson felt \_\_\_\_\_.

Then Nelson felt something soft in his hand. He realized it was the very soft scarf that

his grandmother made for him. Whenever he traveled he took it with him. Then he remembered, "Of course! I'm at Grandma's house!" Nelson remembered that his father brought him from his home in the country to his Grandma's house in the city, the night before. Now, Nelson felt \_\_\_\_\_.

Nelson got out of bed and felt his stomach grumble. He was feeling \_\_\_\_\_. What he needed now was \_\_\_\_\_.

Then he heard his Grandmother's warm voice call to him, "Nelson, are you awake? I've made your favorite breakfast! Come to the kitchen to eat!" Nelson felt \_\_\_\_\_ that his Grandma made him his very favorite breakfast. It was a special meal that Grandma made only for him! Nelson enjoyed a delicious breakfast of fried eggs, spicy beans, and slices of banana with honey spread on them. Nelson loved it! Now, he was feeling \_\_\_\_\_.

Nelson and his Grandmother were washing the dishes when the phone rang. Grandmother answered it. Nelson couldn't hear everything over the running water in the sink, but could hear his grandmother say, "Oh, that's really too bad. I hope feels better soon." "Nelson" said Grandma, "That was Mrs. Montoyo. She called to say that Juan is sick and won't be able to come over today to play." Nelson's heart sank. Nelson only gets to see Juan when he is at Grandma's house, because Juan lives in the city, while Nelson's lives in the country. Nelson felt \_\_\_\_\_. He liked seeing Juan and playing

soccer with him outside. He liked his Grandma's house but there weren't his usual games and toys there. Now, Nelson started wondering what he would do to pass the time.

Nelson's grandmother noticed the nervous look on Nelson's face. "Nelson," said Grandma, "Why don't we take a walk to the park? Maybe you will meet some new friends there." Nelson felt \_\_\_\_\_.

When Nelson and his grandma got to the park, Nelson saw several groups of children playing. There were children on the swings, a few playing with a basketball, and some others playing a tag game. Nelson walked over to the children playing with the basketball. "Hi," he said, "Can I join your game?" A tall girl with curly brown hair said, "No, we have even teams right now." Nelson felt \_\_\_\_\_.

Just then, Nelson felt a tap on his arm. He spun around to hear a boy with glasses say, "Tag, you're it!" Nelson barely had time to think. He had to find another child to tag. He noticed a group of children running in all directions, and he thought if he ran really hard, he could tag one of them. Now, Nelson felt \_\_\_\_\_. It would be a fun time after all. **"**