

Classroom Guidance Lessons

4th Grade

Unit 1: Self-Awareness & Self-Management

Unit Questions

1. What are strong emotions?
2. How are strong emotions connected to the brain?

CASEL Standards (CASEL.org)

Self-awareness: The ability to accurately recognize one's emotions and thoughts and their influence on behavior. This includes accurately assessing one's strengths and limitations and possessing a well-grounded sense of confidence and optimism.

Self-management: The ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations. This includes managing stress, controlling impulses, motivating oneself, and setting and working toward achieving personal and academic goals.

Lesson 1 - What parts of our body do we exercise? Have you ever thought about exercising your brain? Students will begin to explore the connection between strong emotions and our brains. We will watch a short video about the amygdala and practice a relaxation technique called the "core practice".

Lesson 2 - In the second lesson students will explore the hippocampus and prefrontal cortex. We will watch short videos and then work to label several parts of the brain. We will also begin to brainstorm the connection between our feelings and our brain.

Lesson 3 - We all experience strong emotions at times. The class will review stress and watch a short video about how stress impacts our brains. It is important for us to know that when our brain experiences a strong emotion (stress, extreme worry, anger), the amygdala (body guard) will block our brain for higher level thinking (learning, memory, focusing). We will end with some mindfulness exercises that can help when we experience these strong emotions.

Lesson 4 - In the final lesson of the unit, the students will explore mindful listening, review the connection between the brain and emotions, and continue the "core practice".

Unit Vocabulary

Amygdala - The amygdala acts as the brain's "security guard," protecting us from threats. When a student is in a negative emotional state (stress, fear, extreme worry) the amygdala prevents information from passing along to the parts of our brain used to think and remember

Hippocampus - This is where information is stored in our memory and is very important for learning

Prefrontal Cortex - This is the part of our brain used for decision making, focusing our attention, reading, writing, computing, analyzing, predicting, comprehending, and interpreting.

Stress - feeling overwhelmed with current tasks

Worry - feeling concerned about something that may go wrong in the future

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