

MindUP Lesson 12

Appreciating Happy Experiences

Grades: 3-5

Lesson 12: *Appreciating Happy Experiences* is the twelfth video in a virtual series of MindUP programming for the 2020-2021 academic year. Based in neuroscience, MindUP teaches the skills and knowledge children need to manage stress, regulate emotions and face challenges with optimism, resilience and compassion.

Length of Lesson: 10 minutes including worksheet

Objectives: In this lesson, students will learn that remembering happy experiences can help them feel better and think more positively. They can use this tool to help them overcome negative feelings, such as worry, sadness or insecurity.

Materials:

- Appreciating Happy Experiences Worksheet
- Pen or pencil
- Crayons, markers, or colored pencils

Preparation: Have child sitting at a desk or table before starting the lesson.

Appreciating Happy Experiences:

When we remember happy memories, our brains release the same feel-good chemicals as when the experience actually happened. For example, you may laugh over the memory of a funny situation with your friends or feel love and security when thinking about a hug from a family member. When we take a mindful moment to appreciate happy experiences, we give ourselves the ability to garner physical, emotional, and cognitive benefits. For children, this can help them feel optimistic, alleviate negativity, improve physical health and even prime their brain for new learning materials. It is important to remember that no one is happy all the time, but we can use happy memories as a tool to feel better and enjoy special times with friends and family. Below you'll find some activities you can do with your kids to practice appreciating happy experiences:

- Have your child find a picture of one of their favorite memories. Let them tell you the story behind the picture and explain the feelings they felt at the time.
- Create a time capsule with your children. Together, collect items that remind them of a special time they experienced. They can even write or draw about the moment. Put their items that were collected into a container and hide it in a place where it cannot be easily seen. After a year, open the container and revisit all the memories they experienced with the items they placed in the time capsule. Continuing to do this will give children a better sense of their past, present, and future and can help convey what their lives were like.

- Share happy memories that you have both experienced together. Talk about the feelings you both felt and see if they match up.

REFERENCE

- The Hawn Foundation. (2011). *The MindUP Curriculum Grades 3-5: Brain-Focused Strategies for Learning and Living* (pg. 118-125). New York, NY: Scholastic.

