

Feelings Plates

Explore emotions using decorated paper plates with expressive faces

Feelings



You will need

- Paper plates
- Images showing different feelings
- Tape or glue to attach images to plates



Playing together

- Show children several paper plates with different facial expressions drawn or stuck on (happy, sad, angry, scared, excited).
- Ask children to choose a plate that matches how they feel today and explain why they chose it.
- Model this by choosing one yourself and talking about your feeling. "I picked the happy plate. I feel happy when I see my friends."
- The children should then take turns choosing a plate and talking about when they felt the different emotions.

More ideas



- Use the plates as storytelling prompts—"Let's invent a story about someone who feels excited today."
- Introduce a puppet who responds to different plates children bring forward, helping them to explore ways to manage challenging emotions.

Nature faces

Making faces showing different emotions out of natural materials

Feelings



Playing together

- Go on a hunt for materials – ask the children to collect things in the garden or park which they could use to make faces.
- Put all the materials in the middle and draw circles on the floor in chalk for children to create their faces in.
- Demonstrate making a happy face from the natural materials e.g. stones for eyes, sticks and leaves to make a smile.
- Show a photo of a sad face. Ask everyone to make their own natural face which shows the feeling on the card. Talk about each other's faces; discussing the different materials used and when they may have felt this particular feeling. Repeat with other emotions.



You will need

- A collection of natural materials found outside (sticks, leaves, flowers, stones)
- Chalk
- A selection of photos of faces showing different feelings



More ideas



- For younger children, you may want to mark out on the face where the eyes, nose, ears and mouth go so they know where to put their objects.
- For older children, you could ask one person to make a face and the rest of the group has to guess what the emotion is.

Special Treasures

Show and talk about objects which make us happy or help us feel better when we are sad

Feelings



Playing together

- Start with your special treasure – Show it to the group, talk about what the object is or does, where you got it from and why it makes you feel happy.
- Ask the children in your group to share their special treasure in the same way you have – They can show how they play with or use the object.
- You can point out how some children have similar or different special objects and that is OK because what helps us feel better is different for everyone.



You will need

- An object from your setting or the child's home which is special to them e.g. a toy, a photo, a blanket

More ideas



- Take photographs of your children's special treasure (including the adults too) and use them in a display to show the range of treasure collected.
- You could introduce a group teddy which could be everyone's special item which they can cuddle or play with if they feel sad and they don't have their special objects with them.

Do you
see what
I see?

A barrier game:
identify the object
another child is
describing

Communication



Playing together

- If you are able to model this activity with two adults, then this would be useful but not essential.
- The pair sit on opposite sides of the barrier with 5 objects each (which match the 5 objects the other person has).
- In the pair, one needs to be the explainer and the other needs to be the listener. The explainer needs to choose an object from their 5 objects and explain what it is to the listener using describing words about its appearance or use. A key rule of this game is not to use the actual name! The listener needs to choose the object from their pile they think the describer is talking about.
- After 1,2,3 take away the barrier to see if the resources are the same.

You will need

- A barrier (upturned cardboard box, a folder or even a book)
- 5 pairs of matching objects (small world resources, shapes, musical instruments, threading beads, dolls and clothes etc)



More ideas



- Barrier games can be extended by using additional resources such as the same picture to colour in or both having to make the same object with bricks.



Storytime: 'I feel'

Build up an emotion vocabulary bank by sharing stories about feelings

Communication



Playing together

- Either share the book or watch the reading online together.
- Choose specific pictures from the book (or freeze the online version) to explore the different feelings the characters in the book could be experiencing. Use the thought bubble for this, stick the appropriate feelings flash card on the thought bubble above that character. You may need to demonstrate this first.
- You can also ask the children what the characters in the story said about their feelings and practice saying these together – writing answers on the speech bubbles.

You will need

- Books about feelings: Partnership for Children's Good Books for Tough Times or The Colour Monster – Anna Llenas, Ruby's Worries – Tom Percival, The Worrysaurs – Rachel Bright and Chris Chatterton
- Thought and speech bubble template
- Feelings and emotions flash cards



More ideas

- Provide appropriate small world resources, puppets or other props for the book(s) you have shared to give your children more opportunity to re-enact the story.



Who can help me

To consider the different people we can ask for help

Communication



Playing together

- Share the different photographs of the people in school/ your setting who children can ask for help. Ask for ideas from each of the children in the group for why they would ask each person for help. Stick the photos on the large flower template to make a display.
- Ask the children who could help them at home and ask them to draw pictures of these people on the small flower template.
- Ask the children why they have chosen the people in their drawings and what they have done to help them in the past.

You will need

- Photographs of people who can help in school/your setting
- A large template of a flower for group work & a smaller template of a flower for 1:1 work
- Crayons and glue



More ideas



- You could include other professionals and when we might need them to help us e.g. doctor or police officer.
- Provide opportunities for asking for and offering help through role play and smallworld play.
- Create a 'Helper' badge for children to wear who have been helpful that day to a friend or adult.

Compliment circle

What is special about our friends?

Friendship



Playing together

- Explain that a compliment is something you say to someone else that makes them feel good about themselves. You could give some examples, highlighting the values which can be celebrated.
- Explain how the compliment circle works: one at a time you say a compliment to the person next to you as you pass them the object.
- Start the circle with you complimenting the person next to you. "I like how you are so helpful to your friends." "You are kind because you let your friend go before you in the line."
- Once finished, talk about what it felt like to say the words to your friend and also to hear what your friend was saying.

You will need

- Space to make a circle
- Object to pass around
- Optional sentence starter cards (for 'More ideas' activity) For example; 'You are good at...' 'I like it when you...'



More ideas

- Use compliment sentence starters to help your children structure what they want to say.



Friendship high 5

Draw round your hand and add a picture of a friend to each finger and thumb to make a friendship high 5!

Friendship



You will need

- Paper or card
- Crayons



Playing together

- Show children your 'Friendship high 5'. Talk about some of the things you and your friends have done together and the qualities which make them such good friends.
- Share some ideas together about the different friends who could be included on their 'Friendship high 5's' e.g. siblings, friends at school or sports clubs, cousins.
- Give children time to design their own 'Friendship high 5' and then ask them to share with someone else in the group chatting about who they have included, what they do together and what makes them special.

More ideas



- The hands could be used to make a friendship tree display and agree on words to go on the tree trunk which represent qualities of a good friend e.g. share, play, help.

Mini me... mini you

Practise friendship
scenarios through mini
versions of ourselves
and others

Friendship



Playing together

- Encourage everyone to find their own mini me.
- Ask another adult to help you model the activity. Using your mini me's and the small world resources to act out the situation, share a story of how you and your friend play together.

"Look, we like playing in the garden. We push each other on the swing."

- Allow the children in pairs or small groups to take part in imaginative play with their mini me's. You can offer ideas for scenarios to play e.g. pretend you are at a birthday party, pretend you are playing a game in the playground.

You will need

- Small world play resources
- Photographs of your children cut out and stuck to playbricks or on card



More ideas



- Whilst children are playing, ask them questions about their friend.

"Sarah, it looks like you and your friend enjoy playing football together and she helps you when you fall over. What other kind things does your friend do?"

Rescue the toys!

Can the toys be safely transported from one side of your room to the other?

Solving problems



Playing together

- Position the toys in one area and leave for your children to find.
- Ask the children what they could do together to help get the toys from one area to the other area (noting down their ideas). Remind them that they need to work as a team to make this happen and assign each other different roles.
- Work through the list of ideas they came up with, asking the children to try them to see if they work.
- Celebrate when all the toys are rescued!

You will need

- A selection of toys (small world for example)
- 2 designated areas with a poster of the challenge. 'Please help the toys get from here to....'
- Materials to help with rescuing (string, masking tape, boxes, pots, rulers, cardboard, tubes, planks, drainpipes etc.)



More ideas



- If you have enough toys, then you could make more areas so children can work in smaller groups.
- Discuss what ideas worked to rescue the toys and would they try any different ideas next time?

Freeeeze!

Free the objects from the ice

Solving problems



Playing together

- Ask the children to find different objects to freeze and help your children fill the containers with water ready for the freezer.
- Talk about what a freezer does and what they think may happen when they go back later.
- Once frozen, put the containers in a large tray. Talk about what they notice now, encouraging them to observe the differences
- Pose the question *"How are we going to get the objects out?"* Share different ideas as a group.
- Each child chooses a frozen toy and a type of resource to try to free it.
- When all the toys are free, talk about what they did to free the toys and if they would choose something else next time.

You will need

- A selection of containers (must be able to go in the freezer!)
- A large tray
- Resources to help free the objects: baking soda, salt, forks, garden canes etc.
- Objects to freeze
- Freezer



More ideas

- Develop this investigation into a sequence map. In a group lay out several pieces of paper to show the stages which happened. Talk, draw and write about what they did and saw in each stage.



Den building

Test your class' cooperation, communication and problem solving skills to make a group den together

Solving problems

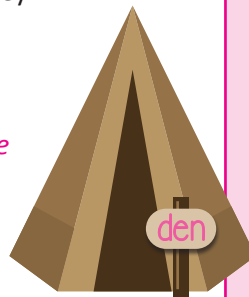
You will need

- Branches, rope, blankets, large pegs
- Clothes airer
- Chairs
- Large cardboard boxes



Playing together

- Organise the children around all the resources you have collected.
- Explain that today's challenge is all about working together to make a den.
- Talk about what they could use to make the den and how they want their den to look.
- Whilst the children make the den, pause them during sections where they are struggling and talk them through ideas for solving the problem. *"You can't reach the top of the airer to put the blanket on it – what can you do?"*
- Once the den is complete – read a book or play a game in the den they have worked so hard to create.



More ideas



- You could further structure this activity by limiting the number of items they can use to 5 objects to make it more challenging or ask them to make a den in pairs where one person gives instructions for the other to follow.

Moving house

Explore the experience of moving house through play

Change and loss



Playing together

- Share one of the books about moving to a new house.
- Discuss how the characters in the story feel about moving house. You could also share your own experiences of moving and ask the class if they have ever moved house.
- Tell the children that you would like to make a place in the classroom to play 'moving houses' and you need everyone's help to make a list of things we need to have in this play area.
- Create the 'moving houses' play area for children to enjoy.

You will need

- A book about moving to a new house (eg: Moving Day by Robert Munsch, The House That Wanted a Family by Susan Spence Daniel, Big Dan's Moving Day by Leslie McGuire)
- Resources for a 'moving house' play area (boxes, objects to pack, etc.)



More ideas

- Discuss positives and negatives of moving house and think of solutions to any worries children may have.



Spot the difference

Similarities and differences

Change
and loss



You will need

- 'Spot the difference' pictures from the internet (CBeebies or Explorify)



Playing together

- Share the 'Spot the difference' pictures together and explain that everyone needs to look really carefully to find things which are different in the 2 pictures. Chat about what is the same and what is different.
- Direct children to look more closely at particular parts of the picture if they need help.

"I can see something different on the top of the teddy's head."

"Have you noticed that something is different next to his feet?"

More ideas



- Change the classroom environment by removing or adding objects or changing the position of items and then ask the children to go round the classroom and notice what has changed.

The Invisible String

Explore ways to talk sensitively to children about separation, grief and loss

Change
and loss

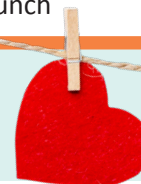


Playing together

- Share 'The Invisible String' story together and discuss the key points.
- Show your own special heart string you made earlier. On the first heart stick a picture of a special person in your life. On the other hearts, draw pictures of the special things connected with this person e.g. what you like doing together. Use a hole punch and thread to make your string of hearts.
- Before children begin making their own heart strings, ask everyone to chat to their partner about the special person they are choosing and what they will draw on their hearts.

You will need

- A copy of 'The Invisible String' book or a live reading or animation (there are lots available online)
- Paper hearts
- String, crayons, hole punch



More ideas

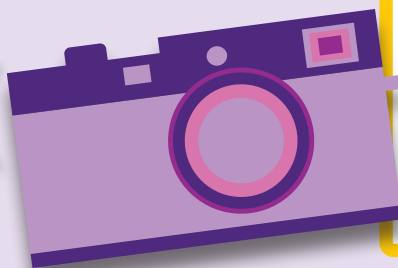
- You could also make a heart string as a group for your class pet/mascot!



Memories

Remember all the exciting things about the first few months at school and plan the next term

Moving
forward



You will need

- Photos of past activities your children have been involved in since joining the class



Playing together

- Share a photo and ask everyone what they can see is happening. Talk about your memories from the photograph (for example, children working well together to make a fantastic model).
- Ask the children what they remember from the photo, what they were doing and how it made them feel.
- Repeat with more photographs.
- After sharing, ask everyone what other activities they would like to do at school so they can make more fun memories.

More ideas



- The photos could be used as part of a display with children's comments included around them.
- If you are able to, include some of their new activity ideas into your planning for the next school term.

This is me!

Create a class video to get to know everyone in your new class

Moving forward



Playing together

- Create a short film about you to share with the children – choose two key objects to include e.g. your favourite mug for your morning coffee and your favourite book to read at storytime.
- After watching the film, ask the children to remember the key things about you.
- Ask the children to think of two things they want to share about themselves, finding objects around the room to help them.
- Video each child sharing their objects and enjoy watching the final video together where you can all learn about each other.



You will need

- iPad or similar to record your children's films
- Prepared film to share all about you
- 2 objects matched to your film (for example; your favourite mug)



More ideas



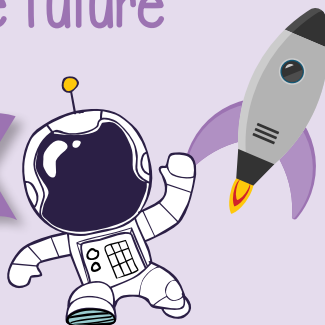
- Ask the children to work in pairs to interview and film each other.



When I'm older

Thinking about the future

Moving forward



You will need

- Pictures and book of different occupations e.g. doctor, hairdresser, teacher



Playing together

- Share books or picture cards about different occupations.
- Discuss what the occupations do and whether the children know anyone with that occupation.
- Tell the children what you wanted to be when you were younger and what you are now – what's your favourite thing about your occupation?
- Now the children can think about what their dream job might be – give them the opportunity to draw what they would like to be when they are older and discuss in groups.



More ideas



- Create a role play area of clothes and objects associated with a range of occupations.
- Discuss other wishes or dreams about the future e.g. places the children would like to visit and things they would like to do.