

THE BUS BREAKS DOWN

Recognizing your emotions



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| Target competency | Manage one's emotions and stress effectively |
| Cross-curricular competencies (QEP) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct their identity |
| General objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize some of one's own emotions • Tame certain strong emotions • Use various strategies to calm oneself |

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. You can use the pattern found there to make puppets of Leo and Charlie with your students. You can also take a look at the workshops available in the 4-year-old kindergarten level and start with these workshops if they better meet your students' needs. If your students are unfamiliar with certain items connected with camping, you can bring sample objects to class to facilitate their understanding (flashlight, sleeping bag, etc.).

THE ADVENTURES OF LEO AND CHARLIE

School started a few weeks ago. After summer vacation, Charlie and Leo were happy to be back together, since they had so much fun together last year. They're good friends. This year, the whole school is going to Camp OFF-TRAIL for two days. They'll be doing everything from hiking in the forest to archery, rock climbing, treasure hunts and tasting campfire-toasted marshmallows.

Today is the big departure for camp. Charlie and Leo are well prepared. They bring everything they need: a flashlight, a change of clothes, a bottle of water, a sleeping bag and snacks. Charlie likes to watch birds, so she brings her binoculars. Leo loves chocolate bars, so he brings a few along.

Naturally, Charlie and Leo sit together on the bus. Before leaving, the driver says: "The OFF-TRAIL camp is deep in the forest, about two hours' drive from here."

The first part of the trip is easy. Suddenly, when they're right in the middle of the forest, about half an hour from Camp OFF-TRAIL, the bus comes to a screeching halt. The driver tries to get the bus going again, but there's nothing he can do: it's dead!

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DID YOU KNOW?

Students gradually learn to express and cope with a variety of emotions throughout their emotional development. Learning about emotions forges self-esteem and the adoption of more complex attitudes such as empathy, resilience, kindness and the ability to overcome life's difficulties.

(Naître et grandir, 2016f)

What's more, at preschool age, learning about emotions fosters the socialization of students who develop an interest in being part of a group.

(Children's Portal, 2011)

Regular communication with peers helps students better understand their emotions and the events that surround them. They become more aware of what's going on inside them, and develop a greater ability to detect other people's emotions.

(Encyclopedia on Early Childhood Development, 2011)

Finally, the learning of emotional self-regulation is important for students in this age group, as it also predicts the development of adequate social skills as they get older. One of the keys to regulating emotions is to take a step back, so as to be less quick to react automatically and respond more consciously.

(Eisenberg, 2006)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Before starting the activity, print out (in colour if possible) the *Emotion Cards* handout (below) for each student. You can cut the cards out, laminate them and group them together on a ring for safekeeping.
2. Distribute the *emotion cards* to students and review the situation Charlie and Leo experienced on the broken-down bus. Using the emotion cards, invite students to answer the following questions:
 - How might Charlie and Leo feel about the bus breaking down?
 - How would you feel if you were in this situation?
3. Explain to the students that they can experience all kinds of emotions in a single day. They may arrive at school in the morning feeling angry because something frustrating happened at home, and they may come back from recess feeling happy because they enjoyed playing with their classmates. It's perfectly normal for emotions to change throughout the day.
4. Now read to the class the scenarios on the *Supplementary sheet: Various Emotions* (below). For each one, ask students to choose an emotion card that illustrates how they would feel if they were in that situation. Invite students to stand up and pretend to experience their chosen emotion. You can suggest that students vary the intensity of the emotion embodied in each situation. For example, they can mimic low-intensity joy in one situation and high-intensity joy in the next.
5. Ask some student volunteers to share moments when they've felt big anger, big sorrow or big joy in their lives. You can take the opportunity to normalize their emotions by sharing a situation where you've experienced a strong emotion yourself.
6. Explain that there are all kinds of ways to learn to calm down when strong emotions arise. Ask students if they know of any ways to calm themselves when they're experiencing strong emotions (strong anger or strong grief, for example). Complement their answers with the following: taking deep breaths, drawing, listening to soft music, moving around, talking about it with someone, or even screaming into a cushion or pillow.
7. Explain to students that meditation is another good way to calm down. Suggest that the students practice listening to this meditation: <https://exercise-2-the-little-frog> (4 min). Using the emotion cards used above, ask students to show how they feel after the meditation.

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CHALLENGE

Suggest the following challenge:

- Before the next OFF-TRAIL workshop, show your parents your emotion cards and explain how you can use them to talk about your emotions.



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ENABLING REINVESTMENT

To encourage reinvestment in learning, keep the emotion cards in the classroom. When a student experiences a situation that evokes an emotion, ask them to use the cards to identify and name the emotion they are experiencing. You can also set up a relaxation corner in the classroom where students can soothe themselves when they're experiencing an uncomfortable emotion, using drawing, reading, yoga, meditation, stationary physical activity, breathing exercises and so on. You can also post some of the ways of calming down that were mentioned during the workshop, as a reminder.

READING SUGGESTIONS

- Grenning, R. (2016). *Alligator is Angry*. Make Believe Ideas.
- Lienas, A. (2018). *The Color Monster: A Story About Emotions*. Little, Brown Books for Young Readers.
- van Hout, M. (2011). *Today I Am*. Fish Book Co.
- Witek, J. (2014). *In My Heart: A Book of Feelings*. Harry N. Abrams.



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HANDOUT TO PRINT
Emotion Cards in colour

ANGER



JOY



SADNESS



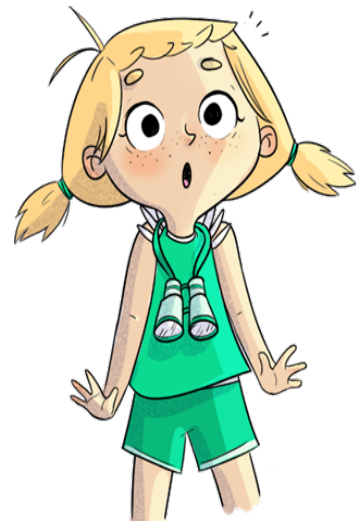
FEAR



DISGUST



SURPRISE



HANDOUT TO PRINT
Emotion Cards in black and white

ANGER



JOY



SADNESS



FEAR



DISGUST



SURPRISE



SUPPLEMENTARY SHEET

Various emotions

Today at noon, when it was time to eat lunch, Henry realized he'd forgotten his lunch box at home. He's hungry and doesn't know what to do.



Liam loves playing with his dog. He spends every weekend throwing the ball, taking him for walks, brushing him and teaching him tricks. While playing ball outside, he realizes he's stepped in his dog's poop. His sneakers are covered in it.



Flora loves playing with animal figurines. She has all kinds: dogs, cats, a giraffe, a dolphin. She even has animal pictures on her bedroom walls. Her big dream is, one day, to have a rabbit. She's been dreaming about it for years. Today is her birthday and her parents bought her a little rabbit.



Lea is in kindergarten. Emma, her little sister, is three years old. Lea and Emma each have their own room in the house. Lea likes to keep her room tidy and neat. Everything is in order and everything has its place. She doesn't like it when it's messy. Today, her little sister Emma went into her room. She moved everything around and it's a total mess.

