

EMOTION WHEEL + MATCHING CARDS

A choice-based printable for recognizing feelings, body signals, and situations.

AGES 5+

10-20 MIN

PRINT + CUT

ADULT SUPPORT

HOW TO USE IT

- 1 Print the wheel and cards. An adult handles cutting and sets up a paperclip-and-pencil spinner, clothespin, or pointing method.
- 2 Take turns choosing an emotion. Say the word, point, sign, draw, or pass. Participation should stay optional.
- 3 Share a time you felt something similar - or invent a character who might feel it. No one has to disclose a personal experience.
- 4 Match the emotion to possible body signals and situations. Talk about how the same feeling can look different from person to person.

WHY IT HELPS

The activity builds emotion vocabulary and encourages curiosity about body signals without labeling one expression as the only correct response.

KEEP IT SUPPORTIVE

Avoid asking a child to perform a facial expression, make eye contact, or explain a private experience. Offer pass, not sure, and another word as valid choices.

SUPPORT + SAFETY

Adult supervision is required for scissors, paperclips, and other small pieces. This educational activity is not a diagnostic or therapeutic assessment.

WHEEL OF EMOTIONS

Use the wheel as a menu of words - not a test with one correct answer.



A feeling can fit more than one section - or none of them. Point, describe, draw, use your own word, or choose not sure yet.

EMOTION MATCHING CARDS

Match, discuss, or use each card as a conversation prompt.

JOYFUL**MIGHT LOOK OR FEEL LIKE**

Smiling, movement, quiet contentment, or increased energy.

A POSSIBLE SITUATION

Being included, finishing something, receiving good news, or enjoying a favorite interest.

SAD**MIGHT LOOK OR FEEL LIKE**

Tears, quietness, low energy, needing closeness, or wanting space.

A POSSIBLE SITUATION

Missing someone, experiencing change, losing something, or feeling left out.

FRUSTRATED**MIGHT LOOK OR FEEL LIKE**

Tight muscles, a faster voice, repeated attempts, shutting down, or needing a break.

A POSSIBLE SITUATION

A task feels difficult, communication is not working, or something seems unfair.

Bodies communicate differently. These are examples, not rules. Ask, notice, and stay curious rather than assuming what someone feels.

EMOTION MATCHING CARDS

Match, discuss, or use each card as a conversation prompt.

CALM

MIGHT LOOK OR FEEL LIKE

Steady breathing, relaxed muscles, focused attention, movement, or comfortable quiet.

A POSSIBLE SITUATION

Being in a predictable space, using a preferred tool, or spending time with a trusted person.

EXCITED

MIGHT LOOK OR FEEL LIKE

Faster speech, movement, smiling, hand motions, quiet anticipation, or repeated questions.

A POSSIBLE SITUATION

A surprise, special interest, upcoming activity, achievement, or welcome change.

SCARED

MIGHT LOOK OR FEEL LIKE

A quick heartbeat, freezing, hiding, seeking reassurance, pacing, or wanting distance.

A POSSIBLE SITUATION

A loud noise, unfamiliar place, uncertainty, separation, or an unexpected change.

Bodies communicate differently. These are examples, not rules. Ask, notice, and stay curious rather than assuming what someone feels.