

THE BIG CROSSING

Recognizing your emotions and their impacts on your behaviour

Target competency	Manage one’s emotions and stress effectively
Cross-curricular competencies (QEP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct their identity • Use creative thinking
General objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize pleasant and unpleasant emotions • Understand that emotions influence behaviour

INTRODUCING THE CHARACTERS AND THE PROGRAM

If this is the first year your students are participating in the program, introduce the characters and the program using the materials provided for this purpose on the [OFF-TRAIL website](#), under Workshops and tools for students/Basic workshops/Introduction to the program and the characters.

THE ADVENTURES OF LEO AND CHARLIE

Charlie and Leo are back at camp OFF-TRAIL for new outdoor adventures. On the bus ride to the camp, mountain bike expert Miss Nathalie announces the big news: “This year, you'll have a chance to take a long ride... on a mountain bike! The trail is magnificent. We'll be riding through the forest in a group. You'll also be taking on a very special challenge. During the ride, you'll have to cross over a long, narrow bridge over Campers River. It's going to be so much fun!”

On hearing this news, Charlie replies: “Yay! I'm so happy. I can't wait to cross the bridge! Heights don't bother me at all. We're going to have a great time.”

Not far away from her is Leo who, on the other hand, is saying to himself: “Oh, no! Not a bridge... I'm super afraid of heights! But I love mountain biking so much. It would be awful to miss the activity just because of a silly bridge. But I'm so scared! I hate it when I have to be brave.”



DID YOU KNOW?








Understanding emotions is essential to students' social integration into their environment. It's based on the perception, decoding and interpretation of their own emotions and those of their peers, and on the ability to pinpoint the origin of these emotions.

You can help students improve their understanding of emotions by getting them to realize that:

- Many reactions are possible for the same situation, and emotions can vary.
- An unpleasant emotion, such as guilt, can arise from an act or word that we disapprove of, like lying or stealing.
- It's possible to increase, decrease or maintain the level of an emotion, whether it's pleasant or unpleasant. This is called emotional regulation, and it's done using various strategies that can be acquired over a lifetime, such as adopting positive thoughts, relaxation and many others.

(Coutu et al., 2012)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Before starting the activity, distribute two *Post-it*® notes to each student. Print a copy of the Leo and Charlie teaching aids, below, and post these images at the front of the classroom.
2. Ask the students to close their eyes, let themselves calm down, then listen to your story, and put themselves in Charlie's shoes. Read the Charlie scenario, which is found on the *Scenarios* Supplementary sheet, below, or in the slide show.  7-8
3. Ask the students to open their eyes, and ask them the following questions:
 - What do you feel in your body when you put yourself in Charlie's shoes?
 - What emotion(s) are you experiencing?Refer students to the list of physical sensations on slide 10 and the list of emotions on slide 11, as needed.  9-11
4. Invite students to write on a *Post-it*® a feeling or emotion that represents what they feel when they put themselves in Charlie's shoes, and then stick it on Charlie's picture. Ask each student to mime the emotion they've written on the *Post-it*.
5. Ask the students to close their eyes again, regain their calm, and put themselves in Leo's shoes. Read the Leo scenario, found on the *Scenarios* Supplementary sheet or in the slide show.  12-13
6. Ask the students to open their eyes, then ask them the following questions:
 - What do you feel in your body when you put yourself in Leo's shoes?
 - What emotion(s) are you experiencing?Refer students to the list of physical sensations on slide 15 and the list of emotions on slide 16, as needed.  14-16
7. Invite students to write on a *Post-it*® a feeling or emotion that represents what they feel when they put themselves in Leo's shoes, and stick it on Leo's picture. Ask each student to mime the emotion they've written on the *Post-it*.
8. Read the students' answers and discuss with them using the following questions:
 - Why don't Leo and Charlie react the same way? But it's the same activity, right?
 - Can you name a situation that made you experience pleasant or unpleasant emotions? How did it feel?
 - What did you do in this situation? 17
9. Explain to the students that different people can react to the same situation in very different ways, as in the story of Leo and Charlie. How we feel about a situation (our emotions) will have a major influence on how we react to it.  18
10. End the workshop by asking the students to choose a way they can suggest to Leo to calm down. Practice this method together. Here are some ideas to help you calm down:
 - Take 3 slow, deep breaths
 - Active stretching
 - Visualize a happy moment. 19

CHALLENGE

Suggest the following challenge:

- Between now and the next OFF-TRAIL workshop, try to pay attention to the emotions you're experiencing and identify them. You can ask your parent or parents for help.

ENABLING REINVESTMENT

To reinvest the learning, when a student experiences a situation that generates a strong emotion, help them identify this emotion and say whether it's pleasant or unpleasant. Then ask them what they will do in this situation, taking their emotions into account.

You can also print out the poster *Possible physical sensations related to stress and anxiety* found on the [OFF-TRAIL website](#) in the *Workshops and tools for students* section, and help your students identify their physical sensations when experiencing strong emotions.

READING SUGGESTIONS

- Potter, M. (2020). *What's Worrying You?: A Let's Talk picture book to help small children overcome big worries*. Bloomsbury Publishing.



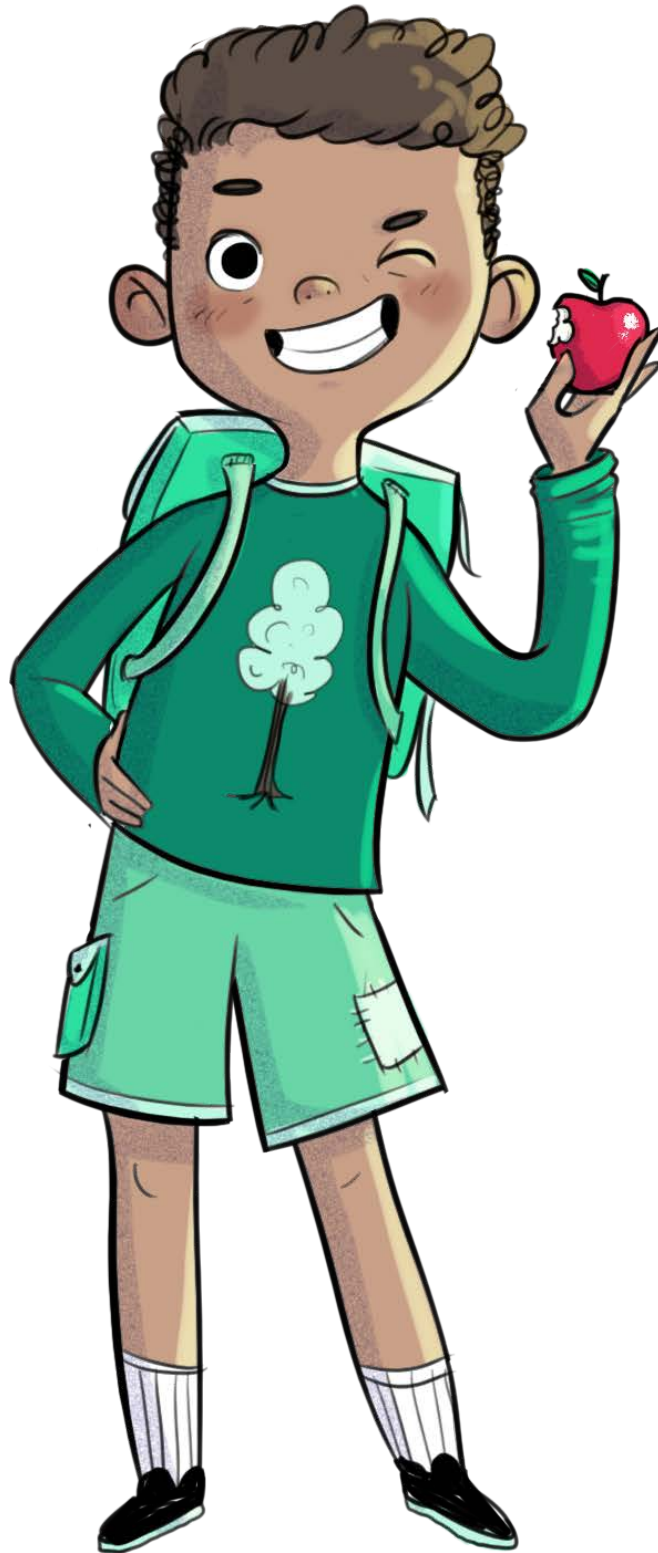
TEACHING AID TO PRINT

Charlie



TEACHING AID TO PRINT

Leo



SUPPLEMENTARY SHEET

Scenarios

Charlie:

Charlie can't wait to get to the bridge over the Campers' River, as this is the first time she'll be allowed to cross. She tries to overtake the others in line to be the first to cross the bridge. Charlie comes to the bridge and rides onward without a second thought. She can see the bridge moving a little, but finds it really fun. She's not afraid because she knows it's safe.

Leo

As he approaches the bridge, Leo is scared. When he sees that the bridge moves as the others cross it, he imagines all kinds of disasters that could happen. He freezes. He's afraid of falling and already feels dizzy before he even sets foot on it. He lets other people go ahead of him, until he finds himself alone on this side of the river.