

# Explore & Learn

## Lessons and Activities

PK, TK, and VPK Instruction

Who Am I?

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# No Feelings Today!



Dona Herweck Rice

Illustrated by Aileen Ramirez



"I don't think I'm going to feel today," Alex said to Grams, yawning and sitting down at the kitchen table. "I had a lot of feelings yesterday. I'm done with feelings for now."



Grams turned from the stove where she was making banana pancakes and glanced at her grandchild. "Yeah, it was a 'big feelings' kind of day, I know," Grams said. "But having feelings is kind of part of the deal, kiddo. That's just how things work," she said with a smile.





"I don't think so," Alex replied. "I'm going to skip them today."

"Okay, hon," Grams said. "You let me know how that goes, all right?"

"All right."



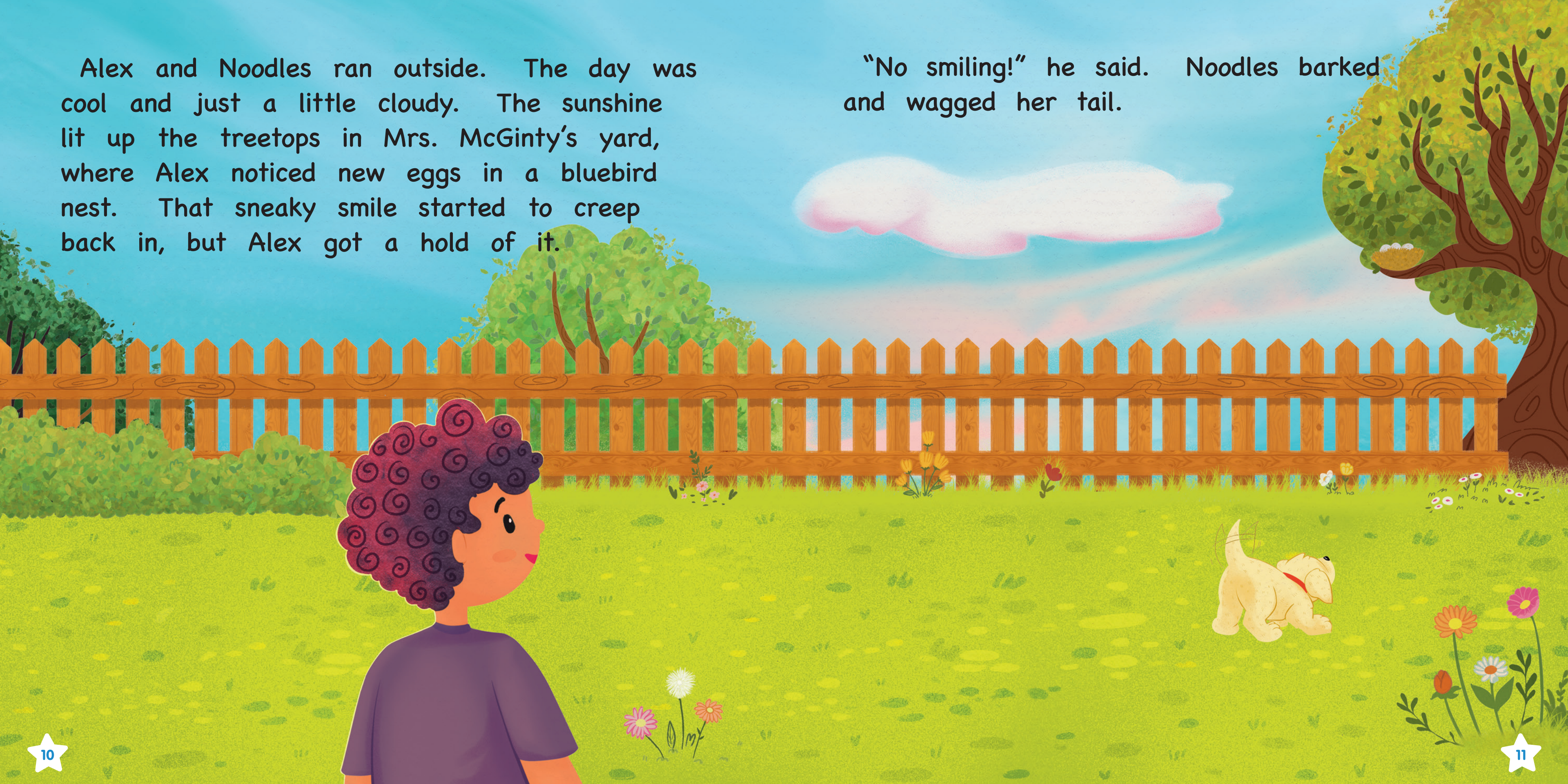
After breakfast, Alex got dressed and brushed his teeth. Noodles wagged her tail and nudged Alex's hand.

"You want to go outside?" Alex asked, starting to smile at his cute pup with the lopsided ears. But he stopped before he actually smiled. That would be feeling. No feelings today!



Alex and Noodles ran outside. The day was cool and just a little cloudy. The sunshine lit up the treetops in Mrs. McGinty's yard, where Alex noticed new eggs in a bluebird nest. That sneaky smile started to creep back in, but Alex got a hold of it.

"No smiling!" he said. Noodles barked and wagged her tail.



Noodles found her ball and brought it to Alex. "Good girl," Alex said with a grin.



"Woof!" Noodles said.

"Oh, yeah," Alex answered. "Knock it off, feelings!"



Alex tossed the ball up high, and Noodles caught it. "That was awesome, Noodles!" Alex said. He smiled from ear to ear.



Having no feelings was harder than he thought.

Alex threw the ball again, but just a little too high for Noodles to catch. Noodles and Alex both ran to look for the ball.

Alex didn't see a rock in the grass. He stubbed his toe and tripped.



"Ouch!" he cried. His toe really hurt, and tears welled up in his eyes.

"Crying is feeling, too," he said, and tried to make himself stop. It didn't work.

"Grams, I think I'm going to feel again, okay?" Alex asked, walking back inside the house and straight to Grams. Noodles licked his hand.



“You feel all your feelings, buddy,” Grams answered with a hug. “The happy ones, the sad ones, and everything in between. Your feelings are part of you, and I love every part of you.”

“Woof!” Noodles said. Her wagging tail showed she felt exactly the same way.



## Notes for the Grown-ups

This book allows for a rich shared reading experience for children who are early and developing readers. The dialogue and images help new readers to tell the story, either as they read or as they are read to. What a valuable tool for building the confidence new readers need to embark on the adventures that await them while reading!

To extend this reading experience, do one or more of the following:

Talk about Noodles's feelings and how they are like or different from Alex's feelings.

Discuss if it is possible not to have feelings and why that does not really work in the big picture.

Together, make a feelings book that shows all the feelings your child has.

Think about ways to manage feelings when they sometimes seem too big to manage. Talk about ideas, such as taking breaths, getting a glass of water, talking with someone who cares about you, and so on.

After reading, come back to the book again and again. Rereading is an excellent tool for building literacy skills.

# Who Am I?

## Teacher's Guide



## Day 8 Preparation and Materials

### Morning Meeting

- **Materials:** *Morning Meeting* routine (card 1)
- **Preparation:** Prepare to share the orange square cutout from Day 1.

### Literacy

- **Materials:** *Teach Letters and Sounds* routine (card 2); copy of *No Feelings Today*; *Feelings Change* (page 14 in *Student Activity Book*); crayons
- **Preparation:** Print a copy of or prepare to display *Feelings Change* as you demonstrate completing it.

### Literacy Explorations

- **Materials:** *Pencil Grasp* routine (card 11); drawing paper
- **Preparation:** Ensure that each Literacy Exploration center is prepared.

### Physical Development

- **Materials:** music
- **Preparation:** Locate and prepare to share songs for students to move and dance to.

### Phonological Awareness

- n/a

### Mathematics

- **Materials:** counting manipulatives
- **Preparation:** Prepare a copy of the *Tree Branch Background* from Day 7 and set of five counting manipulatives for each pair of students and yourself.

### Social Development

- **Materials:** *Writing Social Stories* routine (card 16); “Calming Down” social story poster; crayons
- **Preparation:** Prepare to distribute student-created social stories.

### Fine Motor Development

- **Materials:** *Pencil Grasp* routine (card 11); *Sky Writing* routine (card 12); *Capital I* (page 15 of *Student Activity Book*)

### Science

- **Materials:** large tubs of water; materials for the sink or float experiment; towels or paper towels
- **Preparation:** For each table, prepare a large clear tub that has water filled up halfway. Gather waterproof classroom materials that will either sink or float (e.g., counting manipulatives, utensils, small blocks, animal figurines, sticks, rocks).

### Creative Explorations


- **Materials:** paint; palettes or paper plates; paper; square sponges; cubes
- **Preparation:** Prepare palettes for each workspace by adding various colors of paint.

### Music and Movement

- **Materials:** *Learn a New Song* routine (card 17); “What Do You Do?” audio recording (whatdoyoudo.mp3) and lyrics (page 173)
- **Preparation:** Prepare to share the audio recording of the song.

### Closing Circle

- **Materials:** *Closing Circle* routine (card 18)

 If you have access to the digital manipulatives, you may choose to use the digital counters in place of the noted materials during the Fine Motor Development lesson.

## Morning Meeting



10-15  
minutes



1. Follow the *Morning Meeting* routine (card 1).
2. Display the square cutout you prepared, and have students describe the attributes of a square. (*There are four corners and four straight sides. Each side is the same length.*)
3. Ask students, “How can we make a square using our bodies?” Offer the following configurations, and challenge students to create squares:
  - four students, lying down
  - four students, standing up (Guide students to use their arms.)
  - two students, lying down
  - the entire group

### Inquiry Idea

Ask students these questions, having them turn and talk to partners about their thoughts: *Why do you think some objects are made in the shape of a square? What would happen if they were in the shape of a circle?*



### ★ ★ Free Play

Free Play is a fundamental part of the *Explore & Learn* day. See page 95 for free play ideas related to this unit.



## Literacy



20-30  
minutes



### Alphabet Knowledge Warm-Up

1. Gather students together, and follow the *Teach Letters and Sounds* routine (card 2) to teach the letter of the day. Choose which letter to teach based on your scope and sequence. (See page 39 in the *Management Guide* for more information.)

### Whole-Group Lesson

2. Share the *Emotions* vocabulary concept card using the *Introduce Vocabulary* routine (card 6).
3. Display the book *No Feelings Today*, and take a picture walk to review the different emotions the character feels in each part of the story.
4. Model thinking aloud about a time when your feelings changed. For example, you may share that you felt sad when you couldn't ride your bike on a rainy day, but then you felt cheerful when your friend came over to hang out instead.
5. Model drawing a picture to represent the scenario on *Feelings Change* (page 14 of *Student Activity Book*).
6. Have students move to their workspaces to complete *Feelings Change*. Circulate as students work, and provide support as needed. If time allows, have students share their drawings with partners.



## Literacy Explorations

15-20  
minutes

small groups

centers

Meet with one group to deliver Small-Group Lesson 2 (page 98), while the rest of the students engage in self-chosen centers. For more information about independent learning centers, see page 99.

## Physical Development

10-15  
minutes

whole group

1. Gather students together. Say, “I am going to freeze and show an emotion on my face. Guess which emotion I am showing.” Cover your face, then uncover it to show your frozen emotion. Have students guess the emotion. Repeat several times, showing a variety of emotions.
2. Say, “We are going to play Freeze Dance! I will name an emotion. As the music plays, dance and think about how you will show the emotion with your body and face. When the music stops, freeze like a statue, showing the emotion. When the music plays again, move your body again.”
3. Have students stand in a large circle and move to the beat of the music, freezing and showing the emotions you name each time the music stops.

## Phonological Awareness

10-15  
minutes

whole group

1. Gather students together, and chant, “Rhyming words are fun to say! Sentences sound like songs we play! *Say* and *play*. They both end with the sound /ā/. Do you remember the emotion Cam felt when she went to school? (*shy*) Today, we are going to rhyme with the word *shy*.”
2. Share each line of the following chant, using call and response for the fourth and fifth lines. Provide visual cues by pointing to yourself when it is your turn to say the sentence and pointing to students when it is their turn to say the sentence.

Listen to this sentence twice,  
and find the words that rhyme!

*Cam did not cry when she felt shy.*  
*Cam did not cry when she felt shy.*  
*Cry, shy—they rhyme!*

3. Repeat the chant with more sentences.
  - The sun is high up in the sky. *High, sky—they rhyme!*
  - The duck with a tie told us bye. *Tie, bye—they rhyme!*
  - I don’t know why I felt shy. *Why, shy—they rhyme!*
  - We baked a pie that was dry. *Pie, dry—they rhyme!*
  - She gave a pie to a sly spy. *Pie, spy; sly, spy; pie, sly—they rhyme!*
4. Say, and have students repeat, all rhyming words.

### ★ ★ Teacher-Choice Read-Aloud

Per the pacing plan suggestions on page 38 of the *Management Guide*, after the phonological awareness activity is a good time in the *Explore & Learn* day for a teacher-choice read-aloud.



## Mathematics



20-30  
minutes



### Whole-Group Lesson

1. Gather students together. Display manipulatives and *Tree Branch Background* from Day 7. Distribute a set to each student. Say, “We are going to be practicing more number stories today. I will tell some, then you will get to make up your own stories!” Tell the following number stories, pausing at points to model moving your manipulatives and instructing students to move theirs. At the end of each number story, instruct students to line up their objects and touch each one as they count. Repeat the question, and have students share their answers.
  - There were five apples growing on the branch. I picked one for a snack. How many apples are left?
  - There were three birds sitting on the branch. One more bird flew over. How many birds are there now?
  - There were two leaves on the branch. One leaf fell off. How many leaves are there now?

### Partner Practice

2. Have partners take turns telling number stories to practice talking about math and making sense of numbers. Pairs should use their *Tree Branch Background* and manipulatives to act out the number stories. As you circulate, support students by offering suggestions for what the manipulatives represent or what might happen. It is okay if the number stories that students create do not follow the same structure as the ones you shared.

## Social Development



10-15  
minutes



1. Gather students together, and display the “Calming Down” social story poster. Read, “She fills her backpack with every toy she finds. Cam’s mom notices the stuffed backpack. Cam bubbles over with excitement when she tells her mom about being Star Sharer.” Note that this is a detail from the story that could be added to the illustration.
2. Say, “You might have objects that are important to your story that you could add to your illustrations, like Cam’s backpack.” Distribute social stories, and allow time for students to look at and think about their illustrations. Have students make plans for details they could add to their drawings and share their plans with partners.
3. Have students move to their workspaces and continue to work on their social stories. Encourage students to add more details to their pictures. Support the remaining students in completing step 5 of the *Writing Social Stories* routine (card 16) by scribing their stories.

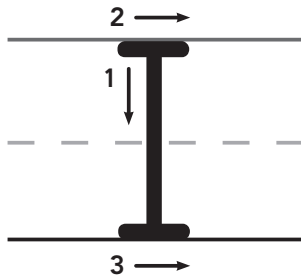
## Fine Motor Development

10-15  
minutes

independent work



whole group



1. Have students move to their workspaces, and say, “How do you feel today?” Have student volunteers respond with the sentence frame, *I feel \_\_\_ today.* Say, “We say the word *I* every day when we share our feelings, thoughts, and actions. The word *I* is only made up of one capital letter—*I*. Today, we will learn how to write uppercase *I* using straight lines.”
2. Follow the *Sky Writing* routine (card 12) to make *I*. As you model making the letter in the air, say, “Down, across top, across bottom.” Have students practice.
3. Model writing *I* in clear view of students. As you make the movements with your writing tool, say, “Down, across top, across bottom.”
4. Have students complete *Capital I* (page 15 of *Student Activity Book*). As students work, monitor for proper pencil grasp, pressure, and paper positioning, correcting as needed.

### Extension Idea

Have students look for the word *I* in books and environmental print in the classroom.



## Science

15-25  
minutes

whole group



independent work

1. Gather students together. Explain the terms *float* and *sink*, and show examples of objects that float and sink. Say, “Scientists! We are going to do an experiment today. You will be making hypotheses, or guesses, about whether you think an object will float or sink. Then, we will test our objects and see if our hypotheses were correct.”
2. Display an object and allow wait time for students to make their guesses. Have several students share their hypotheses and reasoning with the group. Then, test the object by placing it in the tub of water. Have students share their observations and whether their hypotheses were correct.
3. Repeat the process with several more objects. Remind students that it’s okay if their hypotheses are not correct. Support students with strategies to manage their emotions, as needed.
4. Place students in groups of three to four, and have them move to workspaces. Have students take turns choosing items, with the group making hypotheses about whether the objects will float or sink. Have students place the objects into the tubs of water and observe the results. Listen to students’ conversations and reactions as you circulate.

### Inquiry Idea

Ask students the following question, and have them share their ideas: *What do you think makes some objects sink and other objects float?*



## Creative Explorations



15-25  
minutes



independent work



whole group

1. Gather students together. Demonstrate dipping a square sponge and a cube into paint, and stamping them on paper. Ask students to share their observations about the stamps. (*They are squares.*) Say, “The faces of the sponges and cubes are squares, so they create square shapes when I stamp them on paper. You are going to use these square-shaped materials to create pieces of art.”
2. Have students move to workspaces and create art by adding paint to sponges and cubes, then stamping them on paper.

## Music and Movement



10-15  
minutes



whole group

1. Gather students together, and say, “Yesterday, we sang the song ‘What Do You Do?’ and acted out emotions *angry* and *sad*. Today, we will learn and sing the rest of the song.”
2. Follow the *Teach a New Song* routine (card 17) to teach students the remaining verses of “What Do You Do?”
3. Once students are familiar with these verses, have students sing them again, adding the movements stated in the lyrics.

## Closing Circle



5-10  
minutes



whole group

1. Follow the *Closing Circle* routine (card 18).
2. If time allows, choose an extension activity from the routine card.

## Card 1

# Morning Meeting

**Objective:** Students will build community through safe, predictable routines.

**Materials:** Daily Picture Schedule Cards ([schedulecards.pdf](#); *optional*)

## Gather and Greet

1. Signal to the whole group that it is time to gather for the morning meeting. You may choose to use a song as a transition.
2. Gather students together in a circle. Remind students about personal space and the importance of keeping their hands and feet to themselves.
3. Have students greet each other. You may choose to do a whole-class greeting with a song or have students pass one of the following greetings around the circle by greeting the peers next to them:
  - high five
  - fist bump
  - elbow bump
  - wave

## Our Day

4. Share the plan for the day. This can be done by reviewing the *Daily Picture Schedule Cards* together or through a morning message—a short note addressed to the class that includes one or two main events that will take place during the day. The daily learning objectives are included in the *Teacher's Guides* for your easy reference.

## Theme

5. Have students engage with the theme, color, shape, and/or phrase of the week. Ideas are included in the daily lesson plans in the *Teacher's Guide*.

## Card 2

# Teach Letters and Sounds

**Objective:** Students will learn the letters of the alphabet and the sounds they represent to support reading readiness and emergent writing skills.

**Materials:** *Letter Cards* ([lettercards.pdf](#))

**Preparation:** Choose which letters to teach based on your scope and sequence. (See page 39 in the *Management Guide* for more information.) Prepare to share the selected *Letter Cards*.

## Name It

1. Display the selected *Letter Card*, and say, "This is the letter \_\_\_\_\_. This is a capital \_\_\_\_\_ (*point to the capital letter*), and this is a lowercase \_\_\_\_\_ (*point to the lowercase letter*)."
2. Point to the *Letter Card*, and say, "What letter is this?" (*Students respond with the letter name.*)

## Say It

3. Say the sound the letter represents, and discuss how the sound is formed. Have students repeat the sound several times.

## Write It

4. With your finger, trace the capital letter on the card. Narrate your movements, describing the starting point and the types of lines you are forming.
5. Ask students to hold up their pointer fingers and form the lines of the uppercase letter on flat surfaces. Have students repeat the sound the letter makes while they are forming the letter.
6. Repeat steps 4-5 with the formation of the lowercase letter.

# emotions



**different ways people feel**

# emotions

## Related Words

feelings

happy

sad

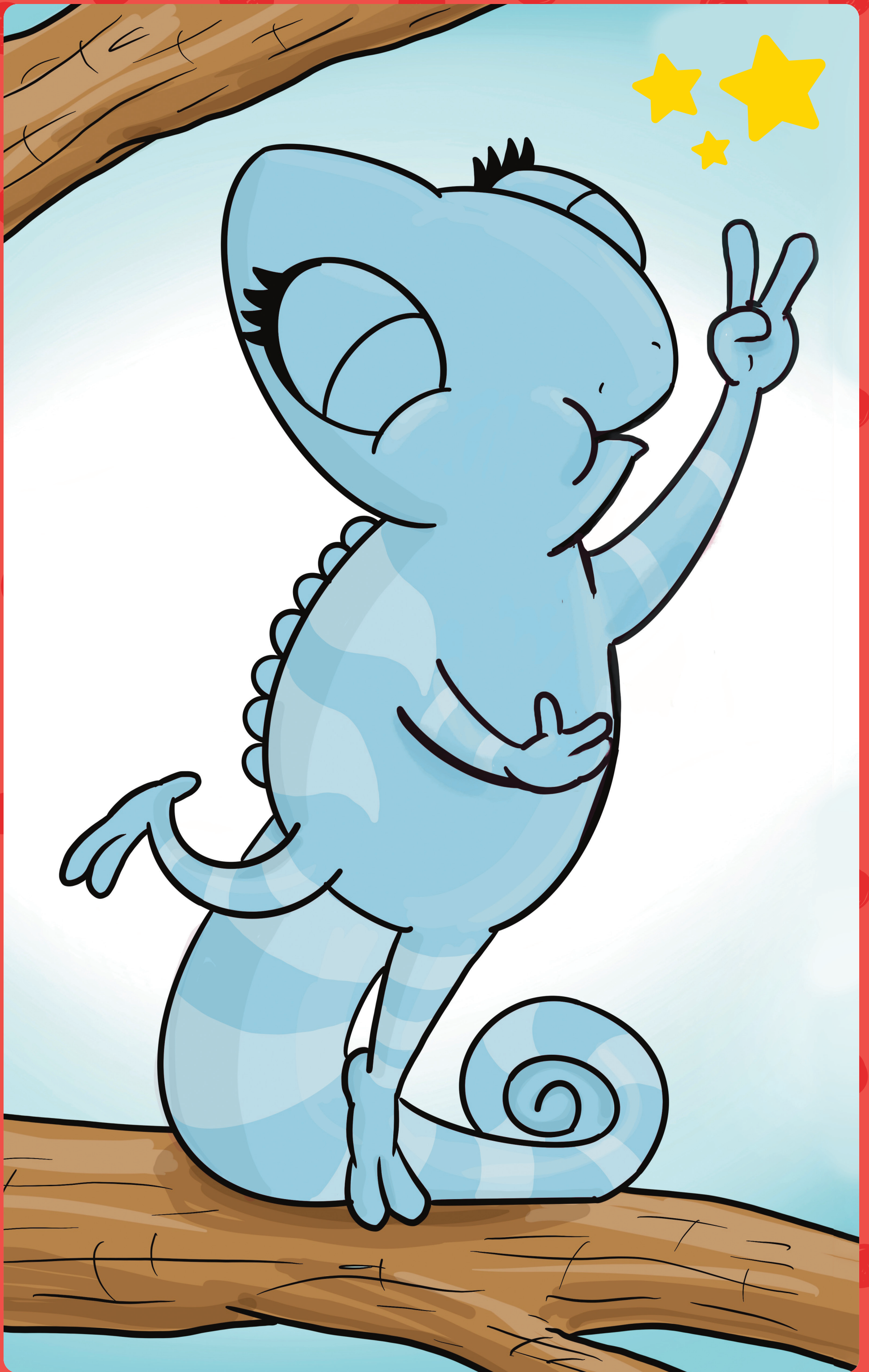
## Sentence

I can show **emotions** with my face and body.

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## Engage

- ★ What emotions might you feel if today were your birthday?
- ★ What could you do if a friend was sad?
- ★ How would your face and body show that you are happy? worried?
- ★ Look at the picture. Which image best describes how you feel today?





# Calming Down

Cam E. Chameleon is packing up for the day when her teacher, Ms. Lee, says Cam will be tomorrow's Star Sharer. Cam is very happy! She gets to bring in one thing to share with the class.

The next morning, Cam wakes up so full of energy that she doesn't think clearly. She fills her backpack with every toy she finds. Cam's mom notices the stuffed backpack. Cam bubbles over with excitement when she tells her mom about being Star Sharer. When Cam is happy, she sometimes gets overly energetic. She has to find a way to calm down. Her mom suggests that Cam pause and take a deep breath. Cam closes her eyes, breathing in through her nose and out through her mouth, and counts to four: *1-2-3-4, ahhh*. Cam is now feeling calm. Her mom reminds her that being Star Sharer means picking one special thing to share with her class. Cam knows just what to pick.

When Cam gets to school, Ms. Lee can see how happy she is because she is smiling and waving to her friends. Cam notices on the picture schedule that she gets to share at morning meeting. That comes first! Cam excitedly runs around the room. Ms. Lee notices that Cam is moving quickly and asks her to calm down. Cam breathes *1-2-3-4, ahhh*. She still feels happy but also much calmer.

When morning meeting starts, Ms. Lee asks Cam to share. Cam tells the story of her family's visit to the zoo. They saw a ferocious tiger prowling, growling, and playing with its toys! Cam shares the tiger stuffy she got that day. The class growls like tigers as she passes it around.

Cam feels happy all day at school. **When she feels herself get energetic and start to move extra fast, she remembers to pause, take a deep breath, and count *1-2-3-4, ahhh*.**

## Key Words

breath  
calm  
count  
energetic  
happy  
pause  
quickly  
share



Listen



tcmpub.digital/el\_story2

## Tree Branch Background

Make copies of this page for the Days 7–8 lessons.



\_\_\_\_\_  
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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Feelings Change

Circle One



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Circle One

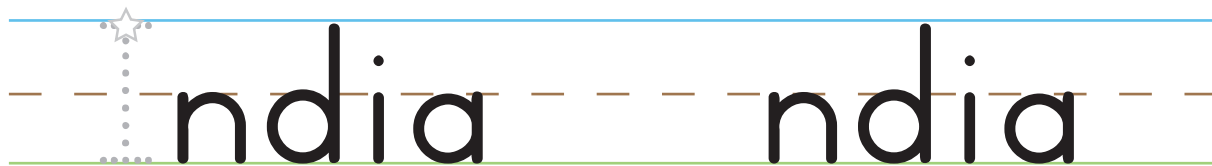
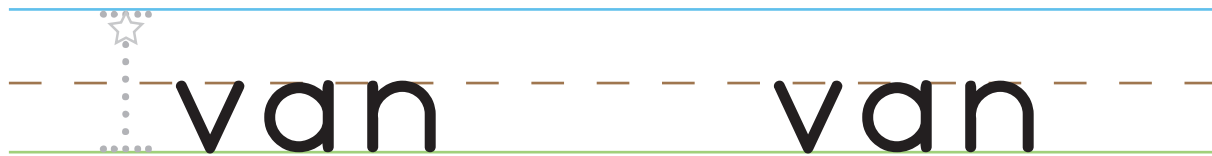
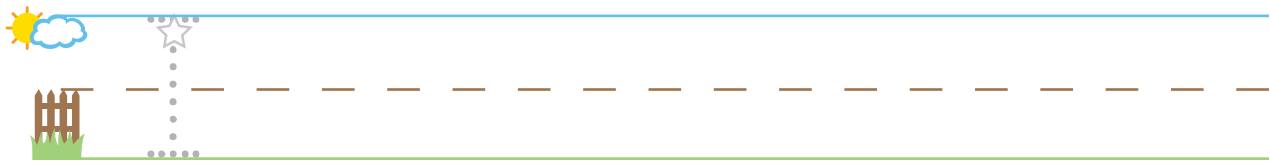
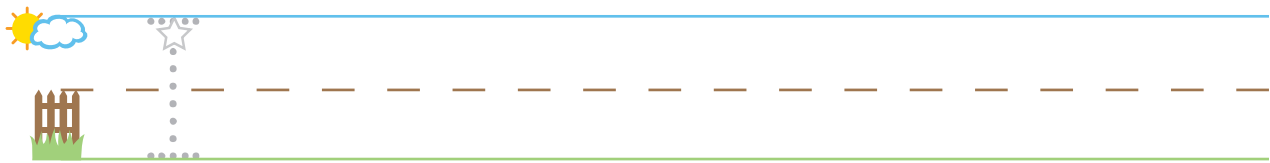
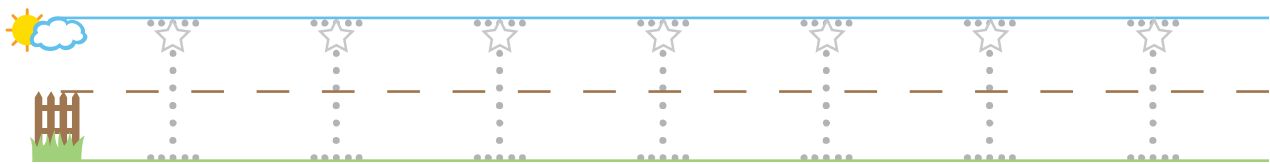
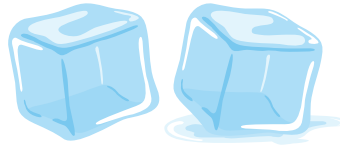
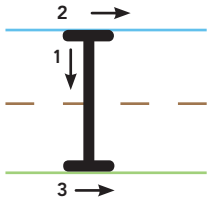


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**Adults, read this aloud:** First, choose sad or angry. Draw a picture of a time when you felt that emotion. Then, choose happy or excited. Draw a picture of how your feelings could change to that emotion.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Capital I



Adults, read this aloud: Start at each star. Trace each letter. Then, write your own letters.

# Social Development and Executive Functioning

Social development and executive functioning include skills and competencies that are essential to getting along with others and managing cognitive processes to regulate behavior. Developing these skills is essential in early childhood as young learners set the foundation for healthy identity development and strong interpersonal relationships.

There are six components that will be assessed in this area:

- **Building Relationships**—Building relationships is the ability to establish and maintain relationships with peers and adults. This involves communicating with others, working together to achieve shared goals, and navigating social situations that may involve differences or conflicts.
- **Social Awareness**—Social awareness is the capacity of early learners to become aware of the needs, desires, and perspectives of others. This involves feeling empathy and showing care for others. Students use cues and situational context to learn that other people’s perspectives may be different from their own. Social awareness also involves understanding and navigating social norms.
- **Decision-Making**—Decision-making involves the processes through which prekindergarten students gather information and make choices that balance their own needs and rights with others’ needs and rights. When making personal choices and engaging in social interactions, students consider different ideas and solutions. They also reflect on and evaluate the consequences of their decision-making.
- **Working Memory**—Working memory is the capacity to hold information in mind for a short amount of time. Young learners draw on working memory to process information and complete tasks. This includes focusing when gathering information, organizing thoughts and information, following multistep directions, and problem-solving.
- **Attention**—Attention involves the ability to take in information from the environment and select and focus on one or more things. Students at this level are developing their abilities to sustain attention for increasing lengths of time. Attention involves focusing sufficiently to understand information or perform a task and ignore distractions.
- **Self-Control**—Self-control is the ability to manage one’s own feelings, thoughts, behaviors, and actions. This includes regulating emotions in various social situations, delaying gratification, and controlling impulses to make thoughtful and intentional choices.



# Social Development and Executive Functioning Checklist

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Teacher Directions:** During each two-week unit, use this checklist to indicate each child’s level based on your observations. Use the following symbols, and include notes about their work when possible.

☆ Advancing     
 ✓+ Meeting     
 ✓ Emerging     
 — Beginning

Student Name	Building Relationships	Social Awareness	Decision-Making	Working Memory	Attention	Self-Control

# Social Development and Executive Functioning Rubric

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Use the *Social Development and Executive Functioning Checklist* to summarize these skills throughout this unit. Based on your notes and annotations on the checklist, determine at which level the student is working for each criterion. Circle or highlight the rating for each component.

	Advancing	Meeting	Emerging	Beginning
<b>Building Relationships</b>	Builds, sustains, and expands relationships.	Builds and sustains relationships.	Starting to build and sustain relationships.	Starting to build relationships with support.
<b>Social Awareness</b>	Considers the needs, desires, and perspectives of others when making choices.	Is aware of the needs, desires, and perspectives of others.	Starting to be aware of the needs and desires of others.	Starting to be aware of the needs of others with support.
<b>Decision-Making</b>	Considers multiple ideas when making choices that balance own needs and rights with others.	Makes choices that balance own needs and rights with others.	Starting to make choices that balance own needs and rights with others.	Starting to make choices with support.
<b>Working Memory</b>	Recalls information to follow multi-step directions and solve problems.	Recalls information to follow multi-step directions.	Starting to recall information to follow directions.	Starting to recall information for short amounts of time with support.
<b>Attention</b>	Focuses and sustains attention for increasing periods of time.	Focuses and sustains attention.	Starting to focus and sustain attention.	Starting to focus on one thing with support.
<b>Self-Control</b>	Manages own feelings, thoughts, behaviors, and actions in various social situations.	Manages own feelings, thoughts, behaviors, and actions in routine situations.	Starting to manage own feelings, thoughts, behaviors, and actions.	Starting to manage own feelings and thoughts with support.