

# STRONG KIDS

**Grades  
3–5**



## **A Social & Emotional Learning Curriculum**

by

**Kenneth W. Merrell, Ph.D.**

University of Oregon

with assistance from

Dianna Carrizales, Ph.D.

Laura Feuerborn, Ph.D.

Barbara A. Gueldner, Ph.D.

and

Oanh K. Tran, Ph.D.

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2–3  
minutes

## Review

To activate prior knowledge, review and discuss previous topics and main ideas. Obtain 3–5 adequate ideas. Discuss with students their responses to last week’s homework assignment.

### Sample Script

*During our last meeting, we talked about how to recognize and understand other people’s emotions. Raise your hand if you can tell me an important idea we learned in our last class.*

## Ideas Discussed in Lesson 5

- How do you define *emotion*, *empathy*, *perspective*, and *cues*?
- What visual cues can you look for to tell someone’s emotional state?
- People can have different perspectives in a similar situation.
- People may feel different emotions in a similar situation.
- People can use information about others’ feelings to be empathetic toward them.

2–3  
minutes

## Introduction

Communicate the lesson’s purpose and objectives clearly. Introduce the concept of emotions and their varying levels of intensity. Students will learn to identify negative thoughts and thinking errors.

### Sample Script

*Today, we will continue to discuss emotions. We will see that emotions can be experienced in different degrees of intensity: some low, some medium, and some high. This is a lot like measuring the temperature outside with the thermometer: sometimes it’s cold, sometimes it’s warm, and sometimes it’s really hot. We will learn to identify when our thoughts and feelings are low, medium, and high. Sometimes these thoughts and feelings can be negative and inaccurate about the situation. In the next lesson, we’ll learn ways to change these negative thoughts to create a healthy lifestyle.*

25  
minutes

## Identify Intensity of Emotions, Negative Thoughts, and Common Thinking Errors



### Activity A

Use Supplement 6.1 as an overhead transparency. Model an example of feeling angry, and discuss where your emotions were on the thermometer. Then, ask several students to volunteer to identify certain situations they may have experienced that involved emotions such as anger, sadness, and fear. Have the students select the appropriate level, or “temperature,” of emotional intensity for that situation.

**Sample Script**

*I'm going to ask a volunteer to think of a time he or she felt angry and use the picture of the thermometer to help explain to the rest of the class the level of emotion he or she felt in that situation. If you felt a little angry, you might point to one of the bottom lines in the "low" area. If you felt a lot angry, you might point to one of the top lines in the "high" area; to show something in between, you can point to one of the lines in the middle in the "medium" area. For example, I felt [insert emotion] when [insert a situation] happened the other day. I was at the [insert level from thermometer] point on the thermometer. Would anyone like to share an anger experience with the class?*

**Activity B**

Tell the students that thoughts often go along with emotions and feelings and that it is important to pay attention to both our thoughts and feelings. Make the point that their thoughts and emotions happen at about the same time and that it is very important to think about our thoughts when we're feeling strong emotions.

**Sample Script**

*When we feel strong emotions, we have thoughts that go with those emotions that happen at about the same time. It's important to pay attention to both our feelings and our thoughts.*

Ask the students who shared their feelings or emotions in Activity A to talk about what their thoughts were while they were experiencing the feeling or emotion.

**Sample Script**

*Remember the feelings you talked about with the thermometer? What were the thoughts that you had that went along with those feelings?*

**Activity C**

Use Supplement 6.2 as an overhead transparency and in-class handout to explain the activity. For this activity, you will describe the different types of common thinking errors. Provide the students with the handout to illustrate the six types of thinking errors.

**Sample Script**

*Now that we have talked about how our emotions can come in different degrees and that there are thoughts that come with those emotions, we will move on. It is important to understand that sometimes when our emotions are very strong, we can make a mistake or a thinking error about a situation. In other words, the thought we are having may not be completely accurate. For example, when we make a mistake we might blame others for what happened and not take responsibility for our behaviors. If we identify these thinking errors, we can change the way we look and react to a situation. We will discuss six of the most common thinking errors that people make.*

Use the overhead transparency to guide a thorough explanation of each of the six thinking errors. Explain that people could experience no thinking errors, one



thinking error, or multiple thinking errors for one situation. Provide students with the opportunity to ask questions about the types of thinking errors.



### Activity D

Use Supplement 6.3 as an overhead transparency to discuss the six situations, and ask the students to identify which thinking errors are being demonstrated by referring to their handout of thinking errors (Supplement 6.2). Reveal only one situation at a time to illustrate each thinking error. Read each situation aloud, and encourage students to follow along on the overhead.

After reading each situation, ask, “Which of the six thinking errors is occurring in this story?”

Call on individual students to identify the thinking error that is occurring. Provide feedback as needed if a student provides an incorrect answer. Use this exercise as an opportunity to motivate students to apply the information from the lesson and to get them thinking. Be prepared for students attributing several thinking errors for each situation. If this occurs, help students to discriminate amongst the thinking errors, explaining how they are different. The bold phrases in each example will help you appropriately identify the thinking error.

#### **Situation 1 (Making it personal)**

*Michael’s parents are getting a divorce. He thinks that **this is all his fault** because he has been getting into trouble lately.*

#### **Situation 2 (Fortune-telling)**

*Marcella’s teacher suggested that she run for class president. She decided not to run because **she knew no one would vote for her**.*

#### **Situation 3 (Binocular vision)**

*Farah got a bad grade on her spelling test. Now she thinks that **she is the worst student in the class**.*

#### **Situation 4 (Dark glasses)**

*Ahmad’s soccer coach gave him a lot of praise and encouragement in soccer practice. As Ahmad was leaving practice, the coach mentioned that Ahmad should practice his dribbling skills at home. Ahmad was upset about **how poorly he played at practice**.*

#### **Situation 5 (Black-and-white thinking)**

*Ling was grounded for not doing her chores. She thought to herself, “I am **always** the bad kid. My sister Kimmy is **always** the good kid.”*

#### **Situation 6 (Blame game)**

*Latisha got in trouble from her parents for taking grape juice into the living room. Her brother bumped into her, and the grape juice spilled all over the floor and stained the carpet. Her parents told her she had to clean it up because they had told her not to take the grape juice out of the kitchen. Latisha **felt that her brother should be the one to clean it up**.*

2–5  
minutes

## Closure

Gather your students together, and review the lesson's main points.

- Identifying negative thought patterns can create a healthy lifestyle.
- What are some common thinking errors?
- How do you apply negative thought patterns and thinking errors to your own life?

### Sample Script

*Today, we discussed the range of our emotions. We learned how to identify common thinking errors. In the next lesson, we'll learn how to change these thinking errors to help create a healthy lifestyle. The homework will help you apply what you've learned today about negative thought patterns and thinking errors to your own lives.*

10  
minutes

## Homework Handout



Use Supplement 6.4 as an overhead transparency and homework handout. Explain that students will be asked to list four situations where they had a negative thought or saw someone experiencing a negative thought pattern on a television show. The exercise asks them to identify their feelings, level of feelings, whether the feelings were comfortable or uncomfortable, their thoughts, and what type of thinking error was made. When explaining the assignment, you may choose to provide a personal example of a time you experienced a negative thought and engaged in a thinking error or use a well-known television or movie character. You can fill out the parts of the chart as you model the use of the chart.

### Sample Script

*On this homework handout, you'll be asked to list four situations where you had a negative thought or saw someone on TV having a negative thought. You're going to identify the kind of thinking error you or the person might have made. I'll start with an example.*

*(Important: Have the students work through at least one example on the homework sheet before the session ends so that they will have something to work on for the next lesson, as it will be a continuation of this activity. At the end of the lesson, instruct the class to bring their completed homework to the next class.)*

### Sample Script

*It is very important that you bring your completed homework assignment to our next meeting. We will be using your examples for the next lesson.*

Be sure to prepare for the possibility that most students may not remember to complete the homework or bring completed exercises to the next lesson.



## Tips for Transfer Training

### **Precorrect**

Tell your students to use their knowledge of Clear Thinking to identify the opportunities to refute negative thinking throughout the day. Situations like report-card day or results to state and classroom assessments may be particularly good times to use this precorrection.

### **Remind**

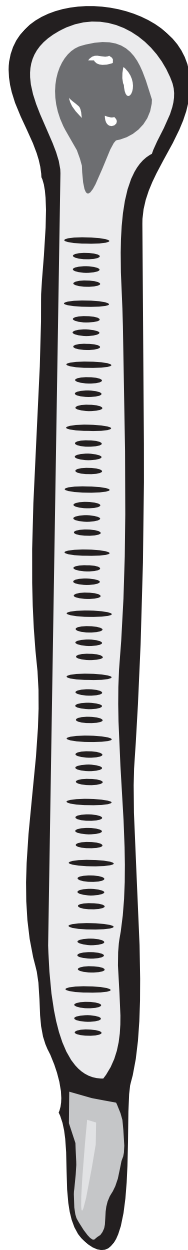
If you notice students using one of the six types of negative thinking, ask them if they recognize what type of thinking they are using, and strategize effective ways to reframe the events and/or to examine the evidence that supports or refutes their thinking.

### **Reinforce**

Reward students observed identifying positive thinking opportunities. Catch and compliment students identifying and using evidence-based steps to reframe negative thinking.



# Feelings Thermometer



High

Medium

Low



# Common Thinking Errors



**Binocular vision**

Looking at things in a way that makes them seem bigger or smaller than they really are



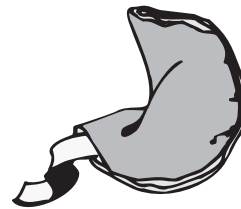
**Black-and-white thinking**

Looking at things in only extreme or opposite ways (for example, thinking of things as being good or bad, never or always, all or none)



**Dark glasses**

Thinking about only the negative parts of things



**Fortune-telling**

Making predictions about what will happen in the future without enough evidence



**Making it personal**

Blaming yourself for things that are not your fault



**Blame game**

Blaming others for things you should take responsibility for



## Situations

1. Michael's parents are getting a divorce. He thinks that **this is all his fault** because he has been getting into trouble lately.
2. Marcella's teacher suggested that she run for class president. She decided not to run because **she knew that no one would vote for her**.
3. Farah got a bad grade on her spelling test. Now she thinks that **she is the worst student in the class**.
4. Ahmad's soccer coach gave him a lot of praise and encouragement in soccer practice. As Ahmad was leaving practice, the coach mentioned that Ahmad should practice his dribbling skills at home. Ahmad was upset about **how poorly he played at practice**.
5. Ling was grounded for not doing her chores. She thought to herself, "I am **always** the bad kid. My sister Kimmy is **always** the good kid."
6. Latisha got in trouble from her parents for taking grape juice into the living room. Her brother bumped into her, and the grape juice spilled all over the floor and stained the carpet. Her parents told her she had to clean it up because they had told her not to take the grape juice out of the kitchen. Latisha **felt that her brother should be the one to clean it up**.



# Homework Assignment

Name (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** List four situations where you had a negative thought. For each negative thought, write what you were feeling, where on the thermometer your emotion was, if that emotion was comfortable or uncomfortable, what the negative thought was, and what type of thinking error you made. You can also use situations you saw on television of someone experiencing a negative thought pattern. Answer the same questions for what the person experienced.

Situation	What were you (or the person) feeling?	Where on the thermometer was your (or the person's) emotion?	Was that comfortable or uncomfortable?	What was your (or the person's) negative thought?	What type of thinking error did you (or the person) make?
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					

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