

# SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

## SOCIAL SKILLS ACTIVITY

SOCIAL SKILL: BEING OPTIMISTIC

CASEL COMPETENCY: SELF-AWARENESS

### ACTIVITY INFORMATION

**Activity:** Optimistic Poetry

**Grade Levels:** 3-6

**Prep Time:** 0-5 min

**Activity Time:** <30 min

### MATERIALS AND ADVANCED PREPARATION

**Materials:** Dictionaries, thesaurus, pens, pencils, paper, and examples of various types of poems

**Preparation:** None needed.

### ACTIVITY

Review various forms of poetry with your students. Make certain that students understand that poetry does not need to rhyme. It may be easiest to begin with a structure type of poem like Haiku. A Haiku is a poem that has 3 lines. The first line has 5 syllables, the second line has 7 syllables, and line 3 has 5 syllables. It also uses a nature metaphor (although you may wish to drop this requirement).

Optimism Haiku

A face with a smile,  
A full heart, overflowing  
Imperfection shines.

An acrostic may also be a great place to start with children that are a little reluctant to write.

O is for the optimism I felt when I learned to ride my bike.

P is for the patience it took to know that things would be alright.

T is for the time it takes to take pride in what I do well... and so forth until the word OPTIMISM is completed.

When students are working on their drafts, encourage them to use a thesaurus to use more interesting words for emotions. Happy could be replaced with gleeful and so forth. Entice students to discover some interesting words and make a point of adding the new words to a creative writing word wall. Consider making a list of words that cannot be used (everyday boring words like happy) and as a class look up alternative words using the thesaurus. Encourage peer review and peer editing. Ensure that the class environment is safe for student sharing. Students will complete their poems in good copy. Consider posting them on a class web page, or in a classroom newsletter.