



Content developed by

from Nemours

Learning Goals

- Paying attention to problems can help you work them out.
- If we notice *only* problems, it can hurt our mood.
- Paying extra attention to good things helps us feel good and do well.

Print Out Before Class

Bring copies for everyone:

- *Kyle's Day* handout
- *Notice What's Good* handout
- *Thank You Note* handout
- *Draw One Good Thing* handout
- *Tips From Michael Phelps* handout

Have a copy for yourself:

- *Kyle's Day* handout

Other Materials

- Pencils, pens, or markers for students

Lesson 2: Find Three Good Things

TEACHER NOTE

Problems grab our full attention, while we take good things for granted. But if we focus TOO much on problems, we start to see them everywhere we look. This can make us feel grumpy and unhappy. In this lesson, we'll teach kids to pay extra attention to good things in their day.

QUICK TIPS

- *It's normal to pay more attention to problems — they grab our attention so we can take care of them.*
- *But seeing ONLY what's wrong can lead to negative thinking. When that happens, students may become self-critical, discouraged, and unhappy. This can lead to depression.*
- *Paying extra attention to things that go well builds positive emotions and resilience.*

START THE DISCUSSION

1. How's your day going?

Instructor: All italicized text is intended as notes to teachers. All other text may be read out loud to your class.

Give the handout Kyle's Day and a marker or pen to each student. Have a copy of the handout for yourself.

Today we're going to talk about things that happen in our day.

I'm going to read what's on the handout. It tells about Kyle's day. You can read along, or just listen as I read it to you.

Read the handout.

Raise your hand if you've ever had a day like this.

Show of hands.

Yes, we all have!



Take It Home!

At the end of the lesson, ask kids to pay extra attention to good things. Invite them to tell a parent what they learned.

Today, kids will take home two handouts: *A Thank You Note* and *Draw One Good Thing*. Two others, *Kyle's Story* and *Tips From Michael Phelps*, will remind them of what they are learning.

Resources

KidsHealth:

- The Power of Positive Emotions
- 3 Ways to Increase Positive Emotions
- Gratitude
- Optimism

(Lesson 2: [Find Three Good Things](#), continued)

By the time Kyle gets home, does he think he had a good day or a bad day? What does he tell his mom about — a good part of his day or a problem?

Let them answer.

Right, Kyle said his day was “not good”! He told his mom all about what went wrong. I can understand that. I’m glad he told his mom how he felt and why.

But I hope he will also tell his mom about what went well for him today. Did anybody notice that there were plenty of good things about Kyle’s day too?

Let’s look again Kyle’s story. As you read it to yourself this time, look for the good things that happened in his day. Underline them.

Let them work on this — then ask:

Tell me some of the good things you spotted in Kyle’s day?

Let them answer.

Yes, there were lots more good things than problems. If Kyle had thought about those things too, he might have said he had a pretty good day — except for one problem. And Kyle solved the problem. That’s another good thing!

2. Good things happen every day.

But sometimes we hardly notice the good things. We pay much more attention to things that go wrong.

Problems have a way of grabbing our full attention. When something’s wrong, you want to give it the attention it needs so you can work it out.

But if we pay TOO MUCH attention to problems, without noticing the good, we start to see problems everywhere we look. This isn’t good for us. It can:

- make us complain a lot
- put us in a bad mood
- take away from our happiness



(Lesson 2: [Find Three Good Things](#), continued)

We can make sure this doesn't happen. If we pay extra attention to good things, we can balance out the attention we give to problems. An easy way to do this is to find at least three good things about each day.

3. Let's try it.

Noticing good things is healthy for us. If we make a plan to notice good things every day, we can build it into a habit.

Think back over today. Can you think of a good thing that was part of your day so far?

A good thing can be anything good that happened, something you're happy about, or something that went well for you. It can be something fun, or nice. Maybe someone was kind, or helpful, or friendly. It can be anything you feel good about.

Can everybody think of one good thing?

Now, think back to that good part of your day as if it's happening right now. Think back to how you felt in that good moment.

Can you feel a little of that good feeling again, just by thinking about it? When we think back to good things, we have more good feelings.

Noticing good things helps us be happier. It makes us better at solving problems when they do happen. Noticing good things helps us get through tough times. It helps us do our best at things we try.

When we start to *really* notice the good things, we see more of them everywhere. We start to notice more of the good things about people in our lives. And we start to notice more good things about ourselves too.

4. What have we learned?

- When problems happen, they grab our attention. That happens because we need to pay attention to problems so we can solve them.
- If we focus TOO MUCH on problems, we start to see ONLY what's wrong. This can make us grumpy, sad, or unhappy.
- We can look for good things to balance out the attention we need to give to problems.
- Noticing good things boosts our happiness and makes us better problem-solvers.



(Lesson 2: [Find Three Good Things](#), continued)

5. Take the next step.

Give students the additional handouts: Notice What's Good, Thank You Note, and Tips From Michael Phelps. Kids might also like to Draw One Good Thing.

The next step is to pay extra attention to good things that happen. I'm giving you some handouts to take home. If you want, you can show the handouts to your mom, dad, or a grandparent. Teach them what we learned.

The handouts will remind you of what we learned today, and help you notice good things in your life.

Use the *Thank You Note* to tell someone you're glad to have them your life.

Use the *Draw One Good Thing* page to make a picture that shows something good that happened and how you felt.

Michael Phelps believes in noticing the good things in life. The last handout has advice from Michael to help you feel strong and confident.