

Grade 4

Sample Lessons



positiveaction.net



@PosActSEL



@PosActSEL



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.

The Philosophy and TAF Circle

PURPOSE: To introduce *Positive Action* as a class to learn how to understand and manage yourself by doing positive actions to feel good about yourself.

 MATERIALS NEEDED	Audio device (laptop, phone, etc.) and internet access	 MATERIALS PROVIDED	Image of “Say Yes to Life” Poster 1-1-4, <i>Positive Action</i> Theme Song “I Am a <i>Positive Action</i> Kid” music and lyrics under Teach on the <i>Positive Action</i> website
---	--	---	---

PROCEDURE



1) SAY: Welcome class. Today we are beginning a new subject called *Positive Action*. Do any of you have any idea what a class called *Positive Action* would be about? (*Discuss*) *Positive Action* is different from other topics we normally study, like reading or science, because the subject of *Positive Action* is—ourselves. This class is about YOU! We are going to learn how to understand ourselves by learning how our minds and bodies work and how that can help us manage ourselves so we feel good about ourselves. When we understand and manage ourselves positively, we will know how to feel good about ourselves, and we will know how to become our greatest selves.

2) Let’s begin by discussing what we think the word “frontier” means. Who knows the meaning of the word “frontier”? (*Discuss: Help them see beyond defining frontier as the old West or a wilderness area.*) Do you think there are any more frontiers left to explore in our world today, and if so, what would they be? (*Discuss: Outer space, medicine, environment, technology and others.*) Who knows what the word “pioneer” means? (*Discuss: Someone who leads the way in learning about a new area not yet completely known or discovered, and not just someone who lived long ago.*)

Can you think of any way you could be a pioneer? (*Discuss*) How many of you think that you could be a pioneer and explore or learn more about yourself? (*Discuss*) What sort of exploring would you do to learn more about yourself? (*Discuss: You might try to understand how you think, act and feel about yourself.*) Who knows what having the “pioneer spirit” means? (*Discuss*) Do you think it would help us in this exploration of ourselves to have the “pioneer spirit”? (*Discuss*)

3) Do you know that the way we think about ourselves contributes to how happy, healthy, and successful we will be? Why? (*Discuss*) In our *Positive Action* lessons, we’re going to learn simple ways, or positive actions, that we can do to be our own good friend and to make our lives happy. **Doing positive actions means that we do or cause good things to happen.** When we do positive actions, we feel good about ourselves, and we make those around us feel good, too. In fact, that is the philosophy of *Positive Action*: **I feel good about myself when I do positive actions, and there is a positive way to do everything.** Let’s practice saying the philosophy.

TEACHER: Have the students repeat the philosophy several times.

Lesson 1

UNIT 1



SAY:

By learning this philosophy and living it, we are saying “yes” to life. It’s like saying, “I want to enjoy my life, find my greatness, do interesting things, and be as happy and successful as I can be.” We even have a poster to remind us of this idea.

TEACHER: *Display the “Say Yes to Life” Poster 1-1-4.*



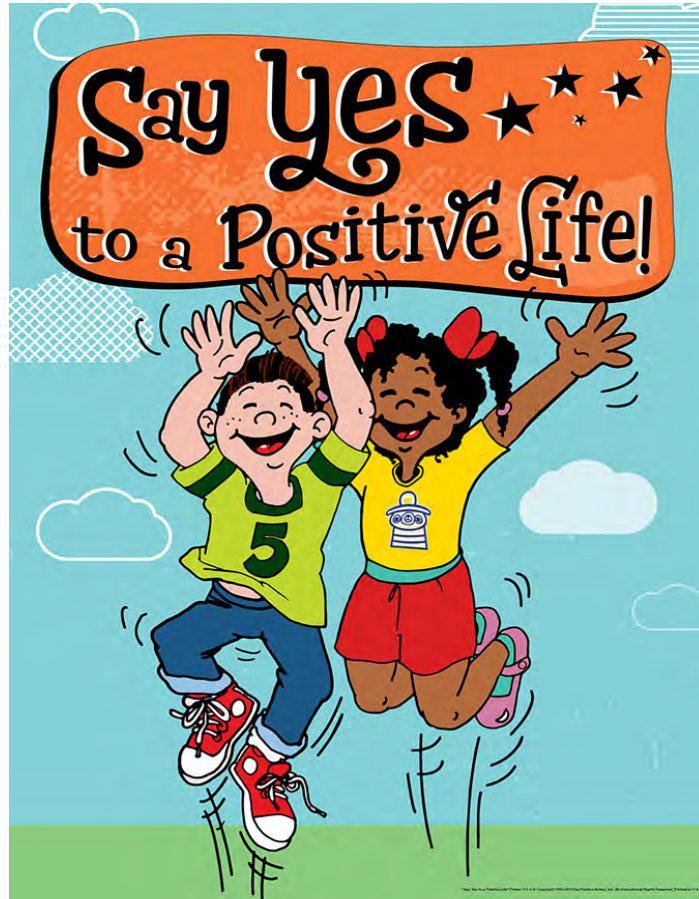
SAY:

You are pioneers. Your frontier is yourself. Your challenge is to learn more about yourself and to like yourself. We will learn how to live in healthy ways, to make good decisions, to wisely manage ourselves, to be a good friend, to be honest with ourselves and others, and how to set goals for ourselves. You are probably already a happy and positive person, but you can always improve. And what an exciting adventure that will be! It all begins with saying “yes” to yourself—saying “yes” to life.

4) We’re going to learn the *Positive Action* Theme Song: “I Am a *Positive Action* Kid.” We’ll sing it many times throughout the year. We just learned to say “yes” to life by using positive actions, and this song will help us remember.

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 (which is the same as “I am a Positive Action Kid”) once and have the students listen. Then play it again and have them sing along. Play this song often to set a positive tone and remind students to do positive actions.*

Lesson 1




The Philosophy and TAF Circle


PURPOSE: To introduce the *Positive Action* Philosophy and the Thoughts-Actions-Feelings about Self Circle that depicts the philosophy, and which teaches that positive thoughts lead to positive actions, positive actions lead to positive feelings about yourself, and positive feelings about yourself lead to more positive thoughts.

 MATERIALS NEEDED	Audio device (laptop, phone, etc.) and internet access	 MATERIALS PROVIDED	Image of “Thoughts-Actions-Feelings Circle” Poster, “Thoughts-Actions-Feelings” music and lyrics under Teach on the <i>Positive Action</i> website
---	--	---	--

PROCEDURE

 **1) SAY:** Every day we act in certain ways without knowing exactly why. Today we will begin to learn and understand the way our thoughts influence our actions and our feelings about ourselves, and how positive thoughts can set off a “positive circle.”

2) TEACHER: Display the “Thoughts-Actions-Feelings Circle” Poster so both sides will be visible. Indicate each step as you discuss it.

 **3) SAY:** It starts with a positive thought, which leads to a positive action, which leads to a positive feeling about ourselves. That positive feeling leads us to another positive thought.

It works in the same way with negative thoughts. A negative thought leads to a negative action, which leads to a negative feeling about ourselves, which leads to another negative thought.



4) The Circle represents the philosophy of *Positive Action*: you feel good about yourself when you do positive actions, and there is a positive way to do everything. (*Have students repeat the philosophy several times*). Every day we are faced with all kinds of situations that require us to make choices. When faced with a situation, we have a thought about it. This thought leads to an act, and that act leads to having a feeling about ourselves, which then leads to another thought. This process is called the **Thoughts-Actions-Feelings about Self Circle**. As you can see on this poster, there is a positive circle and a negative circle. Let’s consider the following example of

the different thoughts that will lead to a positive Thoughts-Actions-Feelings about Self Circle or a negative Thoughts-Actions-Feelings about Self Circle.

A teacher asks you to do some homework. You have a thought: “Homework makes me feel grown up.” That’s a positive thought, and it leads to a positive action: You take a positive action and do a good job on the assignment. This leads to a positive feeling about yourself: satisfaction and pride in your work. Then, it circles back to your next thought: “I want to do well on my next homework assignment.” Do you see how the circle works? (*Discuss*) Now, suppose you start with a negative thought, such as, “I hate homework.” Can someone describe the action and feeling that might follow?” (*Discuss*)

If the negative thought is, “I hate homework and I won’t do it,” then you don’t do your homework. The next day when you have to turn your homework in, you won’t have it. You won’t feel good about yourself. When you have another homework assignment, you might hate it even more, so you won’t do it either, and the circle will continue. You will feel worse and worse about yourself because you are in the negative circle.

- 5) Now you see how positive thoughts—or negative ones—are part of a circle. Good or bad thoughts influence our actions, which make us feel good or bad, and lead to further thoughts. This circle of thoughts, actions, and feelings about ourselves continues on and on. Can you see how important our first thoughts are in any situation?
- 6) Now let’s play a game that shows just how important our thoughts can be.

TEACHER: *Have eight students volunteer. Describe a situation from the list below or use your own and ask one student to say a positive thought about it. Have the next student describe a likely action and the one after that describe a likely feeling about one’s self that will likely result from that action. The fourth student should now see how that feeling can lead to another thought that continues the circle. For example: The next time a homework assignment is given, you remember your pride in the last one, and this leads to good work on your next homework assignment, and to further good feelings about yourself. Then do the situation from a negative point of view. Let the group continue the thoughts-actions-feelings circle on two more situations, one positive and one negative. Change and have another eight students do the same activity. The game can be played as many times as time will allow.*

These are some possible situations, or you may want to make up some of your own that are particularly relevant to your students.

- You have an important test tomorrow and an invitation to go skating.
- Your class has a new student who looks lonely.
- You and a good friend had a disagreement yesterday.
- You wake up to find the day is cloudy and gray.

- Your family has voted to spend summer vacation in a place that was your last choice.
- Some of your classmates are making fun of someone.
- Your father has asked you twice to carry out the trash.
- The dog chewed a schoolbook you left lying on the front steps.

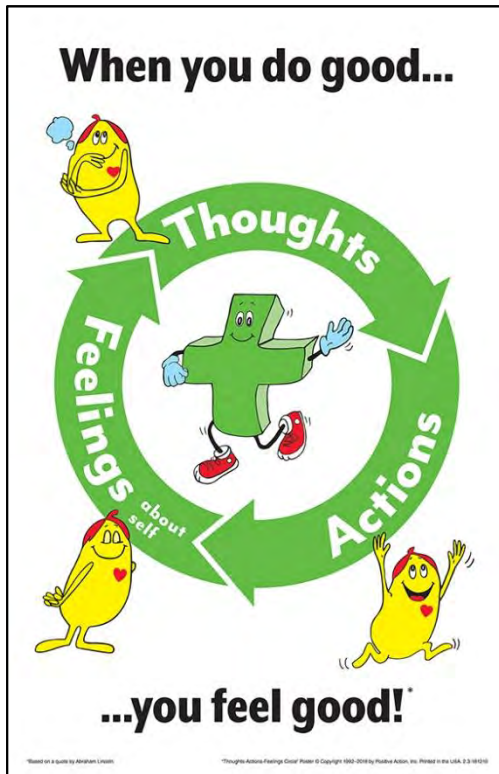
**7) SAY:**

As a reminder for us all to stay in the positive Thoughts-Actions-Feelings about Self Circle, I'm going to refer to this poster often for the rest of the year. We're also going to learn a song called "Thoughts-Actions-Feelings." Are you ready?

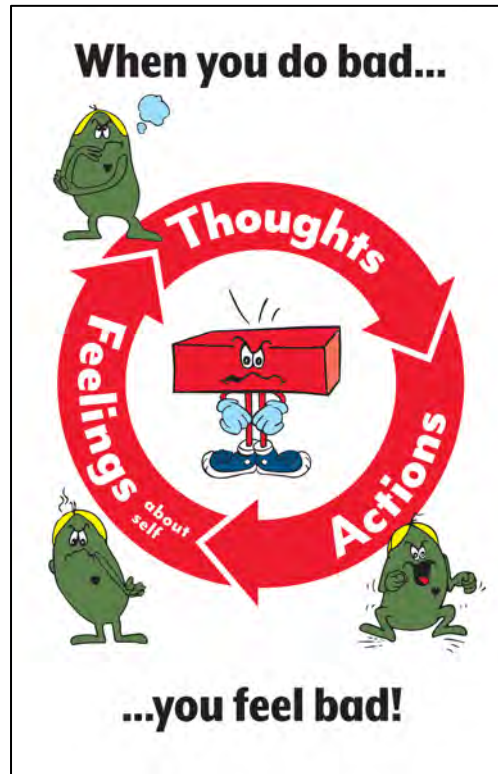
TEACHER: *Prepare to play the music with the lyrics and print or project the lyrics from the Positive Action Program Music page under Teach or at www.positiveaction.net/program-music. Play the "Thoughts-Actions-Feelings" song once and have the students listen. Play it again and have them sing along. Play this song often to set a positive tone and remind students to do positive actions.*

The process of the Thoughts-Actions-Feelings about Self Circle is one we want the students to memorize. It should become second nature for them to think through a situation using the Circle. Learning the song should help them remember the Circle better.

Lesson 7



Front



Back

Physical & Intellectual Positive Actions for a Healthy Self-Concept

PURPOSE: To learn that avoiding illnesses is a physical positive action for a healthy body and how to avoid them.

 MATERIALS NEEDED	Pencils	 MATERIALS PROVIDED	Activity Sheet 29-2-4
---	---------	---	-----------------------

PROCEDURE



- 1) **SAY:** Today we are going to talk about the positive actions we can use to keep us healthy and keep us from getting so many colds and other illnesses.
- 2) It is true that colds are caused by viruses, and we can often catch a cold from others. But there are some positive actions we can use that will keep our bodies in good general health. A healthy body is less likely to get run-down and less susceptible to catching colds and other illnesses. Think of the specific ways you can use these guidelines in your life as I go over them.
 - You should wash your hands often, especially after visiting the restroom and always before eating.
 - If you sneeze or cough, you should always cover your mouth and nose with your arm (*demonstrate and have students practice it too*), and then wash your hands. Germs are spread by touch and also through the air, so doing these two positive actions will help keep you from giving or getting cold germs.
 - You should eat right to stay healthy. This is very important. The fuel you put in your tank will keep your body's motor running right. Your body will be healthy, and a healthy body gives you a good feeling.
 - Exercise is important in avoiding illnesses because the more you can do to keep yourself strong and in good physical condition, the more likely you are to be healthy more often and sick less often.
 - Remember, these **positive actions for avoiding illnesses** will help us all fight off cold germs and also help prevent us from giving cold germs. We want to choose them for the good feelings we get about ourselves when we use positive actions, and for the positive outcome these actions have on our self-concepts.
- 3) **TEACHER:** Direct students to Activity Sheet 29-2-4, "Soaring toward Good Health." Review the instructions, and then allow students to work independently, or complete as a group discussion.

Lesson 29

ENRICHMENT: Further discussion might center on the idea that being sick is no fun. Students might want to share times when they forgot to use some of the positive actions for avoiding illnesses and the results. You may have students write a paragraph about Florence Nightingale and her efforts during the Crimean War.

Activity Sheet 29-2-4 Answer Key

1. hands
2. mouth and nose
3. foods
4. day

Soaring Toward Good Health



You can “fly” through this school year with fewer sick days. Here are some positive actions you can use to avoid illnesses and stay healthy.

DIRECTIONS: Fill in the blanks below.

1. Wash your _____ often.
2. Cover your _____ when sneezing or coughing.
3. Eat the right _____ to stay healthy.
4. Exercise every _____.

**Choosing positive actions makes you feel good about
that happy, healthy body of yours!**

Physical & Intellectual Positive Actions for a Healthy Self-Concept

PURPOSE: To learn that positive problem-solving is an intellectual positive action for a healthy mind.

 MATERIALS NEEDED	None	 MATERIALS PROVIDED	None
---	------	---	------

PROCEDURE



1) **SAY:**

Today we are going to learn a positive action that helps ensure a healthy and happy mind. It is **problem solving**. Problem solving goes on throughout the day, even if we're not aware of it. Problems don't have to be big or dangerous. Most of the time our minds are solving little day-to-day problems. Sometimes, though, we are faced with a problem that is more difficult. It is a real **challenge—a task that calls for special effort**.

Whether the problem we are facing is big or small, the best way to solve our problems or challenges is to first recognize the problem and face it head-on. Then, we think about all of the possible answers or solutions. Finally, we act on what we think is the best or most positive answer.

Solving problems and challenges “head-on” is a positive action rather than a negative action, like ignoring a problem.

2) Today, let's stretch our minds a little with a problem to solve. This problem was a real challenge for Farmer Reynolds. Are you ready to help him figure it out?

TEACHER: *Read the following problem to students and discuss as many interesting and unique solutions as you have time for. Then read and discuss the answers.*

Problem: On his way to the Dutchess County Fair with his pet goat, his tame wolf, and his prize head of cabbage, Farmer Reynolds came to a river that had to be crossed. On the river was a small boat just large enough to transport the farmer and one of his possessions. This presented a serious problem. If the farmer took the cabbage and left the wolf and the goat, the wolf could eat the goat. If he took the wolf and left the goat with the cabbage, the goat would eat the cabbage. For the same reasons, the farmer had to plan ahead so that neither the goat and the cabbage nor the wolf and the goat would be left alone on the other side of the river. Can you help Farmer Reynolds get his possessions across the river and to the fair?

Answer: The farmer took the goat across the river, returned and took the wolf

across. He then brought the goat back with him and left the goat while he took the head of cabbage across. Then the farmer returned with the goat.



3) SAY:

I have a challenge for everybody today. Your challenge is to come up with your own, unique story that presents a challenge in order to be solved. This could be a real life challenge that you have been presented with or a challenge like we heard about with Farmer Reynolds.

TEACHER: Plan to ask one or two students to present their tales of challenges the next day.

Managing Yourself Wisely Using Social/Emotional Positive Actions

PURPOSE: To learn the social/emotional positive action of identifying anger wisely and how to do it.

 MATERIALS NEEDED	Board and chalk/marker or virtual platform	 MATERIALS PROVIDED	None
---	--	---	------

PROCEDURE



1) SAY: An important social/emotional need we all have is to control our emotions. One emotion we all have is anger. Today we will be learning about the positive action of identifying anger and how to wisely control or manage it.

Let's check in on Shannon who got lost in space and landed on planet Foton where she is working to repair her spaceship.

2) TEACHER: Read the story, “Lost in Space: Shannon’s Explosion” discuss the questions that follow.



LOST IN SPACE Shannon’s Explosion

Shannon went back to her manual. She really concentrated this time. Maybe that’s why she didn’t notice that the Foton creatures had slowly returned to the star cruiser. Suddenly the ship rocked to one side. Shannon looked up with a start, and then she looked out of the window and saw that one of the creatures had lifted a landing leg right off the ground.

“Stop that,” she shouted. “Stop that.” She hit the key that slid the door back and dropped out of the craft next to the creature. “You idiot, what are you doing? You’ll tip over my cruiser if you keep that up.”

The big, goofy creature gazed at her, apparently confused. His eyes were full of fear. “Fix,” he said.

“Fix? You’re not fixing anything. You don’t even know what’s wrong. If you tip this ship on its side, you’ll fix me good,” Shannon exploded at the furry beast.

The creature backed away. “Good,” Shannon shouted after him. “Now stay away!”



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How will Shannon feel in a few minutes, once she cools off? (*She will feel good about herself for a few seconds because she vented her frustration but then she will feel badly about herself because she knows she wouldn’t like the Foton creatures to*

treat her that way. She knows that losing control of her emotions was a negative action which makes her feel badly about herself.)

- Do you ever lose your temper and feel bad about it later?
- What could Shannon have done to manage her anger before it got away from her?

3) **TEACHER:** Write the letters **A-N-G-E-R** vertically on the board. Write the following words on the board after each appropriate letter, and then discuss the words and their concepts.

A—Accept: Accept anger as a feeling we all experience.

N—Never: Never take your anger out on someone who is not to blame.

G—Give: Give yourself time to think of ways to deal with it.

E—Explain: Try to get an explanation for what happened. It may help you handle your anger constructively.

R—React: React positively. Channel your emotional energy toward hard work or intense activity. Then you may be able to express your anger in a reasonable way.



4) **SAY:**

We all get angry at times. But uncontrolled anger will destroy our chances of thinking and acting wisely. People who act in anger almost always regret it because it is a negative action that makes us feel badly about ourselves. People who are wise learn to give themselves some time to think before they act, and then to react in a positive way. Have any of you lost control of your anger at some time? What did you do? How did it make you feel about yourself? (*Discuss*)

Managing Yourself Wisely Using Social/Emotional Positive Actions

PURPOSE: To learn the social/emotional positive action of identifying worry wisely and how to do it.

 MATERIALS NEEDED	None	 MATERIALS PROVIDED	None
---	------	---	------

PROCEDURE



1) SAY: An important social/emotional need we all have is to control our emotions. One emotion we all have is worry. Today we will be learning about the positive action of identifying worry and how to wisely control or manage it. Let's check in with Shannon who got lost in space and landed on a planet called Foton.

2) TEACHER: Read the story, "Lost in Space: Getting Worried," then discuss the questions that follow.



LOST IN SPACE Getting Worried

Shannon went back to her ship and tried to read, but she was too upset. At first she was still angry, but as her anger passed, she began to think about what she had done. She knew the big creature had meant well. He really had wanted to help her repair the ship. She tried to imagine how he must feel now.

Shannon wondered where the creature had gone and what he was doing. She knew she had hurt his feelings. He probably hated her now. She wondered what he was telling all the other creatures. Maybe they would all hate her. They might even tell the king—and the king was so crazy it was hard to say what he might do. He might even take her ship again.

Shannon was worried. The more she thought, the more she worried. As the hours went by and she heard nothing from Tom, she began to wonder what had happened to him. Maybe he couldn't locate Foton. Maybe he was lost deeper in space than she was. She never should have sent for him. Everything was going wrong.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Do you think Shannon is letting her worries get out of hand? What process is making her worry more and more? (*She lets one worry lead to another, and then works them up until they are out of proportion to the situation.*)
- Rather than sit and worry, what should Shannon do? (*Turn her negative thoughts to positive ones and then take positive actions—she should find the creature and apologize.*)

- Have you ever worried about something? What was it?
- Did the thing you worried about actually happen?
- Would it have happened whether you worried or not?
- Did worrying change anything? Did it make things worse?
- Instead of worrying, what might you have done? (*Have a positive thought about what to do, then take a positive action. That would have helped you to feel better about the situation.*)



3) SAY:

We all **worry** at times, but we make things far worse than they need to be when we let ourselves get carried away with negative, worried thoughts. A limited amount of concern can be healthy. Can you think of times when that might be true? (*Discuss*) Worrying enough about a test that it makes you study hard for it is a useful level of concern followed by a positive action. But fussing and complaining and telling everyone, “I just know I’m going to fail,” only builds up anxiety and accomplishes nothing.

4) **TEACHER:** *Discuss with students worries that they may have and possible ideas of positive thoughts and actions they could take to deal with those worries.*

Getting Along With Others Using Social/Emotional Positive Actions

PURPOSE: To learn the social/emotional positive action of showing empathy as a way to treat others because it is a way you like to be treated, so you treat others that way.

 MATERIALS NEEDED	Board and chalk/marker or virtual platform	 MATERIALS PROVIDED	None
---	--	---	------

UNIT 4

PROCEDURE



1) SAY: Today we will be talking about the action of showing empathy. Does anyone know what that might mean?

2) TEACHER: Write the word “**empathy**” on the board and pronounce it.



SAY: **Empathy means to think how others feel.** To do so, we try to identify and understand how and why people feel as they do. We’ll hear from the Woodruff family for an example of how empathy works.

3) TEACHER: Read the story and discuss the questions that follow.



THE WOODRUFF FAMILY Kurt and Kevin Understand

Samantha sat slumped down with tears streaming down her face. Kevin and Kurt came into the yard. “Hey, Sam,” Kurt said, going over to her and putting his hand on her shoulder. “What’s wrong?”

Samantha sniffed loudly. “I can’t find Perkins. I’ve looked everywhere.” “Oh, don’t worry,” said Kevin. “He’ll turn up soon.”

“But I miss him.” She sniffed again.

“Sure you do.” The boys sat down by her. Kurt put his arm around her shoulder. “We know you’re worried that something bad will happen to him and that he might not come back.”

Samantha nodded. That was just what she was thinking. They really did understand how she felt. Somehow, knowing that they understood her worries made her feel a little better. She looked at them and smiled. “Come on,” said Kurt. “We’ll help you find him.”



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How did Kevin and Kurt help Samantha feel better? (*Kurt put his hand on Samantha's shoulder, then put his arm around her shoulder; the twins reflected that they understood why Samantha was sad; the twins helped Samantha look for her cat.*)
- Why is it important to try to understand others' feelings? (*Showing empathy lets others know that you understand their feelings. We all want others to empathize with us. It is a way we like to be treated, so we treat others that way. It is a positive action to show empathy, and when we do it we feel good about ourselves. When we don't show others empathy, we don't feel good about ourselves because we know that we wouldn't want others to not think about how we feel—to not understand what is happening to us.*)
- Can you think of a time when someone really seemed to empathize with you? How did you feel? (*It made you feel good because you could tell that person was really trying to understand your feelings.*)



4) SAY:

When you show empathy, you make others feel good and you will feel good about yourself, too. Now, let's do an activity to discuss a time when someone showed empathy to you and how it made you feel, and then about a time when you showed someone empathy and how that made you feel.

5) TEACHER: On the board, write the following topics and phrases. Ask one or two students to volunteer an experience they have had.

When Someone Really Understood My Feelings

One day I was feeling _____ because _____
 _____. Then _____
 came along and _____.

When I Used Empathy to Help Someone

I could tell _____ needed empathy because _____
 _____. So I _____
 _____.



6) SAY:

Today I challenge you to show empathy towards someone else. If you notice someone feeling sad or having a difficult time with something, let them know that you understand how that feels. Try not to offer advice or a solution to their problem, simply let them know that you understand what it feels like.

Getting Along With Others Using Social/Emotional Positive Actions

PURPOSE: To learn the social/emotional positive action of showing compassion as a way to treat others because it is a way you like to be treated so you treat others that way.

 MATERIALS NEEDED	None	 MATERIALS PROVIDED	None
---	------	---	------

UNIT 4

PROCEDURE



1) SAY: Today we are going to learn about showing others compassion or **a sympathy for someone's distress with a design to help them**. We will hear about the Woodruff family. See where you notice compassion in the story.

2) TEACHER: *Read the story.*



THE WOODRUFF FAMILY Helping Mom

"Kevin, Kurt, Samantha, time to wash up for dinner," Dad called. The three children came barging in from the backyard.

"Can Perkins eat with us, Daddy?" asked Samantha.

"No, he can't," her father said with a smile. "Your mother has had a rough day. She had trouble with the car this morning and had to miss an important meeting. Then this afternoon, the washer broke right as she was doing the laundry. She could really use some compassion."

"Okay, Dad," the twins said together.

A few minutes later, seated around the table, Kurt said, "Gee, Mom, dinner is great." "Yeah," agreed Kevin. "You're a great cook."

"It's so good that Perkins wishes he could have some, too," Samantha said. Mom smiled and said, "Thank you."

"Mom," Kevin said between bites, "we're lucky to have you for a mother." "That's right," said Kurt.

"Perkins and I are lucky, too," chimed Samantha.

Ms. Woodruff laughed. "All right, you three. Thank you for making me feel better. I'm the luckiest of all to have such super kids."



3) SAY:

When we reach out to someone who needs our **compassion**, we are using another positive action to help us get along with others. In our story, Ms. Woodruff had a bad day. The children said some encouraging words to show their compassion and cheer her up. Every day, many people around us need to have compassion shown to them. Maybe a friend who has a health problem, or someone having difficulty with their schoolwork, or someone who has had things go wrong in their family. We need to reach out to these people and show some compassion. We need to show them that we have sympathy for their situation and try to help them do better.

4)

Our activity today is to practice reaching out to those around us who are having problems and show them compassion. As you interact with classmates and later at home, see how many times you can say something compassionate to the people around you. You'll make them feel better, and you'll feel better, too.

Self-Honesty: Being Honest with Yourself & Others

Using Social /Emotional Positive Actions

PURPOSE: To learn the social/emotional positive actions of being realistic and admitting your strengths and weaknesses in order to be honest with yourself and others.

 MATERIALS NEEDED	Pencils	 MATERIALS PROVIDED	Activity Sheet 96-5-4
---	---------	---	-----------------------

PROCEDURE



1) SAY:

Being honest with yourself involves looking at yourself and admitting what's good about you as well as those things about you that could improve—your **strengths and weaknesses**. Sometimes a weakness (like eating too much candy) can be changed; sometimes a weakness is just a weakness and there's not too much you can do about it. But it helps to recognize both kinds of weaknesses, the kind you can change, and the kind you can't, because it helps to find out who you really are.

Being able to look at yourself closely and truthfully and recognize those things you do best are positive actions. It is important to know what you are strong in when choosing a career or trying out for sports or a play or something else you might want to do; it can help you make the right selection.

2)

Let's find out what happened to Jan at Camp Wilderness when she got back to the swimming pool. Pay attention to a girl named Brooke. See if you can figure out some of her strengths and weaknesses. Also pay attention to Jan. What are some of her strengths and weaknesses?



CAMP WILDERNESS

The Short Distance Swimmer

When Jan got back to the swimming pool, the diving competition was about to start. The swim coach asked Jan to choose who should take her place in the 200-meter free style and the relay. She also asked Jan to coach the girls on relay techniques while she supervised the diving competition.

Jan knew right away who she should pick for the 200-meter race: Cassandra. Cassandra wasn't the fastest swimmer on the team, but 200 meters was a long race, and she had the power and endurance to keep going at a fast pace. Jan called the girls together and gave them her decision. Cassandra would race the 200-meter. The relay team would be made up of Eva, Susie, Leticia, and Brooke. Brooke would be the anchorperson since she was so fast.

No sooner had the words gotten out of Jan's mouth, than Brooke had stood up and started to walk away.

"Where are you going?" asked Jan. "We're going to go over the timing of the dive."

"Well," snapped Brooke, "Since I'm not going to be in the relay, I won't need to hear the review, will I?"

"No! I mean, yes!" said Jan. "You must have misunderstood, Brooke. You're on the relay team." "No, I'm not. I quit the team." Brooke stomped off. The other girls just looked at each other. "What's the matter with her?" Jan asked.

"Oh," said Leticia. "She's just mad because you didn't pick her for the 200-meter race. She can't admit she's not perfect."

"I guess I'll have to get the coach to talk to her," Jan said wearily.

Just then, the girls heard a thud. They turned toward the deep end, and saw Nancy, the coach, diving into the water.

"What happened?" someone yelled.

One of the other coaches yelled back, "A girl hit her chin on the diving board. She was trying to do an inward flip."

Jan looked toward the pool. She could see blood in the water where Nancy was retrieving the injured swimmer. Moments later, Nancy carried the girl to the infirmary. People were saying that she wasn't badly hurt, mostly frightened, but she had cut her lip and might have lost a tooth or two. Well, that was the end of the coach for a while. The Olympics Coordinator said the meet would continue since the girl wasn't badly hurt. Great, but now what was to be done about Brooke? Jan would have to talk to her herself. She walked over to her.

"Brooke," she began. "I know you're the fastest swimmer on the team. That's why I picked you for anchor. That's a pretty important position, you know."

"If I'm so fast, how come I'm not in the 200-meter?"

"Because you're a good sprinter, but you can't last the whole 200 meters. I've noticed that about you. You are fast, but you fade out."

"Thanks a lot!"

"There's nothing wrong with that. You can't expect to have both speed and endurance." "Oh yeah? Well, you do, don't you Miss Fancy Pants Know-It-All!"

Jan realized that maybe she hadn't picked her words very carefully. Maybe "fade out" wasn't exactly a tactful way to put it, but the words were out of her mouth now. Now what could she do? While she was thinking, Brooke picked up her towel and sports bag and turned to walk away. "I never liked swimming anyway," she

said, and off she went, out of the pool area and on down the path toward the snack bar. Jan knew she wasn't coming back. That was that.

The rest of the afternoon went smoothly. Heather, a diver who was a back-up swimmer, replaced Brooke in the relay and Sofi, the girl who'd been hurt diving, was okay. She hadn't even lost any teeth. She had bitten her tongue, and that was where all the blood had come from, but the nurse said it would heal itself.

The Camp Wilderness team beat the Junior Pioneers by a landslide! The girls put forth an incredible effort. They told Jan they'd won the races for her. And the girls from Cabins 14 and 15 marched back to camp with five blue ribbons, two red ribbons, and lots of white ones. For everyone except Brooke and poor Sofi, the day had been a real success.



3) SAY:

To be truly honest with yourself, you must be realistic. This means you must see things as they really are. Brooke was a very fast swimmer, but she was a short distance swimmer, not a long distance swimmer. Had she seen things as they really were, she probably would have looked terrific bringing the relay team to victory as the anchor of her team. As it was, she didn't even get a chance to compete. She had a real strength, but chose to overlook it because of one weakness.

4)



SAY:

Direct students to Activity Sheet 96-5-4, "Making My Self-Concept Strong."

Everyone has some strength in certain areas. Your strength might be an ability to get along with others, a good memory, or the ability to think quickly. Think of something in which you are truly strong. Think honestly about three or four of your strengths, and then write them down in Box #1. Boxes #2 and #3 can be difficult, so you may need more time to finish them after class. Remember, a weakness is only a challenge or something that we can improve on, and we all have them!

Making My Self-Concept Strong



DIRECTIONS: Write three of your strengths in Box #1. Then, write three of your weaknesses in Box #2. Lastly, in Box #3, write positive actions to improve your weaknesses.

#1: My Strengths	#2: My Weaknesses	#3: Positive Actions to Improve My Weaknesses
1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.


Self-Honesty: Being Honest with Yourself & Others

Using Social /Emotional Positive Actions

PURPOSE: To learn the positive action of avoiding blaming others to be honest with yourself and others.

 MATERIALS NEEDED	None	 MATERIALS PROVIDED	None
---	------	---	------

PROCEDURE

 **1) SAY:** We all have strengths and weaknesses, and we must be honest with ourselves about these. We can slip into the negative action of blaming others if we are not honest about our weaknesses. Blaming others also takes place when we just make plain old mistakes. Let's hear about Carly and her little brother.

 **2) TEACHER:** Read the story and discuss the questions that follow.

THE POSTER

Carly was feeling proud of herself. Her teacher had asked her to do the lettering for the class poster. She was so glad to have her teacher's trust with such an important project. She went straight home and spread her materials and poster board out on the hardwood floor in the dining room. "I must be very careful to do this just right. I want the poster to be perfect—no smudges or wrinkles," she thought. She started to work and was about half done when the doorbell rang. It was Vickie with her basketball. "Let's go shoot some hoops before it gets dark," said Vickie. Carly thought of the poster and quickly decided that she could just finish it later. She grabbed her hoodie and started out the door. As she started to close the door, her little brother, who had just learned to walk, headed directly for the half-finished poster on the floor.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Does anyone think the story ends with little brother smearing and wrinkling the poster? If so, who do you think Carly will likely **blame**? Who is really at fault? How can Carly be honest with herself? (*Carly might blame her little brother. But he is too young to understand what he is doing. It is really Carly's fault for leaving the project where her brother could get to it. Carly can take a positive action and tell herself the truth and admit that she had been careless to leave it where her baby brother could get to it.*)
- Does anyone think the story ends with Carly coming back in and taking positive actions to prevent a problem? If so, what positive actions can she take? (*She could put the poster up out of the way of her baby brother. She could ask her mother to put her brother in his playpen so he can't get to her poster.*)

- Do you ever blame others instead of being honest with yourself about the problem really being caused by you? Does that help you find your greatness? *(No, you are doing a negative action that will cause you to not feel good about yourself, and you won't be able to find your greatness. You can only find your greatness if you are absolutely honest with yourself.)*
- If Carly chose not to take positive actions to prevent the problem, would her teacher want to trust her with another project? *(There is a good chance that her teacher would lose trust in her for letting the poster get messed up by her baby brother and then blaming him for the problem.)*



3) SAY:

Carly felt good about herself because her teacher trusted her with a very important project. **Trust means her teacher had confidence and faith in her abilities.** Her teacher thought she was a responsible person. By choosing to take positive actions to be responsible for the poster, Carly confirmed that her teacher's trust was well-placed. Her teacher will probably trust her with another project. However, if she chooses to take the negative action of not being responsible for her project and blaming her little brother for messing it up, her teacher would lose trust in her. It feels good to be trusted, and we help others to trust us when we are honest with ourselves and others and don't blame others for the problems that are our own fault. We accept the responsibility for our own actions.

4)

Many of us make mistakes every day. Some mistakes are little, some are big. For the rest of the day, I challenge you to be honest with yourself and take responsibility for your mistakes. Notice how you feel when you take responsibility for your own actions.

Improving Yourself Continually Using Social/Emotional Positive Actions

PURPOSE: To learn about the social/emotional positive action of persistence in order to improve yourself continually.

 MATERIALS NEEDED	Pencils	 MATERIALS PROVIDED	None
---	---------	---	------

PROCEDURE



1) SAY: Today we are going to learn about the positive action of persistence to accomplish our goals by overcoming setbacks. Having **persistence** means moving step-by-step toward a goal and not giving up.

2) TEACHER: Read the story and discuss the questions that follow.



THOMAS EDISON

Overcoming Setbacks with Persistence

Thomas Edison's most beneficial invention was the electric light bulb. This achievement made our world a better place in which to live. However, Edison had many failures and setbacks in his attempts to complete this marvelous invention.

In 1878, Edison began experimenting to make an inexpensive, safe, and practical form of the electric light bulb. Other inventors had tried to make such a light, but all of them had failed.

Edison needed to find a cobweb—thin material that could be used as a filament inside a glass bulb. If he could do this, he would overcome the problem that had caused others to fail. At first he tried to use a kind of metal, but found it was too rare and expensive. Edison was persistent. He didn't let this failure discourage him. He went on to test hundreds more materials that all failed to meet the test for a good filament. Edison worked more than 100 hours each week. He tested thousands of materials before he finally discovered a special kind of cotton thread that worked.

Through his persistence and his determination not to let setbacks discourage him, Edison achieved his goal. His great "white magic"—the electric light bulb—soon lit up the entire world.

3) SAY: Discuss with students how being persistent can help them reach their goals. Have students who wish to share their ideas for their specific goals with the class do so.

Improving Yourself Continually Using Social/Emotional Positive Actions

PURPOSE: To learn about the social/emotional positive action of turning problems into opportunities in order to improve yourself continually.

 MATERIALS NEEDED	None	 MATERIALS PROVIDED	None
---	------	---	------

PROCEDURE



1) SAY: In today's lesson we will learn how to **turn problems into opportunities. An opportunity is a chance to improve.** It's hard to think of problems as opportunities sometimes, so let's hear about how one famous inventor turned a problem into an opportunity.

2) TEACHER: *Read the story.*



THOMAS EDISON Turning a Problem into an Opportunity

It is a wonder that Thomas Edison ever survived to become a world-famous inventor. At age 12, he took a job on the railway. He frequently jumped from train to train before they were stopped, or leaped aboard a train after it was moving. On one occasion, Thomas ran alongside a rolling train and tried to climb aboard. As hard as he tried, he could not pull himself onto the railway car. A well-meaning conductor lifted him by the ears into the car. Edison heard something snap in each ear, and he had severe pain for many months afterward.

In Edison's words, "Earache came first, then a little deafness, and the deafness increased until... I could hear only a few words now and then."

Even though he never regained his hearing, Edison didn't let his handicap discourage him. In fact, he felt that the loss of his hearing was a positive thing. It gave him a silent world in which to think about his inventions and research. Also, he considered himself lucky that he didn't have to listen to small talk or hear the noise of the outside world. Amazingly, Edison had turned his problem into an opportunity.

3) TEACHER: *Discuss as a class how to turn problems into opportunities to reach self-improvement goals.*



www.positiveaction.net | info@positiveaction.net | 800.345.2974 | 208.733.1328
260 3rd Avenue North, Twin Falls, ID 83301