



Optimistic Thinking

What Brings Us Joy?

Pre-Teaching/ Guiding Language:

Think of something in life that brings you joy. Maybe it's listening to your favorite playlist on a long drive, or dance parties in the basement with your friends! It could be the smell of burgers on the grill in the summer or the sound of a crackling campfire. When we reflect on these thoughts and feelings, research shows that it causes real calming effects over our bodies. Our heart rate calms down, and our stress levels decrease. Imagine if we took time every day to reflect on these positive moments, or even new moments that we are excited to make? Focusing on things in the future that we are looking forward to also has very similar effects! So, let's get excited and think of all the good times to have!

Key Takeaways:

- Students will take a moment to focus on something big or small that brings them joy.
- Students will have an opportunity to share something with their classmates that brings them joy.
- Students will understand how taking time to think of things that makes them happy can help better their daily outlook.
- Teachers will have an opportunity to learn something about each of their students.

Duration + Materials:

- 5 Minutes

Key Vocabulary:

- **Vivid-** Producing powerful feelings or strong, clear images in the mind.
- **Beneficial-** Favorable or advantageous. Resulting in good.



Activity:

1. Teachers will use the guiding language to explain why focusing on positive memories or future exciting plans is beneficial to our bodies.
2. Teachers will prompt students to share one thing that brings them joy in their lives in general but also something that brings them joy in school.
 - a. These can be things big or small, past or present, and also into the future! For example, the thought of prom in the spring can bring a student joy.
3. Give each student an opportunity to share, but do not force any students to share if they do not want to.

Reinforcement Activities:

1. Be sure to take time at the end of class, as often as possible, to prompt students to reflect on positive moments. Use the language “Something that brought me joy today was...” to help students create and reflect on positive moments in their school and out-of-school time environments.