

Themes and Skills Overview

Use this tool during the school year for reference. The first month's theme and skills aren't aligned with a curriculum unit, but they show how the program supports school rules and positive school climate policies, and they can help you set behavioral expectations and norms for the new school year.

Monthly Theme	Week 1 Skill	Week 2 Skill	Week 3 Skill	Week 4 Skill
Month 1: Setting the Stage (optional, no unit alignment)	Welcome	Being Safe	Being Respectful	Being Responsible
Month 2: Growth Mindset & Goal-Setting	Mistakes Are Okay	Kind Words	Practice & Keep Trying	Set a Goal
Month 3: Emotion Management	Naming Emotions	Same & Different Feelings	Purpose of Emotions	Managing Emotions
Month 4: Empathy & Kindness	Kindness	Empathy	Being a Good Friend	Point of View
Month 5: Problem-Solving	S—Say the Problem	T—Think of Solutions	E—Explore the Outcomes	P—Pick a Solution
Month 6: Ways to Feel Calm	Slow Breathing	Slow Counting	Thinking Helpful Thoughts	Taking a Break

See next page for the actual morning announcements you'll be using.

Month 1: Setting the Stage

Week 1: Welcome

Here at our elementary school, we want everyone to feel welcome and that they belong. We know we're welcome when people smile at us and greet us with friendly words. We know we belong when we're included and invited to play at recess. We know we belong when we notice the ways we're all the same and accept the ways we're different. This week, take time to greet others with a smile and invite them to play.

Week 2: Being Safe

One rule we have at our school is "Be safe" (substitute your school's safety rule here). Safe actions keep everyone's bodies from being hurt. When we act in safe ways, we keep our hands to ourselves and don't use them to touch others in hurtful ways. When we use safe words, we make sure nobody's feelings are hurt. Safe words are kind and respectful. This week, think about how you can act and speak in safe ways in the classroom, hallway, lunchroom, and out at recess.

Week 3: Being Respectful

One rule we have here at our school is "Be respectful" (substitute your school's respect rule here). Being respectful helps everyone feel welcome and safe. When we act respectfully, we listen carefully to each other, help each other, and try to understand how someone else feels. When we speak respectfully, we use friendly words and say please and thank you. We don't call other people names. This week, think about how you can act and speak in respectful ways in the classroom, hallways, lunchroom, and out at recess.

Week 4: Being Responsible

One rule we have here at our school is "Be responsible" (substitute your school's responsibility rule here). Being responsible helps make our school a place where everyone can learn. When we're responsible, we can be trusted to do the right thing. We help others. We clean up our messes. We admit when we make mistakes or do the wrong thing. We focus on our schoolwork. This week, think about how you can be responsible and do the right thing in class, in the lunchroom, and out at recess.

Month 2: Growth Mindset & Goal-Setting

Week 1: Mistakes Are Okay

Here at our elementary school we want everyone to get better at all the things they enjoy. While that's happening, we're all going to make mistakes, and that's okay. Mistakes are a normal part of life! In fact, mistakes can be good because they can help us learn and grow. Making mistakes can help us be more creative and think of new ways of doing things. This week when you make a mistake, big or small, remember that it's okay. You can always try again, make a small change, or even ask for help!

Week 2: Kind Words

Here at our school and beyond, you're going to make mistakes. But remember, that's normal and okay. One of the best ways to remind yourself that mistakes are okay is to say kind words to yourself and others. For example, "It's okay," "I can do it," and "You're doing great!" are all kind words you can say. These words can have a big impact on you and others who are making mistakes while learning something new. Next time you see someone learning something new, take the time to offer them some kind words. And when you make a mistake, remember—kind words are for you too!

Week 3: Practice & Keep Trying

At our school, we want everyone to get better at the things they enjoy and that are important to them. When you're learning something and want to get good at it, it's important to practice and keep trying! Practicing helps us to get better at things we care about by doing them over and over again. It's important to keep trying even when you make mistakes. If you practice and keep trying, you can learn from your mistakes and improve. Don't give up and you'll eventually learn and get better at the things you care about.

Week 4: Set a Goal

It's important to set goals when you're learning and getting better at the things that matter to you. Goals help you focus. When you set goals, make sure they're specific and challenging, but also doable. Having a specific goal helps you measure your progress and know when you've reached it. When the goals you set are challenging but you're still able to do them, you can see that you're growing and making progress. Also, make sure your goals are about things you're interested in so you can stay motivated. If you keep working towards your goals, you'll see improvement before you know it!

Month 3: Emotion Management

Week 1: Naming Emotions

Here at our school, we work to create a culture where we care about each other. One of the best ways to do that is to notice and name the emotions others are feeling. Everyone feels happy and sad and lots of other emotions, and that's totally normal! We can't ever know exactly how someone else feels, but we can get a good idea if we pay attention to what's going on and look at their face and what they're doing. For example, if we see someone smiling, we can guess that they're probably feeling happy or excited. So, for the rest of this week try to notice what emotions others are feeling!

Week 2: Same & Different Feelings

We all want to have friends here at our school. But people can have similar or different feelings about the same situation. For example, I might feel scared to climb up high, and my friend might feel excited. Learning to respect other people's feelings can help us make and keep friends! This week, notice other people's feelings and whether they're the same or different from yours.

Week 3: Purpose of Emotions

After taking the time to notice and name our emotions, we can start to think about what information our emotions tell us and those around us. Feeling scared or angry can tell us something is wrong. With that information, we can then think about why we might be feeling that way and look for ways to manage our emotions. Whenever you tune into your emotions, remember to ask yourself what each emotion is trying to tell you.

Week 4: Managing Emotions

When you notice that you're feeling any strong emotion, such as feeling too excited or nervous, you can look for ways to feel calm. It's okay to have strong emotions, and when you're ready to feel calm you can choose a way to manage them that works for you! You can take a break in a quiet place, count slowly, or practice slow breathing. You can even do all three! Thinking helpful thoughts about something that makes you happy is also a great strategy. This week, pay attention to times you're feeling a strong emotion and try one—or more—of these ways to feel calm!

Month 4: Empathy & Kindness

Week 1: Kindness

A great way to get along with others, in our school and beyond, is by doing kind acts. Kind acts are things we can do or say to help people feel good. It can be something as simple as saying "Thank you for being my friend" or holding the door for the next person walking behind you. These small, but meaningful, kind acts can really make a difference in people's lives. Not only can they help others feel good, but they can also make you feel happy too! So do kind acts whenever you can.

Week 2: Empathy

Getting along with others helps make our school a happier place. To get along with others, we need to have empathy for each other. Empathy is feeling or understanding what someone else is feeling. This week, be a feeling detective! Try to notice how your classmates are feeling throughout the week. Look at what's going on around them and watch their faces and bodies for clues!

Week 3: Being a Good Friend

Everyone likes to have fun with their friends! But even though having fun together is a great way to start a friendship, it's important to do other things to build and keep your friendships. Having empathy and doing kind acts can show your friends you care about them and want to spend time with them. If you have empathy when your friend feels sad, you can do a kind act like asking if they want a hug. This week, do your best to think about how you can be a good friend!

Week 4: Point of View

Just like people can feel differently about the same thing, they can also think about things in different ways. By seeing things from someone else's point of view, we can better understand others, find better outcomes to our problems, and even change our own thinking. All of these can help us make our friendships stronger! Be sure to keep an open mind, listen to your friends, and ask questions to try and see different points of view. Understanding a friend's point of view can make a big difference in your friendship!

Month 5: Problem-Solving

Week 1: S—Say the Problem

Have you ever had a disagreement with a friend about which game to play? Problems like this happen to everyone! When you want to solve a problem remember the STEP process: S-T-E-P. The S stands for "Say the problem." You should consider each person's point of view when saying the problem. That way you can be sure to say the problem in a way that's respectful of everyone involved. When problems with friends come up, try to be a good listener so you can understand their point of view and clearly state the problem that needs to be solved.

Week 2: T—Think of Solutions

Some of you have been learning how to be better problem-solvers using the STEP process: S-T-E-P. S is "Say the problem." Once you've done that, the next step is "T: Think of solutions." It's important to make sure all your solutions are safe and respectful. You can also consider when and where to work on a problem, and who should be involved. You can come up with your own solutions and ask others for their help. Be creative! If you have a problem this week, try to think of 3 solutions that are safe and respectful.

Week 3: E—Explore the Outcomes

When it comes to problem-solving, the STEP process is a great way to go. Just remember S-T-E-P. After you say the problem and think of solutions, it's time for "E: Explore the outcomes." This means thinking about what might happen. Any solution may have different outcomes for different people. When exploring the outcomes, think about everyone's point of view, consider their wants and needs, and try to understand how they would feel. This week, if you have a problem think about what might happen for all of the solutions you come up with.

Week 4: P—Pick a Solution

S-T-E-P: The last part of the STEP problem-solving process is "P: Pick a solution." To help pick a good solution you can ask yourself a few questions: Is the solution safe? Is it respectful? Could it work for everyone involved in the problem? Once you've thought about and talked through these questions with everyone who's involved, you're ready to pick a solution. Remember, if the first solution doesn't work out like you thought, it's okay! You can always pick another one and try again. Now that you have all the steps to being a better problem-solver, try putting them into practice whenever you have a problem!

Month 6: Ways to Feel Calm

Week 1: Slow Breathing

Everyone, including everyone at our school, has strong feelings now and then. Like when you're so happy that you can't sit still, or you're really nervous before a test. Sometimes these strong feelings can take over and make it hard to think. That's totally normal! When you have a strong feeling and you're ready to help yourself feel calm, one thing you can try is slow breathing. Just breathe in slowly through your nose and then breathe out slowly through your mouth. You can do it once, or a few times—whatever you need to start feeling calm. This week, if a strong feeling has you wanting to feel calm, try slow breathing.

Week 2: Slow Counting

Sometimes when we want to feel calm, we can do slow breathing. But another way to feel calm is to take a minute and count slowly. Slow counting is a great way to feel calm when you're having strong feelings, like when you're feeling really frustrated and want to feel calm so you can think clearly. You can count slowly—in your head or quietly out loud—from 1 to 10. You can even try tapping your fingers or clapping quietly as you say each number. Remember, everyone has strong feelings that can make it hard to think. Slow counting is a great way to help yourself feel calm whenever that happens.

Week 3: Thinking Helpful Thoughts

We've been talking about ways we can feel calm at our school. Whenever you experience a strong emotion and want to feel calm, slow breathing and slow counting can help. And once you've started to feel calm, there's something else you can do: think helpful thoughts! You can think of things that make you smile, like your pet, a place where you feel happy, or even a happy memory. Remember, the next time you're feeling disappointed, worried, or upset, thinking helpful thoughts can help you start to feel better.

Week 4: Taking a Break

We know several ways to feel calm when we experience strong emotions. We have slow breathing, slow counting, and even thinking helpful thoughts. Another way to help yourself feel calm is by taking a break. At school, you can take a break by closing your eyes and taking slow breaths or practicing slow counting. Taking a break can look different depending on where you are. So if you're at home, taking a break might mean listening to music or spending time with your pet. But wherever you are, whenever you're feeling a strong emotion and decide you're ready to feel calm, you can use any of these strategies to help!