

THE POWERFUL POSITIVE ATTITUDE

Objective

- Students will be encouraged to have a positive attitude toward themselves, others, and school and will learn the necessity of a positive attitude for success.
- Having a positive attitude is sometimes difficult, but it is important to have one to be a successful student. Students can develop a positive attitude by implementing positive talk, positive body language, and positive actions.

1. Positive Talk

- Explain euphemisms. A euphemism is a less direct word or phrase for one considered offensive. In other words, it is changing the negative to the positive. By using euphemisms students will learn that a positive side exists in all situations. Discuss with students why they prefer bread that is “fresh from yesterday” over “day old.”
- Have students complete the euphemisms worksheet on page 190. Students will turn negative sentences into positive sentences.
- Read *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*. Have students identify positive things that happened to Alexander and write them down. (Suggestions: If Mrs. Gibson’s car got broadsided, he would most likely suffer fewer injuries than Becky & Audrey, or Alexander’s lunch is lower in fat than were his friends’ lunches.) This will help students learn to identify positive experiences in their own lives.

2. Positive Body Language

- Explain that we can usually tell how people are feeling by looking at their body language. The way that people sit, walk, hold their heads, and make facial expressions shows how they are feeling and thinking.

- Have students complete the feelings worksheet on page 191 in order to help them realize that facial expressions are a powerful tool in conveying attitudes.
- Explain to students that how they communicate with their bodies affects the way others (including friends, family, and teachers) respect them. Communication with others is about 58 percent nonverbal, 35 percent verbal, and 7 percent content (the meaning of words). Discuss with students the importance of body language and give them each a copy of page 192.
- Play the body talk game with students. Pass out pieces of paper with “attitudes” on them (i.e., bored, excited, shy, annoyed, eager, etc.). Have each student act out his or her attitude while the others guess. This will reinforce the fact that attitudes are communicated through body language.

3. Positive Actions

- Explain that getting along with teachers is as important as getting along with friends; therefore, it is critical that students take responsibility for their classroom attitude. If students show they are interested in learning, their teachers will appreciate their positive attitude and recognize their desire to be successful students.
- Give students the following ten suggestions to help them get along with their teachers.
 1. Keep eye contact
 2. Sit up straight
 3. Ignore distractions around you
 4. Take good notes
 5. Ask questions
 6. Smile once in a while
 7. Say good-bye as you leave class
 8. Come to class a few minutes early each day
 9. Go to extra study and review sessions
 10. Get a front row seat
- Have students complete the positive actions worksheet on page 193.
- Have students complete the ways to succeed worksheet on page 194.

- Ask students to practice being positive for one week. Suggest they use euphemisms and positive metaphors, work on body language, or choose one area where they can change their classroom attitude. Have students use the chart on page 195 to record their progress.
- Have students complete the responsibility worksheet on page 196 to help them identify ways they can begin implementing their positive attitude in the classroom.

Using Euphemisms

Rewrite the negative sentences in a more positive way.

1. My sister is a pest.

2. I don't like practicing the piano.

3. My room is an ugly color.

4. I'm so stupid. I'll never get the grades my brother does.

5. I had a horrible day because I got yelled at.

6. My friend Sally hates me because she wouldn't come over.

7. Math is my worst subject. I won't ever understand it.

How Do I Feel Today?

My facial expression tells others how I feel. Find the correct emotion for each face and write it on the line below each face.

surprised

sympathetic

negative

frightened

ecstatic

innocent

curious

arrogant

anxious

guilty

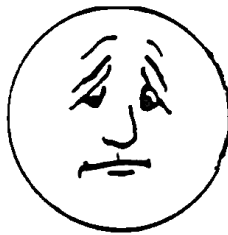
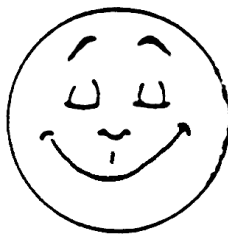
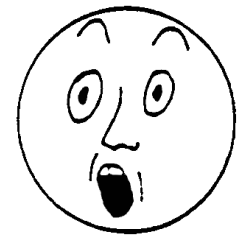
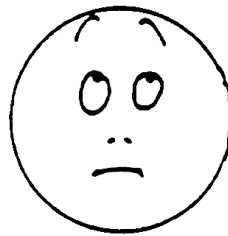
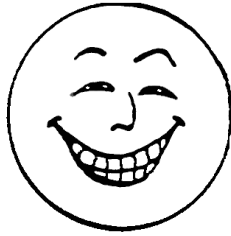
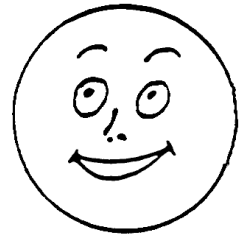
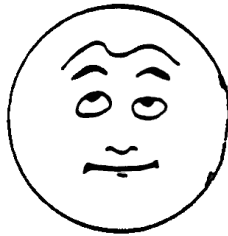
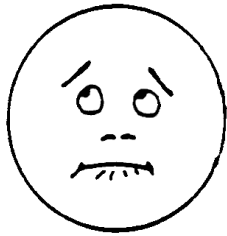
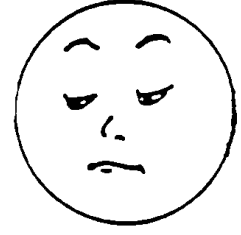
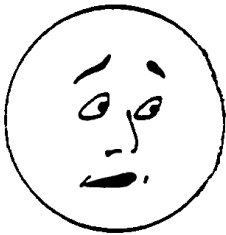
optimistic

agonized

confident

thoughtful

lonely



Nonverbal and Verbal Communication

When you communicate, it is important that your verbal and nonverbal messages match. You can develop greater communication skills by observing your own behavior when you deal with others. You can look for—

Eye Contact

Looking directly at the person when you are speaking is an effective way to say that you are sincere.

Body Posture

The “weight” behind what you are saying to others will increase if you face the person directly, stand or sit at an appropriate distance, lean toward the person, and hold your head erect.

Gestures

You can emphasize your message with gestures and let people know it is important that they understand what you are trying to say.

Facial Expression

When you are sharing good news, smile! When you are angry, your face shows genuine emotion. It is important that your facial expressions match the message.

Voice Tone, Inflection, Volume

If you are sharing a secret, whisper. If you are speaking to an audience, speak loud enough for them to hear you. If you are asking a favor, do not shout or speak curtly or that person may become defensive. The sound of your voice is just as important as the words you are saying.

Content

What you say is obviously important. How you say it, however, may be more important. You do not have to put someone down to express your feelings.

Positive Actions

Listed below on the left hand side are some of the friendship skills you display to let your friends know you are interested in them and what they have to say. On the right hand side are things you can do in your classroom to let your teachers know you are paying attention and that what they have to say is important to you. Read the one on the left and match it with the one on the right.

Things I do for my friends...

- A 1. I sit near my friends in class.
- ___ 2. When Billy is talking to me I look at him so he knows I'm paying attention.
- ___ 3. My friend always has the best stories to tell but sometimes I don't understand what she's saying and I have to ask her what she means.
- ___ 4. When my friends have birthday parties or want to go to the movies, I like to go so they know they are my friends and I like to be with them.
- ___ 5. My friends and I have math class together everyday but I come a little early so we can talk.
- ___ 6. Tom and I always say, "See ya later alligator" when we have to go home.
- ___ 7. My friends help me to be happy most of the time so when I'm near them I smile so they can see that I'm glad when they're here.
- ___ 8. Beth is my funniest friend. She makes jokes all the time. I write down the ones I like so I won't forget them.
- ___ 9. When Josh and I talk he says he knows I'm paying attention when I sit up instead of putting my head on my desk.
- ___ 10. While I'm talking to Ashley on the phone I don't watch television.

Things I can do for my teachers...

- A. Get a front row seat.
- B. Ask questions.
- C. Come to class a few minutes early each day.
- D. Sit up straight.
- E. Go to extra study and review sessions.
- F. Keep eye contact.
- G. Take good notes.
- H. Say goodbye as you leave class.
- I. Smile once in a while.
- J. Ignore distractions around you.

Ten Ways to Succeed in the Classroom

You must be able to distinguish between actions that will help you succeed and actions that will hinder your performance. Positive actions are the only actions that will help you. Without looking back at the list on the previous page, list the ten positive actions you just learned.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

Being Positive

Choose an area to be positive in for five school days. You may use euphemisms, work on your body language, or choose an area in which you can improve your relationship with your teacher. Write down what you are going to do. Each day you are to keep track of the things you did to improve. Indicate at the end of each day how well you feel you met your goal of being positive in the area you chose.

Date for Day 1: _____

What I did today: _____

How I did today: _____

Date for Day 2: _____

What I did today: _____

How I did today: _____

Date for Day 3: _____

What I did today: _____

How I did today: _____

Date for Day 4: _____

What I did today: _____

How I did today: _____

Date for Day 5: _____

What I did today: _____

How I did today: _____

Taking Responsibility for Your Classroom Attitude

Taking responsibility for how you act is what this worksheet is all about. Read each situation. Each situation could be improved if you took responsibility for your attitude. Write what you think would be a better way to act.

1. Joe bothers Lavonna in class by talking to her. Lavonna doesn't answer. Mr. Sheen says, "Lavonna, see me after class." Lavonna says, "I wasn't talking. Joe was."

2. Dana hates French class. She sits in the last row, cleans out her purse, and often is a page or two behind in her book.

3. Matt's English teacher has just finished a review of all the parts of speech. He did the review quickly because his class has a test tomorrow. Matt doesn't understand prepositions. He says to his English teacher, "This is impossible. It's just too hard."

4. You didn't do your homework because you went to a ball game instead. Your teacher has just asked you about it. What do you say?

5. You feel your teacher has insulted you. You are embarrassed, hurt, and angry. What can you do?
