

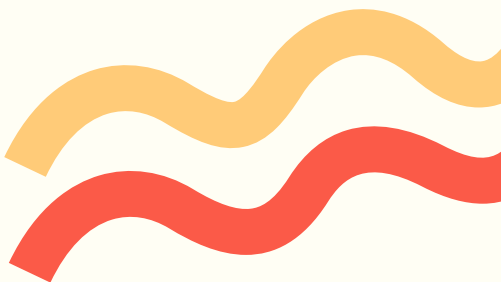
How to Run a Class Circle

Tips for teaching SEL regularly in
the Classroom





Why Run a Class Circle?



Connection is an important part of a classroom.

Connection builds trust.

Trust means students feel safe.

Safety sets the stage for learning to occur.

The goal is to provide a safe and open environment for students to share concerns, explore their feelings, and support each other.



Setting the Stage

1. Meet at a regular time once each week for about 30 minutes.
2. Arrange the class so students can see each other and seating builds a sense of trust.
3. Remember to post the agenda before the circle.



Agenda Items

1. Check-in
2. SEL Question of the Week
3. Update on the class goal
4. Problem-Solving Moment
5. Gratitude Moment

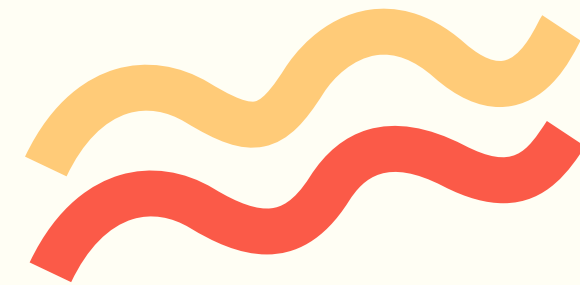


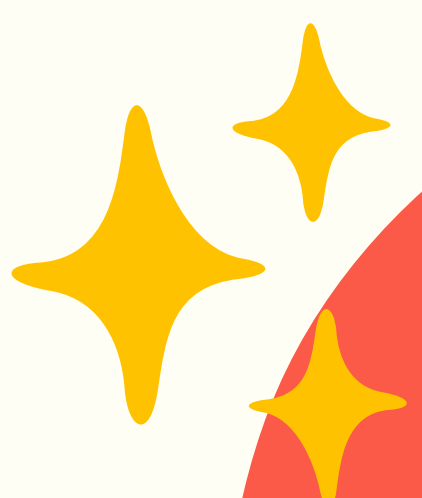
Check-In Activities

These can be something current that is happening in the class or community.
The point of this is for students to find connections with each other.
Connection creates a sense of belonging.

Examples:

- What is your favourite park?
- Do you ride your bike every day?
- What is your favourite fidget?
- What book are you reading?
- What is your favourite sport?
- How are you feeling on a scale of 1-10?
- Do you have a pet?
- “Would you rather” questions





SEL Question of the Week

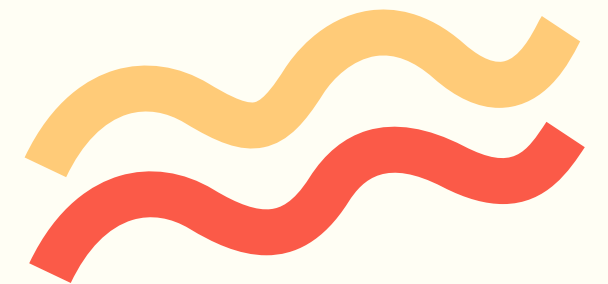
Discuss questions – see your Grade Level Examples.

Some classes use a talking stick

For the first few weeks, work on safety – talk about no giggling or making fun of an answer, no private conversations, don't use names, don't share someone else's story.



**well
done!**



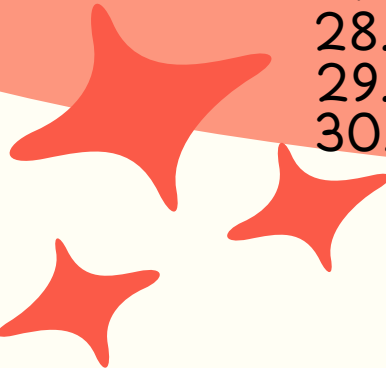
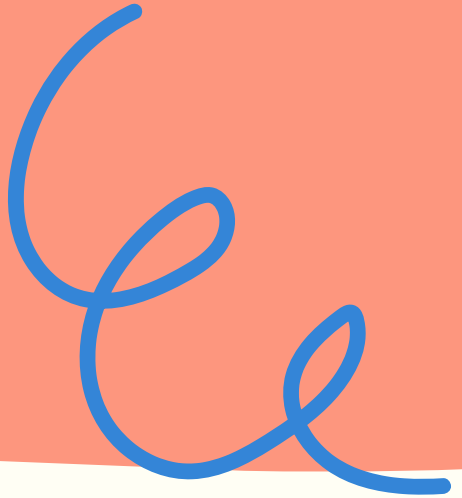
1. What does it mean to have a calm body and calm mind? How do we calm ourselves? Practice: Review different kinds of deep breathing
2. How can I use my growth mindset to help when we are trying something new? Why do we practice things over and over? What can we say to ourselves when we find something hard to do?
3. Can you name some emotions? How do you feel emotions in your body? How do we recognize feelings in other people? All feelings are okay.
4. Introduction to the Zones of Regulation. Explore the different zone colors and review the Zones poster.
5. What are thoughts? What are negative/unhelpful (red) thoughts? What are positive/helpful (green) thoughts? Can we choose our thoughts? (Yes!)
6. How does it feel to be angry? How does your body feel when you're mad? How can you keep yourself and others safe when you're angry? What does it mean to "use our words"? What does "hands to self" mean?
7. What does it mean to apologize? Why do we say sorry? Practice: The 5 steps to a heartfelt apology.
8. What is unkindness? What is bullying? What can we do to stay safe? How do we get help if we need help?
9. How can we get help if we need it? Why do people hurt other people? Who do we get help from?
10. What is empathy? How can we show empathy? What does it mean to be a good friend? Is it hard or easy to be kind?
11. How can I accept being told "No" calmly and respectfully? Why is "no" a hard word to hear?
12. How do we show respect for others? Why is listening important? Why is taking turns important?
13. What is personal space? Does everyone have personal space? What is "our bubble"? What does "hands to self" mean?
14. How are you feeling today? How do you know you're feeling this way? Can you show me with your face or body? Extend the discussion to feelings and how they come and go, and how we can impact other people's feeling.
15. What does your body feel like when you're happy? Sad? Mad?
16. What can you do to help your body feel calm? What are body and brain breaks?
17. What helps you feel better when you're upset? What are your personal self-regulation strategies.
18. What does it look like and sound like to be a good listener?
19. How can you tell when someone else is feeling sad or mad?
20. What can you do if someone is not kind to you?
21. What can you do if you see someone sitting alone?
22. What does it mean to take turns?
23. How do you ask nicely to join in a game or activity? What do you say if someone asks you to join your play?
24. What can we do if we make a mistake? What does saying "sorry" mean? When do we say it?
25. How can we keep our hands and body safe when we're feeling big emotions?
26. What are some things you can do to calm your body when you're mad or excited?
27. What does it mean to use your words when you have a problem?
28. What can you do if you feel left out?
29. What are some ways to be a kind and helpful classmate?



Gr. K-1 SEL Questions



Gr. 2-3 SEL Questions

1. What is a Fixed Mindset vs a Growth mindset?
 2. What are "I statements" and why are they good to use during a conflict.
 3. What is worry, anxiety, and stress and how can we calm ourselves if we are feeling one of these? Brainstorm self-calming strategies.
 4. What are your roles and Responsibilities? What does responsibility mean?
 5. What are Big vs. Small problems? how can we tell the difference between the two?
 6. How do we show respect to others?
 7. What are the Zones of Regulation, and what zone are you in right now?
 8. How can we be bucket fillers in our classroom? What is the Bucket filling idea?
 9. What are some things that make you special or unique? What do you enjoy or what are you good at?
 10. What is self-confidence? What helps you feel confident? Do you know someone who is confident?
 11. What are some clues that tell you you're starting to feel upset, angry, or anxious?
 12. What can you do to calm your body and mind when you feel strong emotions?
 13. How does your body feel when you're nervous, angry, or excited?
 14. What helps you focus when it's hard to pay attention?
 15. How can you tell how someone else is feeling?
 16. What does it mean to be a good listener?
 17. How can you show someone that you understand how they feel?
 18. How do you make others feel welcome and included?
 19. What makes a good friend?
 20. What can you do if you and a friend disagree?
 21. How do you ask someone to play in a kind and respectful way?
 22. What are some things you can do to help someone who's having a hard day?
 23. What can we learn from making mistakes?
 24. How do you make a good choice when something is hard or confusing?
 25. Why is it important to stop and think before we act?
 26. What can you do to fix a problem if you hurt someone's feelings?
 27. Why is it important to take care of your feelings and your mind?
 28. Who are the safe and trusted adults you can talk to when you're feeling upset?
 29. What can you do to take care of your mental health, just as you care for your body?
 30. Why is it okay to talk about your feelings, even when they're big or uncomfortable?
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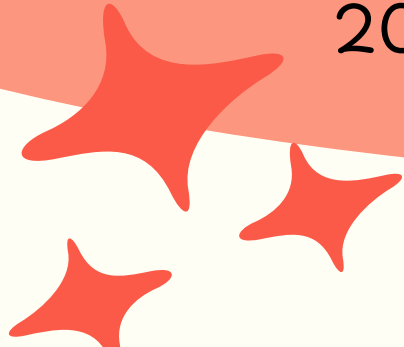
1. What does it mean to be a leader, and how can you show leadership in your classroom or with friends?
2. How do you handle it when someone tries to pressure you to do something you know isn't right?
3. What are values? What helps you stay true to your values, even when others around you are making different choices?
4. How do you manage your time when you have schoolwork, activities, and other responsibilities?
5. What helps you stay organized and remember what you need to do?
6. What do you do when you feel distracted or unmotivated?
7. How do you take responsibility when you've made a mistake or hurt someone's feelings?
8. What does being accountable mean to you, and how do you show it in your actions?
9. What are some respectful ways to speak up for yourself or someone else?
10. What can you do if you feel left out or notice someone else being excluded?
11. What does it mean to be a positive role model in your school?
12. How do you support a friend who is going through a tough time?
13. What helps you make thoughtful decisions when you're upset or confused?
14. How can you recognize when you're just reacting emotionally vs. thinking things through?
15. When is a good time to walk away from a conflict, and when is it better to try solving it?
16. What strategies help you manage stress or pressure during busy or overwhelming times?
17. How do you know when it's time to ask for help, and who can you go to?
18. What does healthy self-talk sound like, and how can it help in hard situations?
19. What can you do to make your classroom or school a more inclusive place for everyone?
20. How do you practice fairness, even when things don't go your way?

Gr. 4-5 SEL Questions





Gr. SEL 6-7 Questions

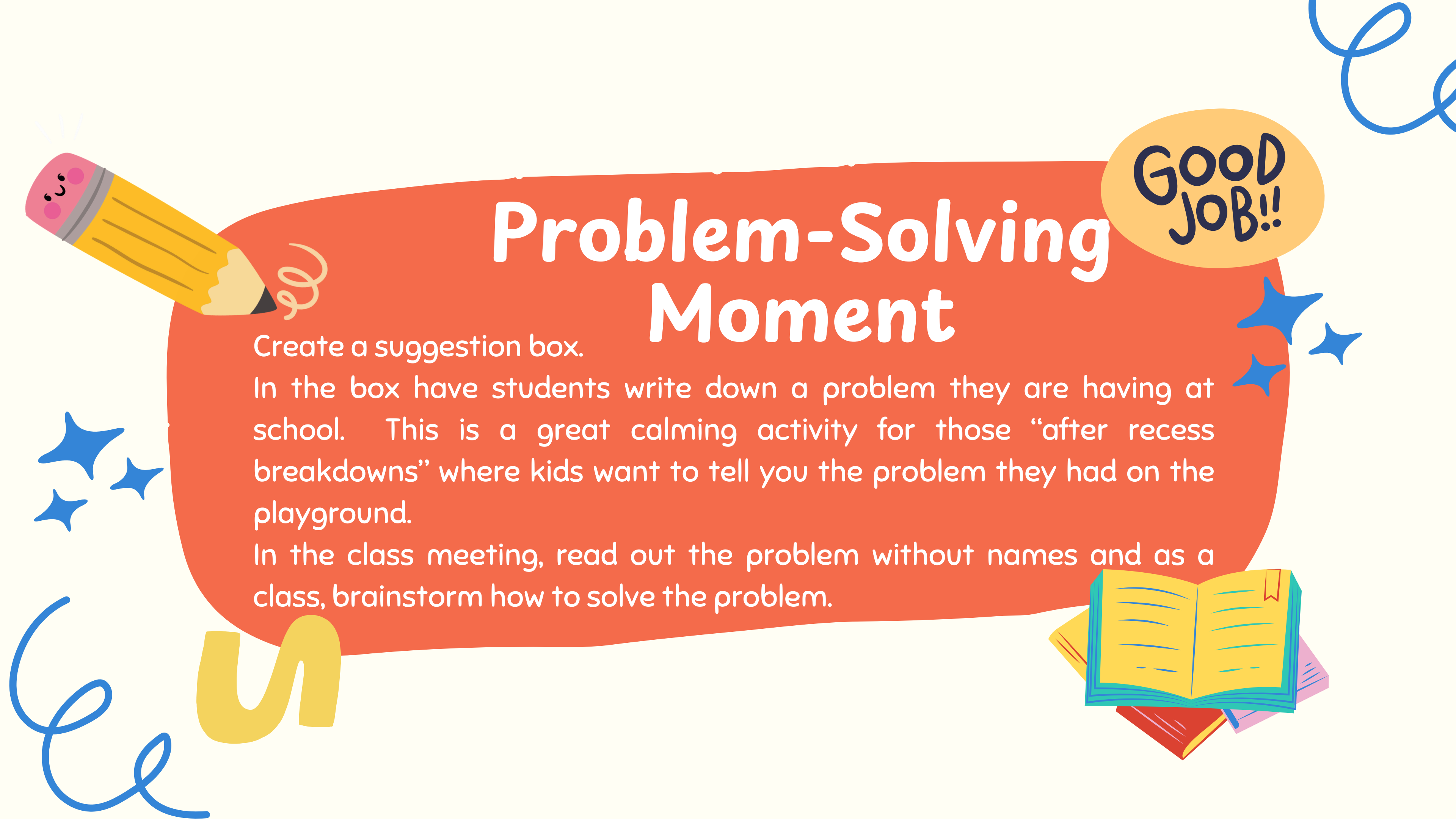
1. What influences your choices when you're with your friends?
 2. How can you tell when you're being pressured to do something you're not comfortable with?
 3. What are some ways to say "no" respectfully but firmly?
 4. What does making a safe or smart choice mean to you?
 5. How do you decide if something is a good risk or a harmful one?
 6. What helps you stay true to your values even when it's hard?
 7. How do you know when a friendship is healthy and respectful?
 8. What can you do if a friend is making unsafe or unkind choices?
 9. How can you be a leader or role model in your peer group or school?
 10. How do you manage strong emotions (like anger, jealousy, embarrassment) in a way that helps you feel proud afterward?
 11. What are some ways to manage stress from school, home, or social situations?
 12. How do you take care of your mental well-being when life gets busy or overwhelming?
 13. How do you know when to ask for help, and who can you turn to?
 14. What does it mean to take accountability for your actions?
 15. How do you repair a relationship when you've made a mistake or hurt someone?
 16. What does a respectful disagreement look and sound like?
 17. How can you tell if a problem is small, medium, or big—and what's the best way to handle it?
 18. What role does social media play in your friendships and how you feel about yourself?
 19. What are some strategies you use to stay focused and motivated?
 20. What are your strengths, and how can you use them to help others?
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Class Goals

**Having a Group Plan can build a strong sense of community through working hard to meet a goal.
Examples of Group Goals:**



- **Have everyone meet an “On First Ask” goal.**
- **Everyone in the class contributes to a discussion, not just a few people.**
- **Set measurable goals in an academic subject for all students to meet.**
- **Implement strategies to encourage kindness.**
- **Set self-regulation goals (use of a self-reg tool).**
- **Have a goal about students working collaboratively.**



Problem-Solving Moment

Create a suggestion box.

In the box have students write down a problem they are having at school. This is a great calming activity for those “after recess breakdowns” where kids want to tell you the problem they had on the playground.

In the class meeting, read out the problem without names and as a class, brainstorm how to solve the problem.



Conflict Resolution



5 SECRETS FOR GETTING ALONG

1. Find Truths

Find some truth in what the other person is saying and tell them, "yeah, that part is true. I did do/say that."



2.

Empathy

Stand in Their Shoes

What is the other person feeling?
"I wonder if you are feeling _____."

What are they thinking?
"You probably think I _____."

3.

Ask Questions

Ask a question about the conflict if you have one.

"Can you tell me more about
how this was for you?"

4. "I feel" Statement

Tell the person, "I feel _____ about this conflict

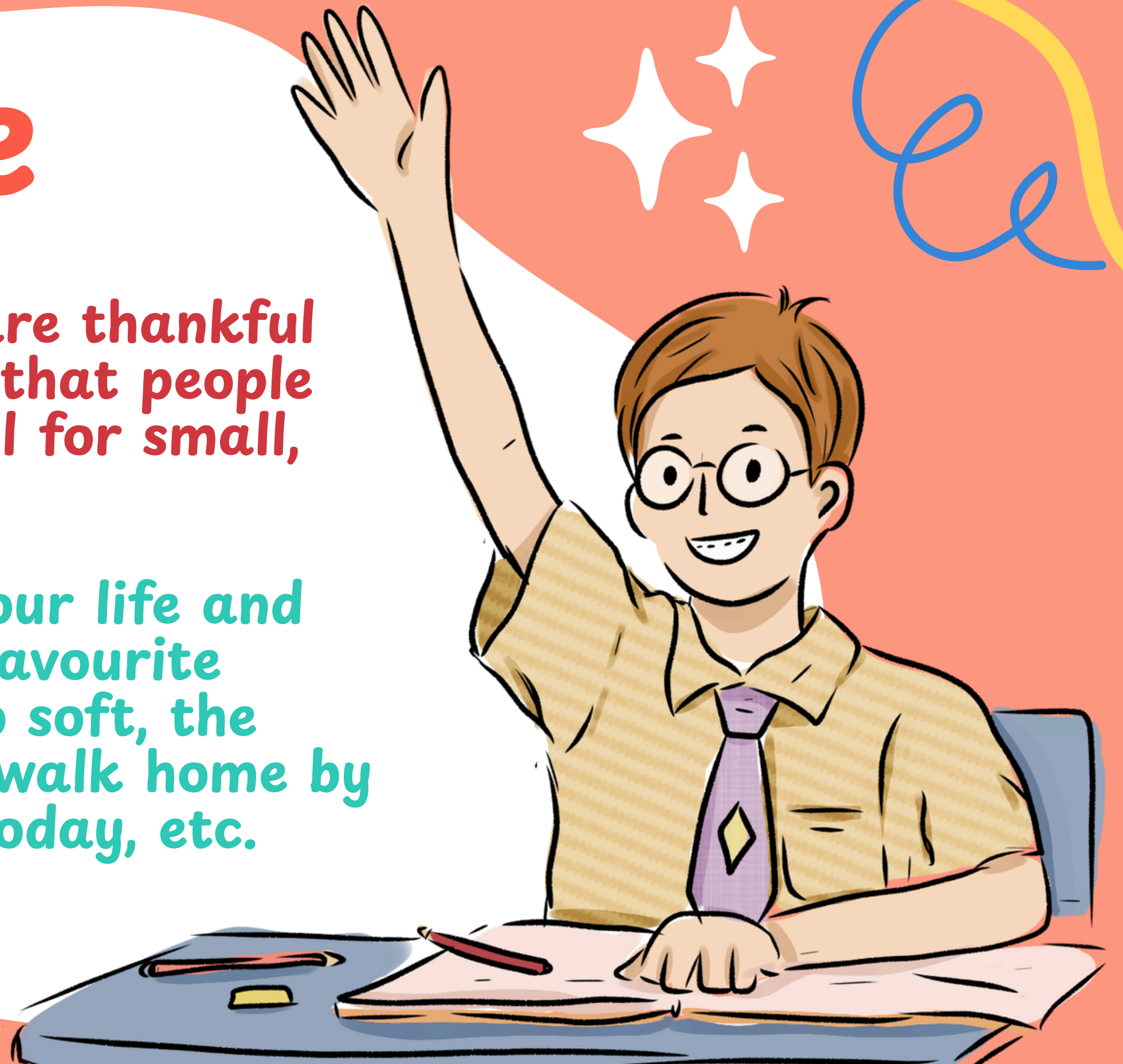
5. Compliment

What is something really positive about the other person? "I think you are someone I'd like to be friends because you are fun to be around."

Gratitude

Name one small thing you are thankful for today. Research shows that people who feel happy are thankful for small, simple things every day.

For example, look around your life and see the little things - your favourite pencil, this t-shirt that is so soft, the candy in my lunch, I get to walk home by myself, I understood math today, etc.



Summary and Recap

Class meetings are an easy way to address SEL needs in your classroom. These meetings help with the safety and sense of belonging for your students. You can use these weekly meetings to address concerns and connect with the class, making it a well-functioning team.



Thank
You

