

‘If you are happy and you know it’ - Empathy

EXPLANATION:

Learning how to read and connect facial expressions with emotions is an important social and emotional skill developed in the early years. Understanding how people feel also contributes to the capacity to empathise. The song ‘If you are happy and you know it’ provides children opportunities to recognise and role play emotions.



YEAR LEVELS: Prior to school

STUDENT GROUPING: Whole session activity

ACTIVITY LENGTH: 20mins approx.

LINK TO CURRICULUM:

Early Years Learning Framework:

Learning Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity

- 1.2 Children develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and sense of agency
- 1.4 Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect.

Learning Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world

- 2.1 Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation
- 2.3 Children become aware of fairness

Learning Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing

- 3.1 Children become strong in their social and emotional wellbeing.

Learning Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators

- 5.1 Children interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes.

SCOPE OF TASK

The song 'If you are happy and you know it' is an age-old favourite amongst young children and perfect for exploring emotions. Intentional lessons investigating emotions do not have to be exhaustive and can just be fun!

1. Conduct a whole-group discussion about emotions and feelings. Introduce the emotion cards (attached below or use your own). Show the cards to the children and ask if they know how the person in the picture might be feeling. Common words are – happy, sad and angry. Depending on the level, prior knowledge and context of the group, many other feelings/emotions can be explored and included in the song.
2. If children have a broad understanding and can label emotions, proceed to singing the song. Start with the emotion of happy. In the song it says 'if you are happy and you know it clap your hands'. Sing this version of the song first but also ask children to suggest other actions that they can use to demonstrate 'happy' (e.g. wave your hands, say 'hooray').
3. Ask children about other emotions that they can sing and role play in the song (see examples in the lyrics of the song). Ask children to describe facial features and physical actions that match the emotion. If the actions that children suggest aligns with the emotion this will assist in ascertaining their understanding of different emotions.

Leave the emotion cards in an accessible place so that children can play with the cards during the day – also continue to sing the song and add in more emotions as children become familiar with labelling and understanding feelings.

RESOURCES

- Emotions cards below

If You're Happy and You Know It Clap Your Hands Lyrics

If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands (clap clap)

If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands (clap clap)

If you're happy and you know it, then your face will surely show it

If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands. (clap clap)

Other emotions:

1. If you're sad and you know it say "boo hoo"...
2. If you're angry and you know it stomp your feet...
3. If you're scared and you know it say "oh no"...
4. If you're tired/sleepy and you know it have a yawn...
5. If you're surprised and you know it say "oh my"...

