

Grade 1

Sample Lessons



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Join us in *Positive Action*

Welcome to *Positive Action*.

In this lesson bundle, you will discover a tool that directly addresses the most pressing issue we have in education today: responding to the mental, social and emotional demands of our students and our educators. The pandemic has magnified the issue of our wellbeing almost beyond our understanding. We need help, and *Positive Action* can provide it.

For 40 years, schools have been successfully using the *Positive Action* program. This span of experience allows us to put a high sheen on the program's materials ensuring that they are of the highest quality and user-friendly. It also provides time for robust, randomized trials that take many years but ultimately establishes the program as one of the most highly evidence-based programs, which is duly recognized by many creditable groups.

Positive Action is a unique program that explains how profoundly our actions, positive or negative, affect us and our lives, one of those intuitive truths we recognize when we see it. The *Positive Action* philosophy makes it all clear: *you feel good about yourself when you do positive actions, and there is a positive way to do everything*—even in this daunting and unparalleled time.

The philosophy implies that we have a desire to feel good about ourselves, which we all do. To feel good about ourselves is a very powerful motivator. It is called intrinsic motivation, which is in all of us and one of the most influential forces to motivate us to do right.

Positive Action graphically represents the philosophy with the Thoughts-Actions-Feelings about Self Circle (TAF). It makes applying the philosophy easy to understand and, therefore, use. The TAF Circle demonstrates how thoughts lead to actions, actions lead to feelings about self (as in self-worth and *not* emotions, i.e., anger, fear, worry, etc.), and feelings about self lead back to thoughts. Whether the TAF Circle is positive or negative, it is always self-reinforcing.

The program aims to teach the philosophy, TAF Circle, and key positive actions for our whole self: physical, intellectual, social, and emotional areas.

All the components of the *Positive Action* program are organized into six units:

- Unit 1—The program foundation: Philosophy and TAF Circle
- Unit 2—Positive Actions for the physical and intellectual areas

(Units Three through Six are positive actions for the social and emotional areas)

- Unit 3—Positive Actions for Self-Management (thoughts, actions, feelings, time, energy, money, possessions, and talents)
- Unit 4—Positive Actions for Getting Along with Others
- Unit 5—Positive Actions for Honesty with Self and Others
- Unit 6—Positive Actions for Continual Self-Improvement

The program components are:

- Pre-K–12 curricula
- Supplemental curricula: Drug Education, Bullying Prevention, and Conflict Resolution

- School Climate Development
- Counselor's Kit
- Family Kit
- Family/Parenting Classes

Together, *Positive Action* is a unified but flexible system for the whole school community that provides a common language and shared goals. It is a powerful approach that generates innovative thinking that is needed, especially in overwhelmingly challenging times, as they are today.

The program has all the materials prepared for ease of use. The lessons/activities are planned and scripted, with all supporting materials assembled into a kit. You have the advantage of having an extensive amount of work done for you to assure that what you do is coherent, complete, and effective. You can quickly and easily get to the heart of the matter in just the right way with these well-developed materials.

For implementation, we suggest that you adapt the materials within the guidelines of honoring the concepts and strategies, while at the same time, considering your students—their needs, challenges, and cultures. With *Positive Action*, you are giving your students a wonderful gift: a way to view and achieve in life—by using positive actions—no matter the barriers.

The universality of the program's philosophy also works for you as a professional and personally. Your life experiences provide you with evidence of the validity of the concepts. Sharing your experiences with your students as you teach the lessons enhances their understanding of the value of positive actions even more deeply.

The end goal of *Positive Action* is to realize that when you feel good about yourself by doing positive actions, you are happy and successful. Success and happiness, as defined by *Positive Action*, is feeling good about who you are and what you are doing—this is the *Positive Action* way. It works for everyone, and it will work for you and your students too. This approach is needed now more than ever as we face these unprecedented challenges to how we think about happiness and success. There is a positive path through these dark days, and *Positive Action* is poised to help us discover it.

We warmly invite you to join us in creating a learning environment where potentials are reached and dreams achieved even in the challenging times of Covid-19 and other critical obstacles. By acting positively and working together, we, individually and collectively, can become even stronger and our wellbeing more improved than ever before.

Enclosed are sample lessons to provide you with a glimpse at what *Positive Action* has to offer. There are lessons for each of the six units. Some lessons are more appropriate for in-class use and others for hybrid/distance learning use. These lessons have been extracted from the complete instructor's manual. They have been edited to better stand alone; some have been modified omitting a few of the traditionally used materials that are provided in the complete kit. Images of posters, visual aids, activity sheets, and manipulatives can be requested through our support portal, allowing you to preview what you would receive in a complete kit.

Lesson 5—I Am a Friend of Mine

Purpose: To show students that they are valuable and can be good friends to themselves.

Word of the Week: Self-Concept – How you think and feel about yourself

Materials Needed Board and chalk/marker

Materials Provided None

Say Today, we're going to learn to improve how we feel about ourselves. First, keep in mind that you are all unique—there is no one exactly like you; you are good at doing some things—and you can get better; and you are important to others—your family, friends, and me. Most importantly, you can improve how you feel about yourself by doing positive actions. When you choose positive actions, they make you glad to be you, and you build a better self-concept. You, yourself, make a big difference in your life by doing positive actions.

Did you know that we are all **valuable**? Each and every one of you is **precious and of great worth**. We feel more valuable when we do positive actions to feel good about ourselves. When we do, we like ourselves and are proud of the things we say and do.

Teacher Write the word “Valuable” on the board, and then write the Word of the Week definition: “Precious or of great worth.” Have the children recite the word and definition with you, and then have them repeat it together several times.

Say When we know we are valuable and can feel good about ourselves by doing positive actions, we can be our own good friends. This poem gives us one reason to be our own good friend; see if you can tell what it is.

I AM A FRIEND OF MINE

Ryan is my friend, and Madi, too.
And I can't leave out Tim and Bea.
And there's Greg, Amanda, and you.
And then, of course, there is me.

Do you think it's silly to say that?
That I'm my own good friend, I mean.
That I count me when I count friends
Like Kevin, Sydney, and Justine?

I'm always happy to see my friends,
But I don't every day, you see.
Yet I'm always here with myself,
So I'm glad that I'm friends with me.

Say Why does the poem say it's good to like yourself and be your own friend? (*Wait for responses: All through your lifetime, you must live with yourself. People have happier lives when they like themselves.*) Does having yourself for a friend mean that you don't need other friends? Why? (*Wait for responses: No. Other people are always important to us.*)

It's easier to have friends when you like yourself, too.) What are some ways to be your own good friend? (Wait for responses: Eat healthy foods so you will feel good; take care of your teeth so you will have a bright smile; choose positive actions so you will be proud of what you do and say; be kind to your friends and family; think positive thoughts about yourself. Emphasize doing positive actions that make you feel good about yourself.)

We are a good friend to ourselves when we do positive actions of all kinds.

Lesson 6—My Thoughts, Actions, and Feelings

Purpose: To introduce the Thoughts-Actions-Feelings Circle and discuss the idea that you can improve the way you feel about yourself with positive actions.

Word of the Week: Self-Concept – How you think and feel about yourself.

Materials Needed Pencils, crayons, audio device (laptop, phone, etc.) and internet access

Materials Provided “Thoughts-Actions-Feelings Circle” Poster, 36” fishline, “Happy Circle” Poster 6-1-1, Activity Sheet 6-1-1, *Positive Action* Theme Song “I Am a *Positive Action* Kid” music and lyrics under Teach on *Positive Action* website

Say Today we are going to learn about something that is really important to us, to help us learn about ourselves, how to feel good about ourselves and how to have healthy, happy, and successful lives. We will learn some new words, some big words. The first is “self-concept”.

Teacher Write the word “Self-concept” on the board, and then write the Word of the Week definition: “How you think and feel about yourself.” Have children recite the word and definition with you, and then have them repeat it together several times.

Say Do you think it is important to have a good self-concept? Why? (*Wait for responses: So we feel good about ourselves.*)

Let’s begin by learning how to improve how you feel about yourself. First, keep in mind that you are unique—there is no one exactly like you; you are good at doing some things—and you can get better; and you are important to others—your family, friends, and me. Most importantly, you can **improve how you feel about yourself by doing positive actions**. When you choose positive actions, they make you glad to be you, and you build a better self-concept. You, yourself, make a big difference in your life by doing positive actions.

Teacher Display the positive (green) side of the “Thoughts-Actions-Feelings Circle” Poster.

Say Do you know what positive means? (*Wait for responses: Something good, right, or happy.*) Can you smile big happy smiles? That’s what positive feels like. This is the positive Thoughts-Actions-Feelings Circle. (*Ask the children to repeat the word “positive” a couple of times. Then, flip to the negative [red] side of the poster.*) Who knows what negative means? (*Wait for responses: Something bad, wrong, or unhappy.*) Can you frown big grumpy frowns? (*Ask the students to repeat the word “negative” a couple of times.*) This is the negative Thoughts-Actions-Feelings Circle. Do you know it’s harder to frown than it is to smile? It takes lots more muscles to make a frown. It’s both easier and happier to smile. Do you like smiles or frowns better? (*Wait for responses: Smiles.*) The good news is we get to choose which Circle we’re in. (*Flip back to the positive [green] side of the poster.*) It sounds like we all want to be in the positive, happy, smiling Circle, so let’s learn how.

Teacher Display the “Happy Circle” Poster 6-1-1. As you discuss the following example of positive thoughts, actions, and feelings, indicate the actions on the poster and ask students to perform them with you.

Say You have a thought in your head. *(Ask the children to point to their heads, symbolic of thought.)* For example, you think, “I want to help my mom by clearing the table.” Show me your big happy smiles if you think that is a positive thought.

That thought leads to an action. *(Ask the students to wiggle their fingers, symbolic of action.)* You clear off the table without being asked. Smile if you think that is a positive action. Next, the action leads to a feeling about yourself. *(Ask the students to put their hands over their hearts, symbolic of feeling.)* You feel good about yourself and happy because you helped your mom. Let’s see those big happy smiles! That good feeling helps you think another positive thought. *(Have the students point to their heads again.)* What would that thought be? *(Wait for responses: I like to help my mom because it makes me feel good about myself, so I will help her more.)*

So, let’s go over that again. *(Trace the steps on the “Happy Circle” Poster again and have students perform the hand motions with you.)* When I think positive thoughts *(point to head)*, I do positive actions *(wiggle fingers)*, and then I get positive feelings about myself *(hand over heart)*—and that helps me think another positive thought *(point to head)*. Now you can each practice your own example in the Circle.

Teacher Distribute Activity Sheet 6-1-1. Direct students to complete the Happy Circle by filling in the blanks with a positive thought, the positive action it leads to, and the resulting positive feeling about themselves. Then, allow time for them to color the picture.

Say Do you feel good about yourself after completing the Happy Circle? *(Wait for responses: Yes.)* We can feel good about ourselves all the time if we just focus on positive thoughts, actions, and feelings. Remember, feeling good about ourselves is a positive action. We will continue to learn more positive actions that will help our brains and hearts be healthy, strong, and smart. Let’s sing a song about them now.

Teacher Prepare to play the music with the lyrics and print or project the lyrics from the Positive Action Program Music page under Teach or at www.positiveaction.net/program-music. Play the Positive Action Theme Song “I Am a Positive Action Kid” once and have students listen. Then play it again and have them sing along. Use this song and others you will learn often to set a positive tone and remind students to do positive actions.

After the lesson, display both posters in a visible, permanent location in the classroom (use the provided 36” fishline for the two-sided “Thoughts-Actions-Feelings Circle” Poster). Leave them hanging for the remainder of the year to reference during lessons.

You will use the three actions taught in this lesson when talking about the Thoughts-Actions-Feelings Circle throughout the curriculum. They will be indicated along with the sample response in parenthesis, but you can also feel free to integrate them whenever it seems appropriate.

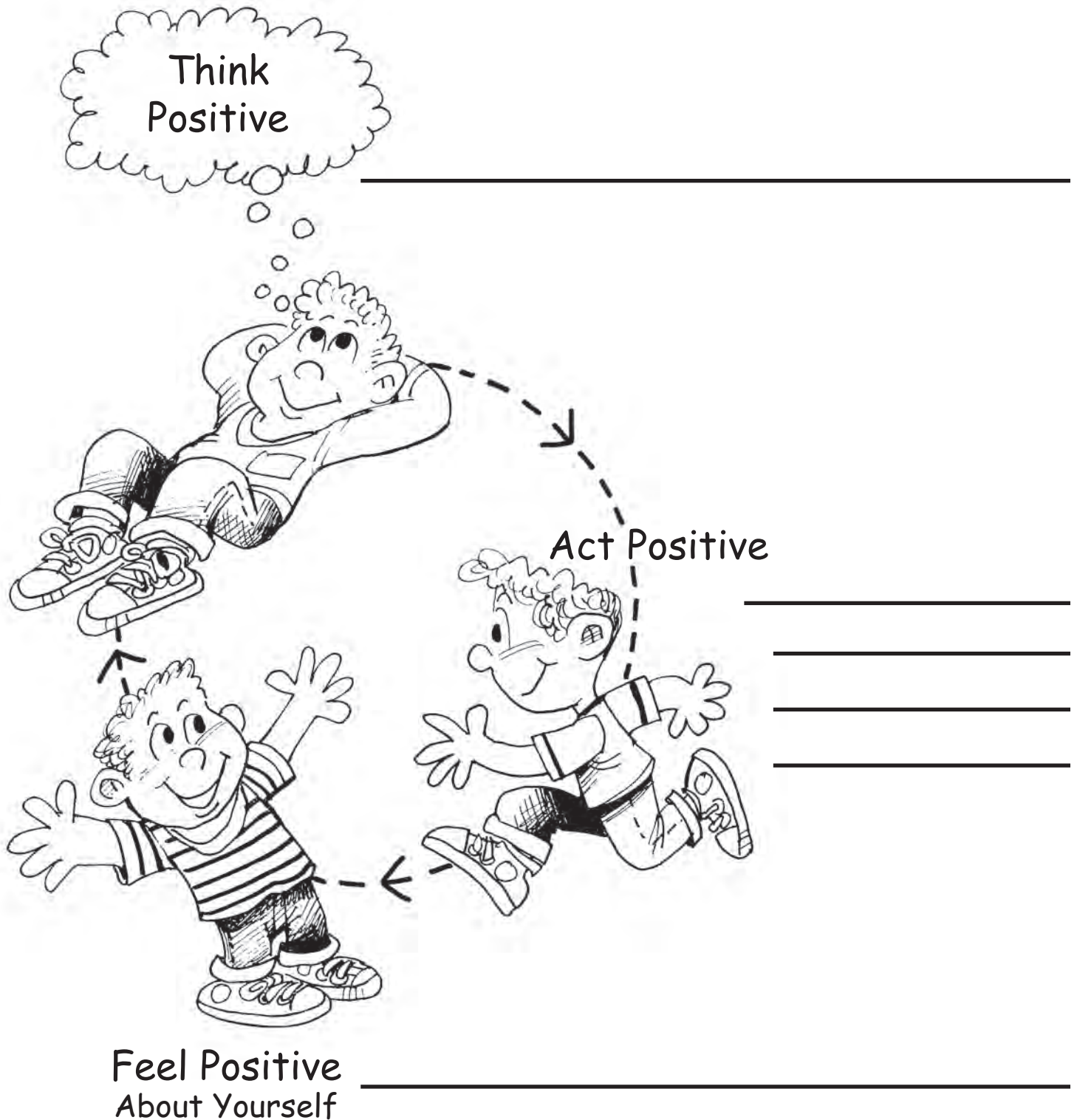
Lesson 6



Name: _____

A Happy Circle

DIRECTIONS: Teacher, direct students to complete the Happy Circle by filling in the blanks with a positive thought, the positive action it leads to, and the resulting positive feeling about themselves. Then, allow time for them to color the picture.



"What do you think is wrong?" Davey asked.

"Just about everything."

"But how could it get that way? It's not a very old car," Davey replied.

"Well, I'm not sure. Do you ever give it a nice drink of oil?" asked the repairman.

"Oil? No. I never thought of that. Does a car need oil?"

"Oh, yes. Do you keep it nice and clean, inside and out?"

"Clean? Well, I let the rain fall on it, and that washes away some of the dirt," answered Davey.

"Oh, dear," the repairman said. "This does sound bad. Do you drive it some every day?"

"Oh, no. I take it on very long trips, drive it all day every day, and then I let it sit out back for a month or two at a time."

"My goodness, this sounds terrible. Do you have someone check it over regularly?" the repairman asked.

"No. This is the first time I've ever brought it to a shop."

"Great garage!" the repairman said. "We have big trouble here. Do you buy good quality gasoline?"

"Sure. Unless I can get some of that cheap stuff."

"Jumping generators!" the repairman said. "No wonder your car doesn't sound right. The poor thing is sick."

"Sick? My car is sick? Do you think it will live?"

"I can't say yet, but I'll tell you this much—you have a lot to learn about taking care of cars. If I get this car fixed, your next trip better be on the Road to Good Health. It is a slight detour on the road to Healthyville. I know some people who live along the way. They can teach you plenty," the repairman told Davey.

"All right," Davey Doodle said. "If you will save my car's life, I'll take good care of it forever."

Say How is taking care of a car like taking care of your body? (*Wait for responses: They both need fuel and movement.*) Cars need care; you need care. There are some physical positive actions that you can do to stay well. Do you know what physical means? (*Wait for responses: Physical means having to do with your body.*) Let's say the word three times. (*Repeat the word.*) Do you know what some physical positive actions are? (*Wait for responses: Sleeping, exercising, eating well.*) Let's look at our poster.

Teacher As you point to the pictures, ask the students to identify the physical positive actions. You can provide coaching if they have trouble. Include:

- Eating healthy food
- Keeping clean
- Getting exercise every day
- Getting enough sleep and rest
- Taking care of your teeth
- Avoiding things that harm your body
- Using medicine correctly
- Staying well

Say Now, we're going to listen to a song called "Take Care of You." It's about all the ways you can take care of yourself.

Teacher Prepare to play the music with the lyrics and print or project the lyrics from the Positive Action Program Music page under Teach or at www.positiveaction.net/program-music. Play "Take Care of You" once and have students listen. Then play it again and have them sing along. Use this song and others you will learn often to set a positive tone and remind students to do positive actions.

Say What is a positive thought about taking care of your body? *(Wait for responses, point to head: I want my body to last me my whole life!)* What are some positive actions you can do for that positive thought? *(Wait for responses, wiggle fingers: Eat healthy food, get lots of sleep and rest, avoid things that harm my body.)* Good ideas! How will you feel about yourself after those positive actions? *(Wait for responses, hand over heart: I'll feel good about myself, and my body will feel good, too.)* Great job! We'll learn more in the next several lessons about positive actions to feel good about ourselves and to make our bodies feel good, too!

Lesson 23



Lesson 25—Getting Great Fuel

Purpose: To reinforce the positive action of eating healthy foods.

Word of the Week: Healthy – To be well or have good health.

Materials Needed None

Materials Provided None

Say What is a positive thought about taking care of your body? (Wait for responses, point to head: I want my body to last me my whole life!) What are some positive actions you can do for that positive thought? (Wait for responses, wiggle fingers: Eat healthy food, get lots of sleep and rest, avoid things that harm my body.) Good ideas! How will you feel about yourself after those positive actions? (Wait for responses, hand over heart: I'll feel good about myself, and my body will feel good, too.) Great job!

Today, we'll learn the physical positive action of eating the right foods. When you eat the right kinds of food each day, you are thinking positive thoughts such as I want a healthy snack (point to head), and practicing a positive action such as eating an apple or carrot (wiggle fingers). That means that your body will feel good and you will feel good about yourself (hand over heart).

If you want your body to feel good and be healthy, there are positive actions that will help you. Like a great car, your body needs fuel and it needs to move. We don't put gas in our ears for fuel or change our feet like the tires on our cars, but we can take care of ourselves so we "run right." You put gasoline in your car; you put food in your body. Your car needs to be driven in order to work well; your body needs to move. We will look at this poster that shows us the "Road to Good Health" to learn some important positive actions to feel good about ourselves in the physical area—positive actions for our bodies.

We'll meet a new friend, Davey Doddle, who likes to travel. He likes to go as far as he can and see everything there is to see. He has a wonderful car to drive, now that it's had some repairs. Let's join him now on the Road to Good Health and see what he's up to.

DAVEY DODDLE EATS WITH THE WRIGHTS

Davey Doddle gave his car a big kiss, and then he got inside and patted it gently on the steering wheel. "I'll take good care of you from now on," he said. He turned the key and the little car responded by starting right up. The engine sounded smooth—all the coughing was gone.

Off Davey went, driving his little red car down the Road to Good Health—a lovely drive, as it turned out. Davey was anxious to get to Healthyville, and the repairman had assured him that if he followed this road, he would arrive in wonderful shape.

He had not gone very far before he saw a family having a picnic. They waved at him in such a friendly way that Davey decided to stop and say hello to them.

"Hello there," he said, and he waved back. He was still sitting in his car.

"Hello," they all said at once. Then the father said, "Would you like to join us? We have lots of good food."

Davey was rather hungry, and the family seemed very nice. There was a mother and a father, a brother and a sister, and a dog with a wagging tail who all looked very happy. Davey parked his car and walked over to them. "It's awfully nice of you to invite me to share your lunch," he said.

"Not at all," the mother said. "We have plenty. Besides we're the Wright family. We do everything exactly as we should."

"Everything right all the time?" Davey asked, quite amazed.

"Oh, yes," the father said. "I'm Ever Wright. This is my wife Always Wright, my son Dew Wright, and my daughter, Bea Wright."

"And don't forget Very Right, our dog," said the son, patting the dog's head.

"Is there anything right you would like us to do?" asked Mrs. Wright.

"Well, no. I just wanted to eat with you if that's all...right."

"It certainly is all right, since we always eat right. Would you like to eat exactly right, the way we do?"

"I suppose so," Davey said. He wasn't sure what it meant to eat exactly right, but he knew the food looked good.

"Which food group are you?" Little Bea Wright asked and she smiled.

This seemed a very strange question to Davey. "Excuse me?" he said.

"She's fruits," Dew Wright said. "She drinks orange juice, eats lots of apples and plums and apricots—all that sort of stuff."

"You mean that's all she eats?" Davey said. "Doesn't she ever eat meat or bread or—"

"Oh, no," said Mr. Wright. "I eat meat. I'm the meat group."

"I'm the bread group," Mrs. Wright said. "I eat all the bread and cereals for the family."

Dew Wright added, "I'm the one who eats all the milk products. I eat enough cheese and drink enough milk to make the whole family healthy."

Davey's jaw dropped at this strange arrangement, but he had one question. "So who eats the vegetables?"

All the Wrights laughed. "We don't like vegetables much, but Very Right does. He eats all the carrots and peas and lettuce he can!"

"I see. Can I say something?" Davey said, trying to be respectful. The Wrights nodded.

"I thought you were the Wright family, but I think you've been eating wrong. A good diet means eating a balance of lots of good foods. One of you can't eat enough bread for the whole family, or enough meat, or enough milk, or enough fruits or vegetables. You all have to eat some of each—every day. That's what keeps you healthy."

"Really?" the Wright family said all at once.

Then Ever Wright said, "What a wonderful idea. I'm sick of nothing but meat all the time. Please give me some of those peaches, Bea." The Wrights immediately began to trade plates with each other, happy to be eating a variety of foods.

"Even a Wright family can learn something new," Ever Wright said, enjoying his peaches. Then Davey joined them and they all ate a meal with some food from each food group.

Later, when Davey was back on the road again, he felt a little disappointed. He had hoped to learn something about taking care of his car, but he hadn't. He had only taught the Wrights something about eating that they should have known already. He wasn't going to learn much on this trip if things kept going this way.

Say Davey helped the Wrights realize they did something good for their bodies by eating healthy foods from all the food groups. You can keep your body healthy by eating a variety of foods, too. Remember, it's the only body you'll ever have, so your positive actions really matter.

Who can think of a positive thought about eating healthy food? *(Wait for responses, point to head: I like to eat healthy food like salads, whole grain bread, fish, bananas, yogurt.)* Can you tell me a positive action that you do to get healthy food in your body? *(Wait for responses, wiggle fingers: Eat one of those healthy foods.)* What positive feelings do you get when you eat healthy foods? *(Wait for responses, hand over heart: I feel healthy and strong, and I feel good about myself because I ate healthy foods.)*

Lesson 25



Lesson 58—Feeling Good About Me

Purpose: To introduce the positive action of managing your gift of feelings, and to practice identifying feelings of love, anger, worry, jealousy, pride, fear, loneliness, thankfulness, and discouragement.

Word of the Week: Feelings – Emotions such as anger, fear, love, and worry.

Materials Needed Tape or tacks, board and chalk/marker

Materials Provided “Feelings Gift Card” Visual Aid 58-3-1, “Birthday” Poster 44-3-1

Say In today’s *Positive Action* lesson, we are going to make faces at one another! Yes, get your faces ready! We are starting some lessons today on managing our feelings—emotions such as anger, fear, love, and worry—and we’ll discuss the words for the feelings we all have.

Teacher Attach “Feelings Gift Card” Visual Aid 58-3-1 to “Birthday” Poster 44-3-1 from inside the card so the bow shows. Ask one student to come up and “open” the gift card, revealing the gift inside and reading it to the class.

Write the word “Feelings” on the board, and then write the Word of the Week definition: “Emotions such as anger, fear, love, and worry.” Have the children recite the word and definition with you, and then have them repeat it together several times. Ask the students if they remember how they have felt when they have had those emotions, and allow them to discuss.

Say It is important to know that everyone has feelings—your mom, dad, teachers, and friends. Everyone feels the same feelings you do. Different things make different people have these feelings. What makes you angry may not make someone else get mad, but you might feel better knowing that everyone does get mad sometimes. It’s natural. But wise people learn to manage their feelings, even when they get mad. Managing your feelings is a positive action that helps you feel good about yourself.

I’ll name the feelings we’ll be learning about and write them on the board. Then we’ll make faces to express them. Ready? Let’s begin.

Teacher *Write the names of these feelings on the board. Explain the feelings and discuss example situations using those provided or others relevant to your class. Then, ask the students to make a face expressing that feeling.*

Feeling	Definition	Situation
Anger	To feel mad or angry.	Your bike has been stolen.
Worry	To be concerned about something.	The bus is late and you don’t know if you’ll be able to get home.

Jealousy	To want something for yourself that someone else has.	Your best friend gets chosen to run an errand to the office, but you wanted to go.
Sad	To feel unhappy, even like you want to cry.	Your dog is lost and you don't know where she has gone.
Fear	To feel afraid or scared or in danger.	You get lost at the mall and you don't know where your parents are or who to turn to for help.
Excitement	To feel nervous and full of energy.	You are going on a field trip and it is hard to wait and to sit still.
Pride	To know you have used a skill or talent or done something well.	You clean up your bedroom all by yourself or you learned how to tie your shoe laces.
Loneliness	To be alone in a way that makes you feel sad or shy.	You arrive on the playground and none of your friends invite you to play.
Discouragement	To lose courage so that you think you can't do something and you feel like giving up.	You try to kick the soccer ball at the goal, but no matter how hard you practice, you can't seem to make it go in.
Thankful	To feel glad and grateful.	Your mom makes you an afternoon snack so you and your friends can enjoy it after school.
Love	To feel warm and caring.	Your sister is your good friend and you always make up after a fight.

Discuss other feelings that come up during the lesson.

Say In our next lessons, we're going to talk about each of these feelings and how we can manage them in positive ways. Controlling our feelings—both good and bad—with positive thoughts and actions makes us feel how about ourselves? *(Wait for responses: Good.)*

Lesson 58



Lesson 63—Brushing My Worries Away

Purpose: To reinforce the positive action of managing feelings of worry.

Word of the Week: Thoughts – Ideas that result from thinking.

Materials Needed None

Materials Provided None

Say Does everybody worry sometimes? *(Wait for responses: Yes.)* Is it natural? *(Wait for responses: Yes.)*

Teacher Use a very portentous voice and say “But...” while dramatically wringing your hands in front of the class.

Say Have you ever seen anyone wring his or her hands in worry? *(Wait for responses: Varied.)* Wringing your hands in worry means you are upset and extremely worried. You want to do something, but can’t think of anything to do. You just wring your hands and worry instead of choosing a positive action. *(Ask the class to make the motions of wringing their hands.)* See how useless that is? Are your hands doing anything helpful? *(Wait for responses: No.)* Instead of wringing your hands in worry, you can brush your worries away by using positive actions. *(Move as if you are brushing something off and ask class to imitate.)*

Here are some positive actions people choose to manage worry.

- Ask yourself if what you are worrying about can change if you use positive actions. If it can, then do something about it.
- Share the worry with a friend. A friend can be a good listener and may have had the same worry. Then, choose a positive action.
- Get busy doing something else. Use a positive action such as exercising, doing something nice for a friend, writing a letter, or reading a book. Do anything that will take your mind off your worries.

Teacher Read each worried thought and ask children for examples of more positive thoughts to replace them. If necessary, provide the examples shown in parenthesis.

- I don’t think I can learn to read well. *(It is so much fun to practice by reading to myself.)*
- I hope I don’t lose the money Mom gave me to give to the teacher. *(I have the money Mom gave me tucked deep in my coat pocket. It is safe.)*
- My dad says we might move. I hope we don’t. *(If we do move, I’ll make some new friends.)*
- I hope I don’t drop the ball. *(Playing ball is so much fun.)*
- I’m going to be scared when the lights go out. *(One of my parents will give me a kiss and tuck me in.)*

Once children have the idea, allow a child to express a worry. Ask others in the class to think of a positive thought to replace that worry.

Children may want to repeat the wringing motion and the motion of brushing off worries as you recite this little verse:

Don't wring your hands in worry;
That makes worry stay.
Use some positive actions
And brush your worries away.

Say Learning this verse will remind you to think of positive actions to help you quit worrying too much. Then you will feel so much happier and good about yourself. You'll have lots more time for other positive thoughts. It isn't easy at first and it takes lots of practice to develop this positive skill, but it's worth it!

Lesson 74—The Code

Purpose: To create a Classroom Code of Conduct based on students' ideas of how they like to be treated, and to reinforce that you treat others the way you like to be treated.

Word of the Week: Friendships – Caring between people who choose to be together.

Materials Needed Board and chalk/marker, audio device (laptop, phone, etc.) and internet access

Materials Provided “Get Along” music and lyrics under Teach on *Positive Action* website

Teacher Before the lesson begins, write the following words on the board. These concepts will help students create a Code of Conduct later in the lesson. This list is by no means exhaustive; your class will be able to decide what they want on their list.

- Kindness
- Fairness
- Honesty
- Patience
- Courtesy
- Cooperation
- Positive Humor
- Empathy
- Compassion
- Respect
- Caring
- Love

Teacher Prepare to play the music with the lyrics and print or project the lyrics from the Positive Action Program Music page at www.positiveaction.net/program-music. Play “Get Along” once and have students listen. Then play it again and have them sing along. Use this song and others you will learn often to set a positive tone and remind students to do positive actions.

Say The title of the song we learned is “Get Along.” Do you ever hear people say that you need to get along? (*Wait for responses: Yes.*) At home? (*Wait for responses: Yes.*) In your community? (*Wait for responses: Yes.*) At school? (*Wait for responses: Yes.*) Wow! Getting along must be important! Remember, the best way to get along is to treat others the way you like to be treated.

Say it with me, please. (*Wait for responses: Treat others the way you like to be treated.*) Let's say it again, all together. (*Wait for responses: Treat others the way you like to be treated.*)

Now, let's talk about ways we like to be treated. I have listed some important words on the board that will help us think of good ideas. When we are done, we will have what we call a Code of Conduct. A “code” means a list of rules and “conduct” is another word for behavior. So, it's a list of rules for how we like to be treated by others.

That means it's also the list we'll follow to help us remember how to treat others. It's easy to understand. If you can truly say and mean that you like to be treated unkindly, unfairly, and without respect, then you may treat others that way. But have you ever met anyone who truly wants to be treated without respect or kindness? (*Wait for responses: No.*) Don't we all want people to treat us fairly? (*Wait for responses: Yes.*)

Teacher Add “Code of Conduct” and “How I Like to Be Treated” above the list you have written. Ask students to give you more ideas for how they like to be treated, adding them to the list.

When finished, ask students again if these are ways in which they want to be treated. Then, remind them that means these are the ways in which they should treat others in order to feel good about themselves.

Say Why do we need a Code of Conduct? *(Wait for responses: To help us remember to treat others the way we like to be treated.)* Yes, it is good to keep such positive thoughts in mind *(point to head)*. Our Code of Conduct will stay in our classroom and remind us of specific ways to treat others.

These positive thoughts and actions will make us feel how about ourselves? *(Wait for responses, hand over heart: Good!)* I can’t wait to get started!

Lesson 79—To Be Fair

Purpose: To introduce the positive action of treating others the way you like to be treated by being fair.

Word of the Week: Fairness – To treat others with justice.

Materials Needed Board and chalk/marker

Materials Provided “Polly the Friendship Parrot” Poster 76-4-1

Say Today we’re going to learn how to get along with others. We do this with one simple rule, the Golden Rule: to treat others the way you like to be treated. How do you like to be treated? (*Wait for responses, encourage: kindness, honesty, respect, empathy, compassion, cooperation, love, caring, courtesy, patience.*) How about with fairness? How many of you like to be treated with fairness?

How many of you have ever felt that you were treated in a way that was not fair? Raise your hands. (*Wait for responses.*) How does it feel to be treated unfairly? (*Wait for responses: It hurts, and makes people mad and sad.*) Being fair is a positive action that makes us feel good about ourselves and it makes others feel good, too.

Teacher Write the word “Fairness” on the board, and then write the Word of the Week definition: “To treat others with justice.” Have the children recite the word and definition with you, and then have them repeat it together several times.

Say If fairness is treating others with justice, what does justice mean? (*Wait for responses: To treat people the same and treat them well.*)

Teacher Discuss the definitions of justice and fairness with the students, making sure everyone understands why they are important.

Say Why are justice and fairness important? (*Wait for responses: To make sure that everyone has the same chance; to make our home, school, community, and world a better place for all people.*)

Teacher Display the “Polly the Friendship Parrot” Poster 76-4-1.

Say This is Polly the Friendship Parrot. She knows that if we get along with others, we’ll feel good about ourselves. She has a very big heart (*point to the medal on the poster*). She treats others the way she likes to be treated. Let’s see how she feels about the positive action of fairness.

Teacher You might want to let children practice a couple of Polly squawks and “Polly voices” to help them feel like Polly is part of the class. Refer to the poster, directing your comments and questions at Polly, and then reply in your “Polly voice.”

Say Polly, do you treat people with fairness?

Polly: Oh, yes! Oh, yes! That's the only way to treat people. Everyone wants to be treated fairly.

Say But how do you use the positive action of fairness when there are so many people?

Polly: Well, that's why we have rules and laws. Rules and laws! Rules and laws! That's also why we are doing the *Positive Action* program. It's easy once you get the hang of it, but it takes practice.

Say Polly, will you help us practice using the positive action of fairness?

Polly: Squawk, squawk! It would be my pleasure, my pleasure to help the children. Since I know quite a bit about being a good friend and treating others the way we like to be treated, it's only fair.

Teacher *Read the following situations and ask the children to shout "Fair" or "Unfair" after each situation is described. Then ask Polly what would be a fair way to handle the situation, and respond using your "Polly voice."*

Say Your classmate and you both want to read the same book. Your classmate takes the book during reading time all week long. Fair or unfair? (*Wait for responses: Unfair.*) Polly, what can we do with this to make it fair?

Polly: Squawk, squawk. This one's easy! You can share the book. One child could read it one day, and the other child could read it the next. Sharing is part of using the positive action of fairness.

Say You and your friend want to play a game. Your friend wants to play by the rules written on the game box. You want to make up your own rules as you go along so that you can win. Fair or unfair? (*Wait for responses: Unfair.*) Polly, what can we do to make this fair?

Polly: Rules are rules! Rules are rules! They are written on the box so that everyone will play by the same rules. That's how it is with rules and laws. Your Code of Conduct is a set of rules. The way to use the positive action of fairness is if everybody agrees to play by the same rules.

Say Your brother and you share a room. Your brother says the room is too cramped, and you have to get rid of all your stuff so that he has room for his stuff. Fair or unfair? (*Wait for responses: Unfair.*) Polly, what can we do with this to make it fair?

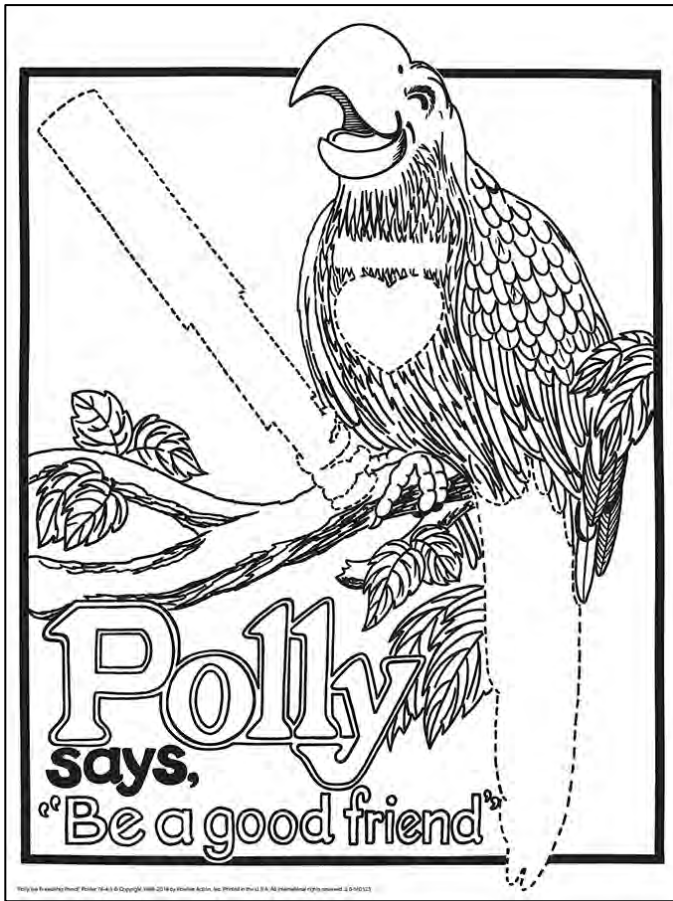
Polly: The positive action of fairness means to treat people with justice. It isn't just or fair for one person to take up all the room while the other has to give up his space. Both children should have an equal amount of space for their things. That's fair! That's fair!

Say Rosa has an orange to share with her little sister. She cuts it in half and gives one half to her sister, while she keeps one half for herself. Fair or unfair? (*Wait for responses: Fair.*) Polly, what do you think about this?

Polly: I think it's just great when people treat each other with the positive action of fairness! Rosa was fair because she gave her little sister the same amount she kept for herself. Good job! Good job!

Say So, like Polly tells us, learning to be fair is just a matter of practicing. What positive thought tells us how to be fair? (*Wait for responses, point to head: We think of how we like to be treated fairly, and then we know how to treat them.*) Right, and then our positive action is to treat them the way we'd like to be treated (*wiggle fingers*). How will we feel about ourselves if we do that? (*Wait for responses, hand over heart: Good because we were fair, and that's how we'd like to be treated.*) We feel good because being fair is a positive action for treating others the way we like to be treated—and there's nothing more fair than that!

Lesson 79



Lesson 103—Grow My Strengths

Purpose: To introduce the positive action of telling yourself the truth by recognizing your strengths and weaknesses.

Word of the Week: Self-Responsibility – To answer for your actions.

Materials Needed Pencils, crayons

Materials Provided Activity Sheet 103-5-1, “Positive Pat and Negative Ned” Poster 94-5-1

Say When we keep our promises, we are telling the truth so that we feel good about ourselves. In this lesson, we’ll focus on our strengths and weaknesses, and how being honest about them can make us feel good about ourselves.

Maybe it seems that since everybody has a brain, one brain should be just like the next brain. But when we look at what’s real, we see that our brains work the same as other people’s in some ways, but they work very differently in other ways. Does that surprise you? (*Wait for responses: Varied.*)

Have you noticed that some children learn to read really fast and other kids learn more slowly? (*Wait for responses: Yes.*) Have you noticed that some children can draw really well and others struggle? (*Wait for responses: Yes.*) Have you noticed that some children make friends easily and other children are shy? (*Wait for responses: Yes.*) There’s a reason why that happens. We all have the same kinds of brain cells, but they work together differently. So, because of these differences in our brains and bodies, everybody has strengths—things they are good at—and everybody has weaknesses—things that are harder for them.

We all have strengths, but sometimes we don’t know we have them. Especially when you’re about six years old—there’s lots of time to discover what you’re good at. It helps to be on the look-out, and to try lots of different things. We all have weaknesses, too. The best thing to know about weaknesses is this: You can learn to get better. By practicing positive thoughts and actions, you can learn to hit the ball even if you can’t now. You can improve your spelling, and get better at drawing. You can also improve your strengths, the things you’re good at, until you’re really good! That’s because every time you practice something, you are teaching your brain to get better. For example, you are teaching your brain every day to get better at reading, and you can teach your brain how to get better at making friends. We did that in our last unit about getting along with others. That’s the great thing about our brains—we can learn to do better with both our strengths and our weaknesses!

Teacher *Distribute Activity Sheet 103-5-1 and ask students to get out their pencils and crayons. Direct them to write one strength on the top half and one weakness on the bottom half. Help them spell the words or come up with ideas if necessary. Then, allow them to draw a picture of the strength and weakness.*

Say What positive thought can help you when you discover some things that are hard for you? (*Wait for responses, point to head: Everybody has weaknesses. I can learn to get better or I can get help.*) What positive actions can help you when you have trouble?

(Wait for responses, wiggle fingers: I can try harder and do the best I can. I can just admit some things are hard for me.) How will you feel as a result of these positive thoughts and actions? (Wait for responses, hand over heart: I feel good about what I can do, and I feel good about learning to do better with my weaknesses.) Plus, you feel good about yourself for telling yourself and others the truth. So, what's the next positive thought? (Wait for responses, point to head: I can do more than I thought I could do.)

Teacher Point out “Know your strengths and weaknesses” on the “Positive Pat and Negative Ned” Poster 94-5-1.

Say Remember, when you are honest with yourself about your strengths and weaknesses, you are taking a positive action to tell yourself the truth and be honest with others. When you tell the truth, you feel good about yourself.

Name: _____

My Strengths and Weaknesses

DIRECTIONS: Teacher, direct students to write one strength on the top half and one weakness on the bottom half. Then, allow them to draw a picture of the strength and weakness.

Strengths

Weaknesses

I can improve my
strengths and weaknesses!



Lesson 103



Lesson 105—*What's Important to Me*

Purpose: To introduce the positive action of telling yourself the truth by discovering what's important to you, including knowing your likes and dislikes.

Word of the Week: Self-Responsibility – To answer for your actions.

Materials Needed	Board and chalk/marker, paper, pencils, crayons, audio device (laptop, phone, etc.) and internet access
Materials Provided	"Go Ahead, Make a Choice" music and lyrics under Teach on <i>Positive Action</i> website

Say As we tell ourselves the truth about our strengths and weaknesses, we get to know ourselves better. We think about what interests us, what is fun for us, what we are curious about, and we discover that there are some things that are really important to us. When we know what really matters to us, we make the choice to give ourselves the time and energy to do those important things, and then we feel good about ourselves for being so honest with ourselves. Let's think about the things that are important to us as a class.

Teacher *Wait for responses and write them on the board: Families, school, friends, art, science, math, computers, games, sports, nature, dancing, singing, vacations with our parents, learning, thinking, imagining, eating healthy food. Add up the number of things important to the class.*

Say As a class, we found many things important to us. However, each of us is unique. Just like we all have an individual footprint, we all hold different things dear. So, now you get to decide the three things—from our list or something new—that are most important to you. Then you'll trace your footprint and write them inside it.

Teacher *Ask students to prepare paper, pencils and crayons. Have them remove one shoe; demonstrate tracing a footprint on the paper. Ask students to do the same, and walk around the room to help as needed.*

Next, direct them to write their names in their foot, followed by the three things that are important to them. Help them spell any words not on the board, and allow time for decorating the feet. Meanwhile, congratulate each student on one thing that is important to him/her.

Say Students, you all have beautiful footprints, and doesn't it feel good to be honest about what's important to you? (*Wait for responses: Yes.*) Sometimes we start to think we like something just because everyone else does. Or maybe we're afraid to say we like something because we think no one else likes it. Part of being honest with ourselves is knowing our likes and dislikes. I'm going to read a list of things some people like and some don't. Stand up if you like a thing, and stay sitting if you don't. It's up to you to make a choice. This is called having an opinion; there's no right or wrong.

Teacher *Read the following examples; allow all students to be seated again before reading the next choice.*

- Riding a bike
- Chocolate cake
- Green, slimy worms
- A sore throat
- Watching TV
- Scary movies
- Going to the store
- Cold, windy days
- Pizza
- New clothes
- Reading a book
- Playing in the sun
- Smelly soap
- Running
- Building a snowman
- Spiders in your bed
- Riding in a car
- Getting your hair cut
- Playing video games
- Hamburgers with French fries
- Cauliflower ice cream
- The color red

Say How do you feel about yourself now? (*Wait for responses: Good because I was honest about my likes and dislikes.*) That was a fun game, and we went through the whole Happy Circle. We had the positive thought that we would be honest with ourselves about our likes and dislikes (*point to head*). Then, we took the positive action of deciding what we liked and standing up for it (*wiggle fingers*). Now we all feel good about ourselves (*hand over heart*)! Being honest can be fun, and it always makes us feel good about ourselves. It even leads to more positive thoughts.

Did you realize when you were having fun that you were also making lots of choices? (*Wait for responses: Varied.*) We're honest with ourselves when we make choices that are true to what is really important to us and to what we like and dislike. Let's sing a song about making choices.

Teacher *Prepare to play the music with the lyrics and print or project the lyrics from the Positive Action Program Music page at www.positiveaction.net/program-music. Play "Go Ahead, Make a Choice" once and have students listen. Then play it again and have them sing along. Use this song and others you will learn often to set a positive tone and remind students to do positive actions.*

Say We can think about what's important and choose to do what really matters, and we'll feel good about ourselves for being honest!

Teacher *Ask students to keep their footprints somewhere where they can be reminded of the things most important to them.*

Lesson 113—How to Get Healthier, Smarter, Nicer

Purpose: To introduce Unit 6—Improving Yourself Continually Using Social and Emotional Positive Actions.

Word of the Week: Self-Improvement – To make yourself better by taking positive actions.

Materials Needed Board and chalk/marker, audio device (laptop, phone, etc.) and internet access, tape or tacks

Materials Provided “Maurice the Mouse” Poster 1-1-1, “Improve Myself” music and lyrics under Teach on *Positive Action* website

Teacher Write the word “Self-Improvement” on the board, and then write the Word of the Week definition: “To make yourself better by taking positive actions.” Have the children recite the word and definition with you, and then have them repeat it together several times

Say Continual self-improvement is an important positive action that helps you feel good about yourself. You do a good job of growing up in a positive way when you improve on what you know and what you can do. Why is this important? (*Wait for responses: Your job as a child and as a student is to learn more and do better over time.*)

Teacher Indicate Maurice on the poster and read the following script using your “Maurice voice.” Maurice talks fast and often gets his words mixed up for a humorous effect.

Maurice: Howdy, pardners. How are you doing today? (*Wait for responses: Good.*) Great. Well, I’m good. I mean I’m doing good things. But I am good, too. What I mean is I feel good about me. That is, I’m a good mouse, who thinks good things and does good things—most of the time you understand—and Marrott, well, he’s good, too. I’m retting geddy to tell you a stood gory about goo tood mice, oops! A good story about two good mice: the story of how Marrott and I found the greatest treasure of all...except that we didn’t exactly find...well, we did find it, but we didn’t find what we...well, maybe I’ll start at the beginning instead of at the end.

I’ll begin by telling you we found a sack of corn on the road. I know that sounds crazy. I know a sack of corn isn’t the greatest treasure of all, but to a couple of mice, ah meece, ah, mooses, ah mice, a bag of corn is supper—for many nights. Even more important than that, Marrott and I learned a lot about improving our lives a little bit at a time, including storing up a good supper for the winter months. We learned how to...well, listen, why don’t we just have [teacher’s name] read the story to you. So listen to my corny story, or I mean, my story about corn, and see what’s up.

MAURICE AND MARROTT'S BIG BAG OF CORN

Maurice and Marrott loved to explore. They never stopped wandering through the house or outside, just to see what they could see—and especially to see what they could eat. They found wonderful crumbs and scraps on the kitchen floor, but they really needed food for the winter.

One day they were wandering outside when they came across a big sack of corn. The sack had apparently fallen from a truck and was lying in a patch of weeds near the road.

“Look at this,” Maurice said. “This would give us something good to eat for months. Storing food is a very important positive action for us to take.”

“I don’t know, Maurice,” Marrott said. “We need to search for the treasure before it gets too cold outside.”

“I know. But let’s take this corn inside first. We need to solve this problem of storing winter food. And this sack of corn offers an opportunity for us to have something to eat all winter.”

“Think about that, Maurice,” Marrott said. “How could we—two little mice—carry a sack that weighs one hundred pounds? It would take a large human being to pick it up and carry it.”

Maurice said, “We don’t have the potential to carry a big sack of corn, but we have the potential to be smart enough to get the corn inside our house. Maybe if we borrowed that red wagon over there, and...”

“Maurice, are you losing your mind?” Marrott said. “How could we get the sack in the wagon? How could we pull it if we did?”

“Yeah, well...you do have a point there. But maybe we could...”

“Maybe we could forget it, Maurice. Let’s just eat what we can now and then not worry about it.” Marrott started nibbling a hole through the sack.

Maurice was not giving up so easily. He really was a sensible mouse. He really wanted all that corn—not just one good meal. Marrott had just nibbled his way through the sack and the golden corn was pouring out through the hole he had made. Maurice filled his mouth and was about to chew when an idea occurred to him.

“Mrarrt. Waykeddoit. Inuhhow.”

“Maurice, you are talking with your mouth full. What are you saying?”

Maurice swallowed and then he said, “We can do it. I figured it out! We fill our mouths, as full as we can get them. Then we go back and forth until all that beautiful corn is in our house. We persist, doing this step-by-step until we meet our goal of getting it all inside. It means making lots trips.”

“But Maurice, that’s a lot of work. We might have to take a thousand trips. Five hundred each, fifty trips a day for ten days.”

“It will be a lot of work, but as we see our storage area fill up for the winter, we’ll be the happiest mice anywhere. We’ll feel really good about ourselves because we did something very smart and we worked so hard to do it. We’ll broaden our horizons in a big way. We’ll learn about ourselves and we’ll learn about our world. We’ll know we can do big, important things.”

Marrott had to think about that, but he was starting to smile. “I have a positive thought: Fifty trips a day sounds like too much. Let’s just do all we can each day. If we try to do too much at once, we’ll get discouraged. But we have the courage to try. We can try!”

“Okay, it’s a deal. But let’s get started now.”

Every day the two little mice made as many trips as they could, and every day they watched the pile in their attic grow. They turned a problem into something good; they believed in their potential to do it; and they were brave—they had the courage to try. They took on this big job in mouthfuls, moving step-by-step toward their goal. They learned important things about themselves and their world by broadening their horizons. They weren't strong enough to lift a hundred pounds—not all at once—but they were strong enough to lift it a little at a time. They were improving their lives by saving their food; they improved themselves a little bit every day over time. They did it with their own positive thoughts, their own positive actions, and their own positive feelings about themselves.

Say What does “improve yourself” mean? *(Wait for responses: Learning how to be the best that you can be; learning how to keep growing in a positive way.)* How did Maurice and Marrott learn how to improve themselves? *(Wait for responses: They were able to save all their winter food because they believed they could move the corn even though it was such a big bag; they turned a problem into an opportunity; they were brave and had the courage to try; they set a goal and worked toward it step by step; they kept on keeping on; they broadened their horizons by making themselves more at home in the world.)*

Did they try to do everything at once? *(Wait for responses: No.)* Why not? *(Wait for responses: If there is something we want to do and it seems like too big a job, we can do a little at a time and get the job done.)* Why is it important to improve ourselves? *(Wait for responses: Improving ourselves makes us feel good about ourselves and it makes our lives better.)* Imagine Maurice and Marrott's lives if they didn't take care of their food. What would that be like? *(Wait for responses: They would be very hungry mice. They would not be able to live without food for the winter.)*

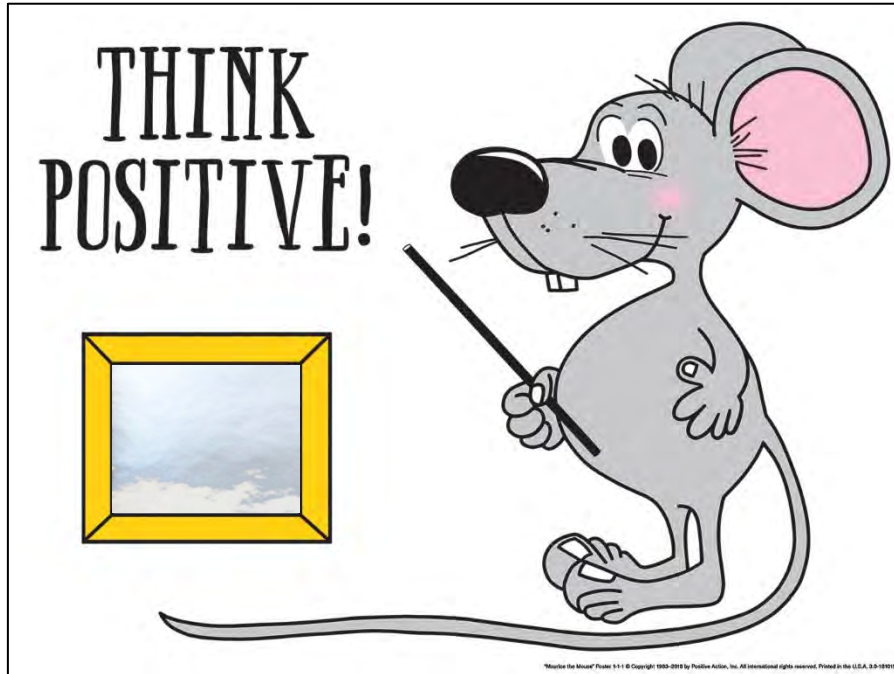
Teacher Prepare to play the music with the lyrics and print or project the lyrics from the Positive Action Program Music page at www.positiveaction.net/program-music. Play “Improve Myself” once and have students listen. Then play it again and have them sing along. Use this song and others you will learn often to set a positive tone and remind students to do positive actions.

Say Let's track how Maurice and Marrott used the Happy Circle to improve themselves continually. First, what positive thought did they have? *(Wait for responses, point to head: Maurice thought that the bag would solve their problem of what to eat during the winter months. Also they realized that even though they were too small to lift the whole bag of grain, they could carry the food a bit at a time.)* What positive actions did that lead to? *(Wait for responses, wiggle fingers: They had the courage to think of a plan, they set a goal, and then they started carrying the food, a mouthful at a time.)* Then how did the mice feel about themselves? *(Wait for responses, hand over heart: They felt good about themselves and about their lives because they were continually improving themselves.)*

Like Maurice and Marrott, we are finding out how to improve ourselves all the time. We will discover how to keep making ourselves better by learning more positive actions that make us feel good about ourselves.

You are doing a good job of growing up in a positive way as you improve what you know and what you can do. We all want to be better, stronger, smarter, and nicer. That's why improving ourselves continually is important to us.

Lesson 113



Lesson 117—Believing in What I Can Do

Purpose: To introduce the positive action of continually improving yourself by believing in your potential.

Word of the Week: Potential – The power to do.

Materials Needed Board and chalk/marker, tape or tacks

Materials Provided “Steamy the Train” Poster 117-6-1

Say We have been learning that we can use positive actions to improve ourselves in three areas: physically, by improving our bodies; intellectually, by improving our minds; and socially and emotionally, by improving the way we manage ourselves, get along with others, and tell the truth. We’ve all improved a lot since we were just babies, but we know we can improve more, too. This is called our potential. It means the power to do. Every person has this power inside of them.

Teacher Write the word “Potential” on the board, and then write the Word of the Week definition: “The power to do.” Have the children recite the word and definition with you, and then have them repeat it together several times.

Say Why do you suppose it’s important to believe that you have the power to do something? (*Wait for responses: It helps you to actually do it.*) You can do so many more things if you believe in your potential. Believing in your potential is a positive action that helps you feel good about yourself and gives you the confidence to tackle the big, important tasks and complete them.

Teacher Display the “Steamy the Train” Poster 117-6-1 in a visible place. You will refer to it throughout Unit 6. Point to the words “Nothing Is Impossible” on Steamy’s engine.

NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR STEAMY

Steamy sat at the end of a dead-end track down at the dusty, lonely end of the train yard. It was the same train yard where Papa Diesel Train, Mama Electric Train, and Little Locomotive Train lived, but Steamy was a much older train and hadn’t been out of the train yard in years.

Every day, he felt himself get a little rustier, a little more broken down. Within himself he knew he was not a useless old steam engine. But others thought he was good for nothing and he sadly realized this. The modern engines were doing all the work now, so the old steam engine just sat and waited—potential on wheels.

“I know I could do something worthwhile if someone would just give me a chance.” Steamy would say to himself. “I don’t want to rust away.” But no one heard him. No one even walked down to his end of the train yard. Steamy and his cars were all alone.

One day some young people decided Steamy would be fun to play on. Lisa played engineer and all her friends hopped on the cars. They pretended they were chugging along the track on their way to a magical land where anything was possible.

"I wish you would get me going for real," Steamy whispered. "I have potential; I have potential; I have potential." Lisa looked around. Had she really heard something? In all the chug-chug-chugging she was making up in her mind, she had seemed to hear some words.

"That's right. I want to go places, I want to go places, I want to go places." Lisa couldn't believe all this. Trains didn't talk. And it was such strange talk anyway—something in the rhythmic clicking of her own imagination.

"Wipe away the dust on my side." All right, Lisa thought. She wiped away the dust on the old train's side and underneath found the words: Nothing Is Impossible.

Wow, thought Lisa, nothing is impossible! Then she had a grand idea—one she couldn't resist! Supposing the train could be polished up and repaired? It would be such a lovely train, nicer even than the modern ones. This one had such pretty little cars and such a happy feeling about it.

Lisa gathered the other kids around. "Listen," she said, "I think this train just told me...well, I'm not so sure...but anyway, this train could run again. I am sure of that. If it were polished up and fixed up, it could be a terrific train to ride. I think this train has potential!"

"It's just an old rusty wreck," Antonio said, and the other kids agreed.

"We could fix that," Lisa said. "We could work hard on it."

"It would take more than work. It would take money. Someone would have to repair the engine; we can't do that," Antonio said.

"I know," Lisa said, "but if someone else believes in this engine as much as I do, then it could be fixed up good as new. We just have to find someone to help us—someone who doesn't want to see this nice old train fall apart."

"That's silly, Lisa," Antonio said. "This train could never go fast enough to keep up with the other trains. It's old fashioned. The new trains would run it right off the track."

Lisa had to think about that. But then something wonderful occurred to her. She wasn't sure whether it came from her own mind or from the train itself. "It could run on the old track that isn't used any more—the one through the mountains from here to Sunnydale. It could go nice and slow so everyone could enjoy the view. People—especially kids—could learn what it was like to ride on these nice old trains. After all, nothing is impossible."

"That would be fun," Antonio said, and the others seemed to agree. But Lisa knew the job was too big for a bunch of kids. Lisa knew she would have to get help.

Say What did Lisa see in Steamy? (*Wait for responses: She saw that Steamy could get cleaned up and work just fine.*) Why is it important for you to believe nothing is impossible and remember your potential—your great power to do and be important things? (*Wait for responses: You will want to try more things if you believe that you can learn more and do more.*)

What positive thought did Lisa get from Steamy? (*Wait for responses, point to head: I have potential. Nothing is impossible.*) What positive action did Lisa take? (*Wait for responses, wiggle fingers: She spoke to the other children about Steamy's potential.*) How do you think Lisa felt about herself? (*Wait for responses, hand over heart: She felt good about herself because she took the positive action of believing in potential.*) What was Lisa's next positive thought? (*Wait for responses, point to head: She thought that Steamy could run on the old track.*)

Steamy has potential, Lisa has potential, and so do all of you! You have the power to do many things, and you can do much more if you believe in your potential. It's a positive action that helps you feel good about yourself and gives you the confidence to tackle big tasks and complete them.

Lesson 117





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