

## LESSON FORMAT

### Methods

While all lessons begin a brief opening exercise, several lessons in each year begin with the “Opener of Choice.” This is meant to incorporate students’ prior knowledge to build connections between lessons. Teachers are encouraged to teach this process to students so that it becomes a comfortable routine.

### Opener of Choice

Students volunteer to choose one of the following openers:

- Three words that sum up last lesson and why you chose them
- One thing you can’t stop thinking about from the last lesson
- Last lesson in a Tweet/Snapchat/Pictionary/Charades

## CONTENT

Each lesson will have some of the following areas. Note that the order of these may change depending on the lesson.

- Opening: Opener of Choice or another activity
- Discussion: In pairs, small groups, or whole group
- Mini-Lesson: Lesson delivered by the teacher
- Group Activity: Students working together in a learning experience
- Independent Learning: Students working individually in a learning experience
- Video: Internet access required to view
- Creative Activity: Students creating and constructing
- Wrap Up: Bringing closure to the lesson

## LOOKING AHEAD

Finally, we’d like to share the advice from students at the New York City Lab School for Collaborative Studies. To successfully implement RULER lessons with high school students, they advise: *“Be brave and keep going. If students make fun of the lessons, it shows that they learned something. They secretly love it, so don’t give up.”*

# **RULER**

## FOR HIGH SCHOOL

### LESSON 3: INTRODUCTION TO THE MOOD METER

<b>Overview</b>	Students are introduced to the Mood Meter and work in teams to plot as many feeling words as they can for each of the Mood Meter quadrants. Students reflect on ways that the Mood Meter could be helpful in their daily lives.
<b>Learning Objectives</b>	Describe the Mood Meter as a tool for building self- and social awareness Identify emotion words for each Mood Meter quadrant
<b>Duration</b>	45-60 minutes
<b>Materials</b>	Mood Meter poster or digital version to display to class Paper and colored markers
<b>Illinois SEL Standards</b>	1. Develop self-awareness and self-management skills to achieve school and life success 1A. Identify and manage one's emotions and behaviors <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1A.4a. Analyze how thoughts and emotions affect decision making and responsible behavior</li><li>1A.4b. Generate ways to develop more positive attitudes</li></ul>
<b>Key Terms</b>	Mood Meter Mood Meter Check-In

#### NOTE TO INSTRUCTOR

This lesson will establish a routine of checking in on the Mood Meter.

#### OPENING

##### Opener of Choice (3 minutes)

Say: In this lesson, we will be talking about the Mood Meter, which is one of the RULER Tools. Before we get started, who would like to refresh us on last class? Share an opener of choice.

#### MINI LESSON

##### Introduction to the Mood Meter (10 minutes)

Say: The Mood Meter is a tool to help us with self- and social awareness—to help us better understand how we, ourselves, and others, are feeling so that we can better handle our emotions.

There is a lot of research on identifying emotions and putting words to them. From that research, the phrase: “name it to tame it” was introduced. If we can identify and label how we are feeling, we are in a better place to manage our feelings, feel better, and be more effective in our lives.

# **RULER**

## **FOR HIGH SCHOOL**

Use the following notes to describe the Mood Meter:

- Explain the X-axis (horizontal) as your internal, mental feeling state, ranging from extremely unpleasant (-5) to neutral (0) to extremely pleasant (+5).
- Explain the Y-axis (vertical) as the energy coursing through your body, ranging from very low energy (-5) to neutral (0) to very high energy (+5).
- Show how the X- and Y- axes cross to form four quadrants. Explain the quadrants starting in the red and ending in the green or yellow by any or all of the following:
  - Asking for a few feeling words to exemplify each.
  - Demonstrating or discussing the facial expressions, body language, and vocal intonation in each.
  - Sharing a story about your experiences in different quadrants. If possible, try to find a connection to your students (a story from when you were their age, for example).

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Mood Meter Check-In (5 minutes)**

Say: Let us take a moment to share where we are on the Mood Meter and why (e.g., I am at +3/+2 in the Yellow because...).

Ask students to plot themselves silently on the Mood Meter, considering the following questions:

- How are you feeling right now?
- Are your thoughts more pleasant or unpleasant?
- How much energy do you feel in your body?
- What may have caused you to feel this way?
- Are you in a good place to get the most out of this class? If so, what can you think about or do to stay where you are? If not, what can you think about or do to move yourself to a more helpful place on the Mood Meter?

You may want to explain to students that you would like to establish a routine that students will be greeted by name as they enter your classroom, and that they will be asked to check in on the Mood Meter before taking a seat. You could hang a poster-sized Mood Meter near the entrance to the classroom where they can plot themselves (via sticky notes, pins, magnets, etc.) or use the Group Plot Mood Meter tool in RULER Online for students to anonymously plot how they are feeling. These activities will provide you with a sense of the students' emotions and the opportunity to offer support.

## GROUP ACTIVITY

### Labeling and Plotting Emotions (25 minutes)

Divide students into four teams. Each group should have a piece of paper and write in a different color of ink to match the quadrants of the Mood Meter.

Say: Each team will represent one color of the Mood Meter - write the color on top of the page. With your team, take two minutes to come up with as many words as you can that belong in that quadrant.

After the first two minutes, groups should swap papers so that each group has a paper with a different color of the Mood Meter than they started with. Take another two minutes to come up with as many words as you can that belong in that quadrant that are not already on the list from group(s) who previously wrote on the page. Repeat until all four groups have had time to come up with words for all four quadrants.

### Continue

Say: Find your original paper. Have one member of your group read the words on the page aloud to the class, allowing others the opportunity to challenge any words that are read. Cross off any words that the class agrees do not belong in that quadrant. Tally the number of unique words each group came up with on all four papers. The team that comes up with the most words wins.

The resulting word lists from this activity can be posted around the classroom to remind students to use a large “feelings words vocabulary.”

Say: In the same groups, each assigned to the same original quadrant, spend 10 minutes with your group plotting each word on their list into that quadrant.

Walk around the room as they do this and prompt students to discuss and decide for instance, where “happy” fits in relation to “proud” and “excited.” Is it more or less pleasant? More or less energized? [Note: Disagreement is likely and helpful; the primary benefit of this activity is in the process of thinking critically about different emotions.]

*Optional: Introduce students to the How We Feel app (available for iPhone and Android) at <http://howwefeel.org>. Students may wish to download this app and use it to track their emotions over time. The app helps students to practice labeling their feelings, to understand the causes of their feelings, and to choose effective regulation strategies.*

# **RULER**

## FOR HIGH SCHOOL

### WRAP UP

#### Reflect and Share (5 minutes)

Say: Take a moment to reflect individually on the following prompt, then discuss as a group:

- What is one way, or one situation, that the Mood Meter could be helpful in your life?

*Possible responses:*

- *Getting better at recognizing how they feel*
- *Learning new feeling words*
- *Tracking how they feel throughout a day or week*
- *Communicating to teachers or friends when they need support*

### LESSON 66: EXPLORING THE CORNERS OF THE MOOD METER

<b>Overview</b>	Students will examine the experience of emotions in the corners of the Mood Meter, consider the relative use of intense emotions and resulting thought patterns, and apply this knowledge to creating their own Mood Meter image.
<b>Learning Objectives</b>	Label emotion words for the four corners of the Mood Meter Identify the emotional experiences and thought patterns of the corners of the Mood Meter
<b>Duration</b>	45 - 60 minutes
<b>Materials</b>	Four large pieces of paper and tape (one for each corner of the Mood Meter) Sticky notes Materials for students to creatively redesign the Mood Meter
<b>Key Terms</b>	The Mood Meter Self-talk Acceptance

### OPENING

#### Journal (7 minutes)

Say: Let us start this lesson by responding individually to the below prompt:

We often say that all emotions matter for academics, decision making, relationships, mental and physical health, and everyday effectiveness. We also say that emotions are information. In your opinion, how do these two statements apply to emotions near the four corners of the Mood Meter - where intense emotions live?

# **RULER**

## **FOR HIGH SCHOOL**

### DISCUSSION

#### **Mood Meter Labeling (5 minutes)**

Say: Let us start by identifying some of the feeling words that live at the corners of our Mood Meter.

As a class, suggest relevant feeling words for each of the four Mood Meter corners. As you generate words, record them on four large pieces of paper (one piece for each corner of the Mood Meter) or another digital method.

Potential responses:

- +5, +5 (Yellow corner) - Ecstatic, Euphoric, Exhilarated, Elated
- -5, +5 (Red corner) - Enraged, Livid, Panicked, Terrified
- -5, -5 (Blue corner) - Despair, Despondent, Depressed, Hopeless
- +5, -5 (Green corner) - Carefree, Serene, Comfortable, Untroubled

### GROUP ACTIVITY

#### **Brainstorming: Emotions Matter For... (15 minutes)**

Say: Now, let us think about how these emotions specifically impact our thoughts.

Post or display the representations of the four corners to the group. If using paper, make sure everyone has sticky notes to write on.

Say: Think about the kind of self-talk that a person might say to themselves if they were experiencing these intense emotions. Write one thought on each sticky note, then put them on the large pieces of paper around the room.

For example, what would be something that a person who is feeling hopeless might say to themselves?

Potential responses may include:

- *"I will never be able to do this."*
- *"Things will never get better."*

Say: After posting your sticky notes for each corner, take a few minutes to read the notes from each poster.

What do you notice about the kind of information that they provide?

Potential responses:

- *Thoughts tend to be extreme, exaggerated*
- *Information is not always accurate because it is clouded by intense feeling*
- *Signal that something is wrong; signal that the person needs help*
- *Thoughts are not useful for reaching goals, behaving as one's best self*

# **RULER**

## **FOR HIGH SCHOOL**

- *It's okay to temporarily spend small amounts of time in these corners, but when it's a pattern, you might need more help*

### **Continue**

Say: Sometimes, unhelpful and inaccurate thoughts can lead to very intense emotions. For example, negative self-talk can cause us to feel depressed. Other times, intense emotions are completely justified given the extremes of the situation. Either way, a pattern of feeling intense emotions at the corners of the Mood Meter may signal that something larger is wrong. These feelings can be particularly hard to regulate on your own without seeking professional help.

We first discussed this in Lesson 65, when we explored how emotional intelligence is just one set of skills, but not a “cure all.” It's important to note that some emotion states are not something you can pull yourself out of alone - like depression or grief. The Mood Meter is not only about shifting emotions. Sometimes, it's about accepting where you are for a while. Other times, you may need to look for resources to deal with the situation that is causing this pattern of extreme emotion.

## **WRAP UP**

### **Mood Meter Redesign (20 minutes)**

Say: Now, let us take a few minutes to redraw the Mood Meter creatively, reflecting the nuances that have been discussed. You may want to consider the following in your redesign:

- Gradients of color to reflect intensity
- Certain emotions are more useful than others depending on context and task
- Emotions provide different kinds of information; some are more trustworthy than others
- Some emotions are more difficult to regulate

Say: Once you are done, share with the class!