

The Principle Pathways

Storytime Workbook



Meet the Sparks!™

Growing whole humans, one conversation at a time.



Chow
HAPPINESS



Izzy
SADNESS



Pepper
ANGER



Fizz
LOVE



Koko
PEACE



BoA
FEAR

Purpose Prep, a trusted name in the field of Social Emotional Learning (SEL), brings you this supplemental resource to further develop children's abilities to recognize, regulate, and reflect on their emotions.

These activities are relevant, fun, and engaging. They are focused on helping children become more self-aware and able to understand how their feelings correlate with their actions, well-being, and relationships.

By following our online program, this workbook can be utilized as a supplemental resource to our curriculum. It can also be used as a learning tool independent of the online program. To find more information about SEL growth and other tools offered and developed by Purpose Prep, visit www.purposeprep.com.

This workbook is dedicated to all the teachers and parents who help children fulfill their purpose in life, and to all the learners who grow with each social-emotional activity.

Emotions and Relationships: Attitude

With his feet shuffling slowly across the floor and his shoulders slumped forward, Izzy made his way to the door when he heard a knock.

“Hi,” he said in a low voice as if it was difficult to even get the one word out.

“Oh no, Izzy. You look like you’re having a tough day,” said Chow as he walked into Izzy’s house.

“Mmhmm,” Izzy forced out.

“Want to talk about it?” asked Chow.

Izzy curled himself up on the couch before answering. “I guess.” Chow was always good at listening and helping his friends feel better.

“I woke up, and we were out of my favorite cereal, so my mom made me some waffles. Then, right when I was ready to play outside, it started raining. I was really excited to play with my new bouncy ball. I had to play with it in the basement instead.”

“It sounds like you felt disappointed this morning, huh?” said Chow.

“Yeah, it was so disappointing. Then, I just felt like nothing was going to go right today,” Izzy grumbled.

Chow thought about how he could help Izzy change his attitude, so he could see that it wasn’t all that bad.

“Well, if you look at it a little differently, you might not feel so bad. I like to find things to be thankful for. Then, it really helps me see the good in almost any situation.”

“What do you mean?” asked Izzy.

Chow helped Izzy rethink the things that happened in his day.

“Well, when you woke up, your mom made you breakfast. That was really nice of her. Then, you got to play with your new ball, and you probably had some fun with it, right?” Chow said to Izzy.

Izzy started to rethink his day. “Yeah, that was nice of my Mom. I probably should have thanked her. I had such a bad attitude about my cereal being gone that I didn’t think of saying thank you.”

“See, now you’re using a positive perspective. How about not being able to go outside? That was a bummer, but did you still get to play?” Chow reminded Izzy.

“Yeah, I guess I did. My new bouncy ball would have been more fun outside though,” said Izzy.

“I understand that,” said Chow, “but now you have something to look forward to next time it’s sunny outside.”

“I see what you’re saying, Chow. Maybe I need to do a better job of seeing situations differently and looking for things to be thankful for,” said Izzy.

Chow was just glad that Izzy had a smile on his face now and was ready to play. There was still lots of time to make it a great day!



Discussion Starters and Support:

1. How can your attitude color your day?
2. What could Izzy have done to make her own day better?

Remind learners that they are in control their feelings.

Storytime Coloring Space

Now it's time to have fun and be creative! First, close your eyes and imagine the story you just read or had someone read to you. Then, draw how you envision the characters, your favorite scene, or an alternate ending in the space below! Use an additional sheet of paper if you need more space.



Emotions and Relationships: Being a Good Friend

It was a big day at the Intergalactic Academy. The Sparks were preparing for their class presentations. Fizz was getting ready to do her presentation on how to be a good friend. She couldn't wait to share with her class! Once she got up in front of the class, she put up two big boards. One had a list with the title "Things Good Friends Do." The other board was titled "Things Good Friends Don't Do."

"Today, I'll be sharing some tips with you on how to be a good friend and how to look for good friends too!" Fizz started. "As you can see on this list, a good friend will share with you, include you in fun and games, help you, say sorry when they've hurt your feelings, and forgive you when you apologize."

"Wow, those are all of the things you do, Fizz!" said Pepper.

"Well, thanks, Pepper," Fizz replied.

"On the other hand, if you notice someone doing these other things, let them know that they need to work on improving their attitude. If someone takes your things without asking, lies, excludes you, or hurts you on purpose, they are not acting like a friend!" Fizz said with a serious face.

She went on to explain that even good friends make mistakes.

"Part of growing up and building friendships is learning from your mistakes. Don't be afraid to apologize, and try hard to fix any hurt you cause. Your friends will be so thankful for you!"

After Fizz finished her presentation, everyone stood up and clapped. Her heart was full, and she was happy she had taught the class something valuable.

Discussion Starters and Support:

1. What did Fizz teach us about being a good friend?
2. How can you act like a good friend today?

Have learners share a person in their life that acts like a good friend.



Storytime Coloring Space

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Emotions and Relationships: Talk to Someone about Your Fears

It was a stormy day at the Intergalactic Academy. The wind was whipping space stones around, and they were hitting the windows with little pings and pops. With each clap of thunder or gust of wind, Boa was getting more and more worried. She couldn't stand storms; they were one of her biggest fears. It was so hard for her to focus on doing her schoolwork when she just wanted to hide under her desk and cover her head.

Boa's friends knew that she was afraid of storms, so they made sure they were there for her. Koko asked Boa how they could help. Boa didn't even know. Her hands were shaking, and she could feel a big knot in her stomach.

"Just remember, Boa, you've got a lot of us in your support system. You can talk to a friend, a teacher, someone in your family, or even someone else here at school like the counselor," Koko suggested.

Boa looked at Koko with wide eyes. "Thanks, Koko. I think maybe taking a quick walk with you to get a drink would help me."

"Let's ask. I'd be happy to walk with you," replied Koko.

After asking for permission, they walked slowly down the hallway. Koko reminded Boa to breathe deeply and remember that even though storms were a little out of the ordinary, if they were inside, they were safe and protected.

Boa started to feel better. Sometimes, during a big, windy space storm, she forgot that she was actually safe. As they got closer to the drinking fountain, Boa thanked Koko for reminding her about breathing and looking for anyone in her support system to help her during tough times.

"That's what friends are for, Boa!" said Koko with a big smile.

Discussion Starters and Support:

1. How did Boa overcome her fear?
2. Who could you talk to if you are feeling fearful?

Let learners know that being afraid isn't always bad. It can help you understand yourself better and help you find ways to grow.



Storytime Coloring Space

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Emotions and Relationships: Happiness

Lunchtime was everyone's favorite time at the Intergalactic Academy. The Sparks got to chat and play games together while eating the best treats from the Cosmic Café. Chow brought a new card game for everyone to play, and he was excited to share it. Each friend would choose a card from the deck, read it out loud, and decide if the behavior on the card would make those around them happy or sad.

Chow shuffled the deck and started passing out the cards to everyone.

"Who wants to go first?" Chow asked.

"Ooooo, I do!" said Pepper.

"Ok, go ahead," replied Chow.

Pepper started. "My card says, 'You see someone drop a pencil in the hallway, and you run over to pick it up for them before they walk away. Would that make them happy or sad?' I think it would make them pretty happy. That's a friendly thing to do," said Pepper.

"I agree," said Boa.

Pepper put his card in the "making others happy" pile, and Izzy went next. "My card says, 'You really want to be first in line for music class, so you push your classmates out of the way to get to the door. Would that make them happy or sad?' Oh no, this would not make others happy."

After Izzy put his card in the "making others unhappy" pile, the rest of the Sparks took turns reading their cards and discussing which things would make their friends happy and which behaviors wouldn't.

Soon enough, lunch was over, and it was time for the friends to return to their classes. They were happy that they were able to play such a fun game together and practice their friendship skills at the same time!

Discussion Starters and Support:

1. How can you bring happiness into your life?
2. What does Chow do to spread happiness?

Have learners pick out a "spreading happiness" strategy that they'll try out today.



Storytime Coloring Space

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Emotions and Relationships: Feeling Sad

At the Intergalactic Academy, students learned how to make great projects that helped everyone in their community. Today, the Sparks were making a poster for the hallway to show strategies for improving their mood when they were sad.

It was going to be a big project, so everyone had to get involved. Koko suggested putting a picture on the poster that showed one good way to feel better when you're sad: talking to someone.

"I agree. I know when I'm not feeling my best, talking to my friends or family really helps my heart feel better," said Izzy.

Koko drew a picture of Izzy talking to Chow.

Boa added, "Another thing we could include is someone thinking of something that makes them happy. That helps me when I'm upset."

"Good idea, Boa. I'll draw you thinking of a birthday party!" said Pepper.

"When I'm sad, doing something that makes me happy, like reading with my stuffed animals, makes me feel better," said Fizz.

"That's a great one to add. Good thinking, Fizz!" Chow said.

Pepper knew there was one more strategy that needed to be added: taking deep breaths. He said, "If I'm feeling really down, I need at least five good, deep breaths, so that I can start thinking positively and get on a better path."

"That's the perfect one to use for this poster. Everyone can do that!" Izzy said.

The friends felt like they were creating something that would help everyone at the Intergalactic Academy. They were so proud of themselves and couldn't wait to have their poster put up in the hallway for everyone to see!

Discussion Starters and Support:

1. If you were friends with Izzy, what would you tell him to cheer him up?
2. What could you do if you're feeling sad, and you don't know how to fix it?

Encourage learners to look for signs of sadness in those around them and in themselves.



Storytime Coloring Space

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Unleashing the Best Me: The Impact of Values

In the Sparks' class today, they were going to be playing a game for their morning meeting. Their teacher gathered the class on the carpet and started to explain how the game was going to be played.

"We've been learning about our values and what they mean to us, and how we live our lives. When we set up a system of personal values, we work to live by them so that we can be happy and grow in a positive way.

"If we have personal values that we care about, we need to make sure our actions match those values. As we play our game, I will say the name of a personal value that we might want live by. Then, you will think of an action that matches living by that value, and the next person will think of a positive consequence of that action. We'll do this until we get all the way around our circle."

The first personal value that their teacher pulled out of the bag was honesty. Pepper was the first student to think of a way to live by that value.

He started, "If I live with honesty as a personal value, I would tell the truth to my mom even if it was hard. Like when I told her that I put my books away on the shelf, but I really put them under my bed. It didn't feel good to be dishonest, so I told her that I wasn't telling the truth and went back to my room to fix my books."

"Thanks for sharing, Pepper. Chow, what positive consequence do you think Pepper would have for choosing to be honest?" asked their teacher.

Chow was eager to share. "I think since Pepper was honest, he probably felt better about himself. I also think his mom was probably proud of him."

"Well done," she said. "Pepper, is that true?"

Pepper responded, "It really is, and I have really been honest ever since then. It really helped me see how much better it felt to live honestly."

"Our second value is forgiveness. Fizz, you're up. Can you think of an example of someone forgiving someone else?"

"Sure, like if you borrowed someone's crayons and you accidentally broke one. You would say you were sorry for breaking it and ask your friend to forgive you. Then, hopefully, your friend says they forgive you."

"That's a good example, Izzy. If your friend forgave you, what kind of positive chain reaction would that cause?" asked their teacher.

Izzy responded, "Well, if my friend forgave me, then my feelings wouldn't be hurt, and they would probably feel better, too, since they didn't get angry."

"Do you see how living by a set of strong personal values can have a positive impact on your lives?" their teacher asked.

All of the students nodded their heads.

The teacher put her hand back into the small bag and pulled out another slip of paper, the value on it was dependability. This was a big word, so she explained it to the class.



The Impact of Values (continued)

“This value is dependability, which means others can trust you to do what you say you’re going to do. Koko, can you think of a real-life example of someone being dependable?”

Koko started, “Yes, if you asked me to take an important note to the office, and you tell me to walk the whole way there, I would show you that I’m dependable by walking the whole way and making sure the note gets to the office. It’s like others can count on you to do the right thing.”

“That’s exactly right! Boa can you think of a positive consequence you would have if you showed that you were dependable?” the teacher asked.

Boa said, “Of course, if I can show that I am dependable, others will trust me, and I can get more privileges in life. That would make me feel really proud if everyone can count on me.”

“Awesome, I can tell that you all enjoyed talking about how values impact our lives. You are all ready to put your personal values to good use and live positively!” their teacher exclaimed.

Discussion Starters and Support:

1. Can you think of a value that causes a positive chain reaction?
2. Who in your life shows they take action living by their personal values?

Remind learners that our actions show people who we are, and being seen as someone positive can only be achieved through repeated positive actions. Learners are bound to make mistakes here and there, so fixing mistakes and working toward changing can be part of the process, too.

Storytime Coloring Space

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Unleashing the Best Me: Optimism

The Sparks were planning on spending the afternoon at their math stations to get ready for their upcoming math test. Everyone except Pepper was feeling excited to review for the test at the fun stations their teacher had set up for them. Pepper was not feeling up for math review activities. He sometimes had a hard time being optimistic when something like a test was coming up.

As their teacher explained each center and finished the directions, Pepper would make a comment under his breath like, “Yeah, right, a whole lot of fun that’ll be,” or “No thanks, not for me.” Chow could hear Pepper’s comments and knew that his friend wasn’t feeling great.

“Hey, Pepper, what’s up? Why aren’t you excited for the review stations?” asked Chow.

Pepper looked at him with a frustrated face, “Ugh, nothing is going to be fun when we’re getting ready for a test. Tests are the worst.”

“I can tell that you’re not looking forward to it. Are you worried about it maybe?” Chow questioned.

“I just know it’s not going to go well, so I’m mad, and I don’t want to do the activities,” said Pepper.

Chow could see that his friend was struggling to be optimistic and see the positive part of having a test.

“Pepper, is there anything we’ve been learning that you feel confident about? Maybe thinking about one good thing will help you feel better about the rest of it too,” suggested Chow.

“I’m good at adding on the number line, but that’s about it,” Pepper said.

“OK, there you go. Let’s go to the number line station first. We’ll play the frog hop game and go from there,” replied Chow.

As Chow and Pepper played the frog hop game, Chow could see that Pepper was having a good time and doing well with the math. He wanted to make sure he pointed that out to Pepper.

“See, buddy, you’re doing a great job, and it seems like you’re having fun, too.”

Pepper looked up at Chow, surprised. “Huh? I guess so. Do you think the other stations will be this fun?”

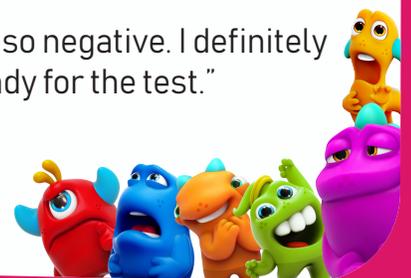
“I really do! If you have an optimistic mindset, even difficult things can be fun,” replied Chow.

Chow and Pepper moved around to each of the stations. Some were harder than others, and Pepper got frustrated when they got to the game about telling time. But with some help from his friend, he was able to get it.

That alone helped make him more optimistic about his skills and the test that would be coming up. After they had played all of the games and practiced some more, Chow could tell that Pepper was feeling better.

“How do you feel now about how you reacted when the teacher was explaining the stations?” Chow asked.

Pepper responded, “Well, I feel a little embarrassed that I was being so negative. I definitely should have been more optimistic about the games and about getting ready for the test.”



Optimism (continued)

On the day of the test, the Sparks got their pencils sharpened and math supplies ready on their desks.

Chow looked over at Pepper and gave him a big smile and a thumbs up. "This is going to be great. You're ready for this test, buddy. How do you feel?" asked Chow.

"To be honest, I feel pretty optimistic, thanks to you and the review games. I didn't need to think so negatively. I can do anything I put my mind to. I just have to work hard and have a good attitude!"

Pepper responded with a smile.

Discussion Starters and Support:

1. How can being optimistic change a situation?
2. If Pepper had continued being negative, how do you think he would have done on his test?

Being optimistic while you're going through a difficult time can be a struggle, especially when you don't know if the outcome of the situation will be positive. It's important to stress the power of optimism, and how small bursts of positive thinking can lead to positive actions, and overall a more optimistic outlook in life.

Storytime Coloring Space

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Unleashing the Best Me: Being Responsible

The Sparks were walking home from school, and Fizz was telling the rest of the group about how great she was feeling lately. They asked her what she thought was helping her feel so great.

Fizz thought to herself for a moment before responding, "I think being more responsible has a lot to do with it. I've been trying really hard to be responsible in all areas of my life, and it's really paying off."

Boa said, "That's awesome, Fizz. What did you get for being responsible?"

"What do you mean?" Fizz asked.

Boa responded, "Well, usually if I do something responsible, like making my bed or cleaning my room, my mom gives me a reward, like a piece of candy or something."

"Oh, that sounds nice, but no, I haven't gotten any rewards like that. I guess having my family and friends trust me more and say nice things about me has been its own reward, though. And I feel really good about myself, too. That's the part I like the most," said Fizz.

The Sparks thought about that and decided that they wanted the feelings that Fizz was talking about, too. So, they all planned on focusing on showing how responsible they could be.

Koko thought about her whole day and figured out when she could really practice her responsible behavior. She thought that she did a really good job of being responsible at school, but sometimes she needed to do a bit more at home. Koko planned on fixing that by doing a few new things.

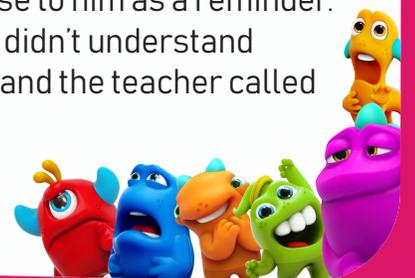
The next day after breakfast, Koko put her dishes right into the dishwasher. She didn't leave them in the sink for her mom to clean up. Koko was walking to the bathroom to brush her teeth before school when she caught a glimpse of her mom in the kitchen. Her face was a mixture of surprise and joy. Koko felt something in her heart that she recognized from her conversation with Fizz the day before. She was really proud of herself.

As Koko thought about how she was feeling, she admitted to herself that it really wasn't that much work to do the right thing. She made a promise to herself to keep showing how responsible she could be.

Izzy was the opposite. He was pretty good about doing things around the house to help his family and be responsible, but at school, he struggled to stay organized, and sometimes that made him feel irresponsible. He was going to make it his mission to show that he could be responsible at school.

Izzy sat down and made a short list of things he could do to show his responsibility. He wrote it in his class notebook so he would have it with him throughout the day. He knew that to show responsibility, he would have to ask questions when he was confused about anything in class, turn his work in on time, and remember to put his name on all of his assignments.

As Izzy went through his day, he kept his responsibility checklist close to him as a reminder. After their teacher gave directions about an activity, Izzy realized that he didn't understand whether they should do their drawing or writing first. He raised his hand and the teacher called on him.



Being Responsible (continued)

“Should we draw or write first? I want to make sure I do it the right way.”

His teacher smiled and said, “Good question. I’d like you to draw your picture first to get ideas, and then write your story.”

Izzy felt amazing. He had followed through on something he promised himself he’d do. Two great things happened as a result. He now knew exactly how the teacher wanted the activity completed, and his teacher looked quite happy that he wanted to get it right.

As a group, the Sparks were all working on being more responsible in their own ways. The best part was that they were there to support one another.

As the school year went on, they could feel themselves growing and becoming more responsible in all areas of their lives. It was a great feeling to be able to take pride in their actions. That was better than any other reward they could get!

Discussion Starters and Support:

1. How can you show that you’re responsible at home, at school, and in your community?
2. What is one thing you can do today to show that you’re responsible?

As with all areas of growth for learners, celebrating small victories is important. Not all displays of responsibility need to be rewarded with tangible items, but honest and sincere praise can be valuable.

Storytime Coloring Space

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Unleashing the Best Me: Gratitude

It was the final month of school at the Intergalactic Academy, and the Sparks were all ready to celebrate completing a great year of school. The class was planning an end-of-the-year project to show their gratitude for everyone who had helped them have a successful year.

Each student was going to write three notes, each to someone who supported them in some way throughout the year. The class brainstormed together all of the people they could write their notes to. They listed their teacher, their family members, the custodians at school, their lunchroom helpers, their friends, and even themselves. After they brainstormed as a class, the students went back to their desks and started to plan out their notes.

Fizz decided to write to her mom, her music teacher, and one of her best friends, Boa. Fizz knew that being grateful to her mom was very important.

Fizz's mom woke her up on time every day, fed her breakfast, helped her gather everything she needed for school, and sat down most days to help her with her homework. Fizz really appreciated all of the time and effort that took.

As she thought about what she'd say in her note to the music teacher, Fizz thought back to all of the times she'd been encouraged during music class, even when she wasn't singing on key or if she was struggling to play an instrument. Their music teacher had always told her that the best songs were only a few practices away. Fizz loved knowing that if she put in the hard work, it would pay off.

The last person Fizz was writing to was Boa. Boa was such a dedicated and loving friend. If Fizz needed someone to help her through a tough time or someone to laugh with, Boa was always there with a hug or a smile. As Fizz finished up her notes, she folded them neatly and put each name on the outside. She was so excited to show how grateful she was for her Mom, her music teacher, and Boa.

Izzy also thought hard about who he was going to write his gratitude notes to. He really wanted to thank people he thought didn't get thanked enough for what they did.

His first note was going to be to his favorite lunchroom helper. He was always smiling and happy to help the students at the Intergalactic Academy. He helped when students needed their yogurt or milk opened. He never made anyone feel bad about spilling something. He always said things like, "Mistakes are expected. It's what you do after a mistake that helps you grow." Having someone at the school like that made the students feel encouraged to be better, and that was absolutely worth being grateful for!

Just like the amazing lunchroom helper, all of the custodians at his school were fantastic. Izzy wanted to thank the custodian who cleaned their classroom every night. She worked so hard to make sure the students came into the school every day to a super clean classroom. Izzy noticed each day how the counter and sink didn't have any paint or soap on them, and he knew exactly who had taken the time to do that.

Izzy thanked her for clearing the pencils off the floor in the coatroom and for emptying all four of the classroom garbage cans. Even though these things didn't have anything to do with book learning, Izzy appreciated that they made their learning environment so much better each day.



Gratitude (continued)

Once everyone had finished their gratitude notes, it was time to deliver them. One by one, each student handed out their notes with smiles that spread to each note recipient. The teacher asked the class how they felt after all of the notes had been distributed.

“Taking the time to really think about what made our year great and thanking everyone who has helped us really made me feel amazing. Sometimes, our days go so fast that we don’t realize all of the hands it takes to make our school a great place to be. It was nice to honor everyone with our gratitude notes,” Fizz said.

The celebration of gratitude was exactly what everyone needed to end the year with happy and full hearts.

Discussion Starters and Support:

1. Who would you write a gratitude note to if you had the chance?
2. How else can you show your gratitude for those around you?

Gratitude is contagious. If learners see the adults around them modeling gratefulness, they’ll be more likely to do the same. Honoring the “small” helping hands in our lives will encourage them to do more and be proud of their role at home, at school, and in the community.

Storytime Coloring Space

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Unleashing the Best Me: Showing Empathy

At the Intergalactic Academy, one of the biggest goals was for all of the students to have empathy. When students showed empathy for others, they built relationships and helped everyone around them feel supported.

One Spark who was working hard at being more empathetic was Pepper. He knew that having empathy for others was important, but it took some practice to make it a habit for him. To make it easier for him to practice, he thought about empathy as a three-step process.

If someone was upset or struggling with something, the first thing he would do is stop and think about how he would feel if he were in their shoes. Next, he would acknowledge that he saw them and cared by saying something like, “I’m so sorry you’re going through this,” or “I’m sorry that happened to you.” Pepper’s third step would be to ask if they needed help or support in any way. He couldn’t wait to try out his empathy skills at school.

The next day, Pepper told Koko about his plan. “When I’m so focused on myself, I miss out on opportunities to show others that I care, and that I’m a good friend. I’m going to try and be more empathetic.”

Koko was impressed, “Wow, that’s awesome, Pepper. I agree, everyone should be more empathetic, not just you.”

Just as they were talking, Izzy walked up to them with a frown on his face and eyes that looked puffy from crying. Right away, Pepper saw the opportunity to be a friend. He thought to himself, “If I were crying and frowning, what would I want my friends to do?”

Pepper looked into Izzy’s eyes and said, “Izzy, you don’t look happy. Do you want to talk?”

A tear rolled down Izzy’s cheek as he spoke, “I was working really hard on an art piece, and I accidentally spilled my cup of paint all over it. Now I have to restart the project.”

Pepper took a breath and thought before he spoke. “I can tell how frustrated and sad that makes you feel. Is there any way for me to help you feel better?”

Izzy wiped his cheek and looked at Pepper. “Thanks for asking. That was really nice. I think that having someone just offer to help makes me feel a little bit better. I need to stay after school tomorrow to work on my art piece. If you stayed with me, I would love that. Could you do that?”

With a smile Pepper replied, “I’d be happy to stay. Maybe I could learn how to paint like you. That would be fun.”

“Thanks, Pepper, I appreciate it. Now I can’t wait to try it again. You really helped. I hope you know that,” Izzy told his friend.

Pepper was really proud of himself. He felt so good about showing empathy and helping Izzy through his sadness.

After lunch, the Sparks were out at recess playing freeze tag with their friends. They were all running and laughing when Pepper got tagged. He froze in place and took a deep breath, waiting for someone to come and unfreeze him.

As he waited, he looked around and someone caught his eye. A student was sitting under the slides looking upset. Pepper didn’t want to break the rules of the game, but he knew what he needed to do to be a good classmate.



Showing Empathy (continued)

He walked over, crouched down next to the student, and asked, "Are you okay under there? You look upset."

The classmate picked his head up and said to Pepper, "My friends left me out of the game. They said they already had enough players, and they didn't need me."

"I'm so sorry that happened to you. That must have hurt your feelings a lot. It would sure hurt mine if my friends said that to me," Pepper responded.

"Yeah, and now I don't have anyone to play with," he said.

"Well, if you want to play freeze tag with my friends and me, we'd be happy to have you join us. Everyone is welcome!" said Pepper enthusiastically.

"Really? You'd let me join you? That would make me feel a lot better."

Pepper offered his new friend a hand to get up, and they ran off to find the others.

Pepper thought about his day and realized he didn't have to work that hard to be empathetic, and he loved that he was helping others feel better!

Discussion Starters and Support:

1. Who in your life shows empathy?
2. How can you be more empathetic in your life?

When guiding learners in activating their empathy skills, breaking down the concept into short steps or keywords can sometimes be helpful. Ask them to see, feel, and support. The more they practice, the more it will become a natural habit!

Storytime Coloring Space

Now it's time to have fun and be creative! First, close your eyes and imagine the story you just read or had someone read to you. Then, draw how you envision the characters, your favorite scene, or an alternate ending in the space below! Use an additional sheet of paper if you need more space.



Healthy Growth: “No” Means “No”

For her birthday, Koko had been given a brand-new art set that she loved! The Sparks were working on a big project in class, and Koko knew she wanted to bring in the art set to use on it. She walked into the classroom and put her art set on her desk while she put her backpack away.

Koko returned to her desk; her friend Pepper was standing there looking at the art set.

“Wow, that is a really cool set of art supplies. Can I use them for my drawing?” asked Pepper.

Koko hesitated. She really didn’t want anyone using her brand-new supplies. “I don’t think I want anyone using them quite yet. I just brought them in, so I could use them on the science project.”

Pepper looked surprised and disappointed. “Ok, got it.”

Pepper went back to his seat. Two minutes later, he was back at Koko’s desk, and this time he was picking up the supplies and looking at each one.

Koko was walking back from the pencil sharpener and saw what was happening. “Hey, Pepper, remember I didn’t want anyone using my new supplies?”

“I’m not actually using them. I’m just looking at them. It’s different,” Pepper said as he picked up a blue marker.

Koko took a few deep breaths before she responded to her friend. “Pepper, no means no. When I want to share my new supplies, I will, but, today, I don’t. I haven’t even used them yet. Please be respectful.”

“Hmmm, I didn’t think about it like that. Sorry, Koko,” said Pepper.

Koko responded, “Thanks for understanding. I appreciate it.”

Discussion Starters and Support:

1. Just because someone asks you nicely, should you say yes to what they ask?
2. When should you feel comfortable saying “no” to someone?

The idea that “no” means “no” relates closely to people respecting each other’s personal boundaries. Having learners practice saying “no” in different ways helps them fill their toolbox for the times they may need to use it in real life.



Storytime Coloring Space

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Healthy Growth: We're All Different and Need Help in Different Ways

The Sparks were sitting in their morning meeting circle, ready to start their day in class. Their teacher told them the topic for the meeting was recognizing how each student was unique. Everyone got a small piece of paper to write something that made them different from everyone else.

They all thought for a few minutes and wrote down their ideas. Once everyone was done writing, their teacher asked if anyone wanted to share. Everyone raised their hand and waited to be called on.

Izzy was picked first. "I'm unique because I like to study birds."

"That is unique, Izzy. Thanks for sharing!" said his teacher.

Next was Boa. "Something that makes me unique is my singing voice. I love to sing."

Their teacher responded, "We'd love to hear you sing someday if you'd like."

"Of course!" said Boa.

After Boa shared, it was Chow's turn. "I'm unique because I can jump really high in the air. Do you want to see?"

"Why don't you show us at recess?" replied his teacher.

All the students went around and said something about themselves that made them different. Then, their teacher told them they'd all be answering a question about something they struggle with and a question about how they like to get help when they're having a hard time.

Each of the students had something different they struggled with, but it also showed another way they were unique.

Fizz struggled with math, but she loved it when someone was there to help her with it. Koko said that she had a hard time learning new sports in gym class, but she liked to sit back and watch before trying anything out.

"Huh, I never thought about it like that. If I was having a hard time learning a new sport, I would try to jump in and figure it out while I was out there. We really are unique," said Pepper.

"Yes, you sure are," said the teacher. "That's the important thing about working with others: respecting each other and who you are. Each one of you have such amazingly unique strengths and challenges, and that is what makes our class so much fun."

The rest of the class went around and shared their challenges. They knew that learning these new things about their classmates would help them as they supported one another throughout the year.



Discussion Starters and Support:

1. Why is it important for us to know the strengths and challenges of those around us?
2. How do you like to receive help when you're struggling?

Helping learners understand their strengths and challenges early on will support their emotional health as they grow up. Share real life examples of how you've tapped into your unique abilities and areas for growth, so they can see the things that make us unique are wonderful and welcome!

Storytime Coloring Space

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Healthy Growth: Safe vs. Unsafe and Wanted vs. Unwanted Touches

The Sparks were having a guest speaker in their class to talk about personal safety. Her name was Ms. Allie. Ms. Allie gathered the class at the carpet and started by having everyone introduce themselves. The group went around in a circle and said their names and something they liked to do outside of school.

After everyone introduced themselves, Ms. Allie told the class they'd be talking about something very special and very important: their bodies and keeping them safe. Next to her was a big poster that had a picture of someone about the Sparks' age on it.

Ms. Allie asked the class a question: "How do you like to be greeted when you see someone?"

She called on Boa first. "I like it when someone waves to me," said Boa.

"I like giving a big jumping high five," said Chow.

Izzy had his hand raised, and Ms. Allie called on him.

"What about you, Izzy?"

"Well, I like to say hi and give a hug."

Koko spoke up next. "It depends on who it is and how comfortable I am with them."

"That's a great point, Koko," Ms. Allie said. She continued, "We get to choose, so that no matter who we're greeting, or who we're with, we feel comfortable and safe."

Ms. Allie talked to the class about the differences between safe and unsafe touches and wanted and unwanted touches. She explained that even when a friend might just want to give a hug or touch your hair, that if that's not something you want, it's okay to say no to it.

"We especially get to say a big no if anyone tries to give us an unsafe touch. Remember that anywhere on your body where your bathing suit would cover up is off limits. If someone touches you in a bathing suit zone, you should immediately tell a trusted adult," Ms. Allie told the class.

"Wow, this is pretty serious," Fizz said to Ms. Allie.

"It sure is, Fizz. Your body is so important, and keeping it safe, happy, and healthy is a big job."

After they talked with Ms. Allie, the class discussed how to keep their bodies safe at home, at school, on a field trip, at a sporting event, or anywhere out in public.

Being aware of who is around you and how they make you feel is key to keeping safe. The Sparks learned so much and were very thankful Ms. Allie came to talk to their class.



Discussion Starters and Support:

1. What is the difference between safe/unsafe and wanted/unwanted touches?
2. Who gets to decide how and when you receive a touch (hug, high five, hand hold)?

Empower learners to understand their right to keep their bodies safe, happy, and healthy. Before a gathering or event, go over standing up for their personal space with them, what it would look like, and how it would sound in a conversation.

Storytime Coloring Space

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Healthy Growth: Speaking Up and Reporting Unsafe Touches

The day after Ms. Allie had come in to talk to the Sparks' class about safe and unsafe touches, they had an assignment to work on. The students were going to make a list of people they could go to anytime to talk about keeping their bodies safe, happy, and healthy.

Each student thought for a bit and started writing down who their trusted adults were and why they felt safe with them.

Their teacher reminded them, "These are people that make you feel safe and comfortable. You should go to them right away to report if someone touches you in an unsafe way."

That afternoon, Pepper took his list home to his mom and told her who was on it. "Here are my trusted adults: you first, then dad, and Aunt Paprika."

"It sounds like a good list, Pepper. You can always trust us to help you, especially if you feel unsafe," Pepper's mom reassured him.

"Thanks, Mom. I know you're always there for me," Pepper said.

Izzy shared his list with his grandma when he got home.

"Grandma, we talked about trusted adults at school today, and you're on my list."

"That's wonderful, Izzy. I'm so glad your class is learning about how to stay safe. It's very important," Izzy's Grandma said.

"My ears are always open, my dear!" she added.

"Aw, Grandma, that's why I love you. You always make me feel happy and safe," said Izzy.

At dinner, Chow showed his list to his family. "Dad, you and mom are my trusted adults. I feel really good about that. So is my teacher; she's on my list too."

Chow's dad responded, "That's great, son. We're always here for you!"

"I know, and I figure that if something happens at school that I need to talk about, I can always talk to my teacher. She is a good listener, too," Chow added.

"It sounds like you have a great plan for staying safe and telling us if anything makes you uncomfortable," said Chow's mom.

"I do! Thanks, mom!" said Chow.

Discussion Starters and Support:

1. What qualities does a trusted adult have?
2. Is there any "right way" to report an unsafe touch?

A learner's sense of safety and confidence grows when their toolbox is full of ways to handle difficult situations. Having a trusted adult list can help children visually see who is in their corner and ready to help them.



Storytime Coloring Space

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Healthy Growth: Goals to Transform Behavior

The Sparks were getting together to take a hike on a sunny day. Everyone had their packs ready and shoes tied up tight. They were going to be hiking and then eating lunch together afterwards. On their way over to the trail, Fizz noticed Pepper was quiet and hadn't greeted them with his usual running high-five and hug.

"Are you ok, Pepper?" asked Fizz.

Pepper replied, "Yeah, I actually am. I'm working on thinking about my behavior before I act. So, before I ran up to everyone like I usually do, I asked myself if that's how you would like to be greeted."

"Wow, Pepper, that's really thoughtful," said Fizz.

The group started to make their way up the hiking trail. They were laughing and talking about toasting marshmallows later. Pepper was turned around talking to Boa, so he didn't see the big tree roots coming out of the ground on the trail. His foot got caught under the root, and he went tumbling to the ground.

Everyone stopped, stayed silent for a second, and then asked Pepper if he was okay. They were expecting Pepper to explode in anger, but he didn't. Instead, Pepper took some very calm, deep breaths and looked up at his friends.

"Ouch, I sure didn't see that root there. Did you guys?" Pepper asked.

They all smiled at him and agreed that they didn't see it since they were talking to one another instead.

Chow said, "Pepper, usually you get so mad if something like that happens. What was different this time?"

"Like I told Fizz earlier, I'm really trying to change some of my behaviors. When something like that happens, getting mad about it wouldn't change the fact that I fell and got hurt. It would just add to the negativity. Instead of getting mad right away, I'm breathing, acknowledging that something didn't go my way, and moving forward with my day. It has been pretty helpful. I feel a lot better," Pepper explained.

"That's amazing!" said Chow.

"We should all try to make some behavior goals that would help us all be happier," added Fizz.

As the friends helped Pepper up from his tumble and continued on their hike, they talked about how each of them could change just a few things to become happier in life.

They talked about asking for help before getting frustrated, looking at the positive side of every situation, waiting for their turn to talk instead of jumping in whenever they felt like it, and thinking about others before themselves.

The Sparks were on their way to transforming their behavior and being the best friends they could be!



Discussion Starters and Support:

1. What behaviors might you want to change?
2. Do you have to change everything all at once, or can you make small changes over time?

Sometimes, learners don't realize their behavior affects more than just themselves. Guide them in seeing the cues and clues from within themselves and the people around them in order to gauge their behavior.

Storytime Coloring Space

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