

Respect

This week we will explore what it means to respect ourselves and discuss the importance of self-respect in relation to respecting others.

Begin the unit with the whole class lesson and then aim to complete at least two of the mini lessons with your students throughout the week. Each mini lesson is designed to present elements of the main lesson in new and engaging ways.

Main Lesson

Whole Class Lesson
30 minutes



R.E.S.P.E.C.T. - Respecting Ourselves

This lesson introduces the terms respect and self-respect. Students practice self-respect by brainstorming at least five things they like about themselves and writing or drawing them out on a puzzle piece with their name on it. After students complete their piece, the whole group will put the puzzle together to demonstrate how each unique individual is a valuable piece of the larger group. (See page 2 for lesson details.)

Mini Lessons

For Small Groups
15 minutes



Affirmation Exercise

In small groups, discuss common insecurities that 6th graders might have about themselves and write affirmation sentences to combat each insecurity. After about 10 minutes of brainstorming and affirmation writing, return to the large group for whole class sharing and ask the groups to share some of the insecurities and affirmations they came up with.

For Partners
15 minutes



Partner Brainstorm

Partner up and brainstorm at least five things you can do each day to show respect for yourself. If time permits, return to the large group to share with the whole class.

For Individuals
15 minutes



Respecting Myself: Self-Respect Acrostic

Ask yourself, “How can I show myself respect each day?” Design an acrostic of the word RESPECT to help you remember these tips for self-respect. Use the brainstorm from partner activity to help. (Students will need paper and writing/drawing utensils to complete this activity. This activity could be completed with calming or inspiring music playing in the background.)

Technology-Focused
15 minutes



My Digital Footprint

Ask each student to assess his or her current online presence (social media - Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, etc. - or via text and images [selfies!] they take) and evaluate what it says about him or her. Have them answer, “Does my online or digital activity show I respect myself?” Have them journal their answers.

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Lesson Timeframe

30 minutes

Required Materials

- Puzzle piece cut-outs; one for each person, including teachers. This will take some pre-planning. Use the template provided as a guide, or simply take a large piece of butcher paper and cut out random pieces (they do not need to look specifically like a traditional puzzle piece). Outlining each piece in black marker will make the pieces stand out when put together, but this is also optional.
- Markers, crayons, and/or colored pencils for decorating the puzzle pieces
- Tape for securing the pieces back together into a completed puzzle

Standards Map

This lesson aligns with CASEL Competencies, National Health Education Standards, International Society for Technology in Education Standards, when applicable, and Common Core State Standards. Please refer to the [Standards Map](#) for more information.

Lesson Objective

Students will:

- Define self-respect.
- Identify personal qualities they respect about themselves.
- Brainstorm ways to show self-respect in healthy ways.
- Evaluate how their digital profiles communicate a message of self-respect.

Teacher Connection/Self-Care

Welcome to the Respect Unit! As you guide your students through the lessons in this first week, remember that your students' ability to learn and demonstrate respect begins with you. How do you model respect for your students, for your colleagues, and, most importantly, for yourself? Students at this age can be skeptical about the power of respect, but active modeling can show them how being respectful can completely change attitudes, relationships, self-perception, and even culture. As you go into this week, focus specifically on how you show respect for yourself.

Do you believe that you are a good educator? Are you proud of your classroom culture? Do you value your health or are you pushing yourself too hard? Do you communicate your needs? Can you be calm in the midst of conflict? If you feel you could improve how you show respect for yourself, take some time this week to write down all the things you are doing well right now. What are some things about your classroom that students love? What are students doing well this week? That is a reflection of you! Need a nap or a long, brisk walk? Take one, even if it feels like you have no time. This week, work on improving how you see, care for, and respect yourself.



Share

5-7 minutes

For our first unit, we are talking about respect. Over the next four weeks, we'll do some activities that help us understand this term and all the ways that we can respect ourselves, others, and the larger community around us, as well as how we experience respect in our culture.

To start, let's "popcorn" a definition of respect. What words remind you of the concept of respect? Say them out loud and I will write down what I hear. (Pick a note-taker to help you write down the words if you want.)

Based on what we've shared, we could define respect as: *(Use generated ideas to formulate a definition.)* The RAK definition of Respect is this: Treating people, places, and things with kindness. Pretty easy, right? It should be, but sometimes it can be hard to show respect to ourselves and others. We will explore that throughout this entire unit. We start with respect because if we don't respect ourselves and others then it is very hard to engage in any other type of kindness. It's really important that we understand respect first!



Inspire

15 minutes

We are going to start this week by talking about self-respect, which is how we show kindness to ourselves. Why do you think it's important to be kind to yourself?

(Invite student response.)

Good! If we can't be kind to ourselves, we can't be truly kind to others.



Empower

15 minutes

To kick off our respect unit, we are going to create a self-respect puzzle. The goal is to realize that we are all unique individuals, yet we all fit together as one. If one of us is missing, then our puzzle isn't complete. It is important to remember that we all matter and to respect our own unique contributions to this entire group.

Each one of you will get a puzzle piece. Put your name in large letters on it and then write at least five things around your name that make you special and unique. Think of things that you like, that you do, that you believe, or that you are proud of about yourself. I want to see FIVE of these - or more! - written or drawn out in pictures around your name. You have 10 minutes to complete this task. With any extra time, feel free to decorate your puzzle piece. (Teachers, be sure to do a piece for yourselves!)

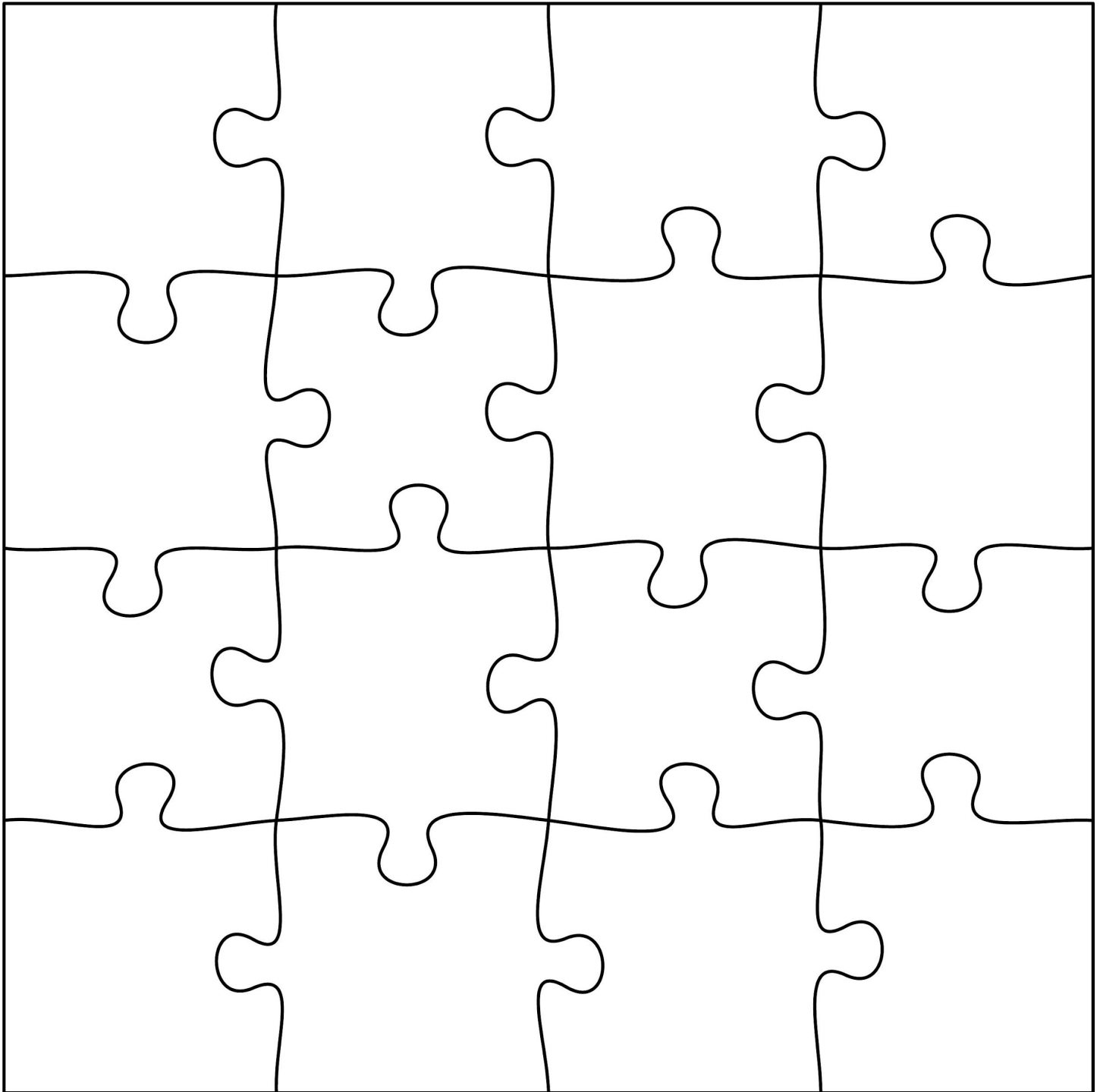
When we are done, we will put our puzzle together. (Ideally this will be done on the wall or bulletin board space and can serve as a decoration and reminder for respect throughout the unit.)



Reflect

5-7 minutes

Use this time to put the puzzle together if necessary. Have each student place his or her piece and work together as a group to create the full puzzle. With time remaining, read some of the personal attributes of the students, making connections between similar attributes and celebrating each student.



Respect

This week we will explore what it means to respect others and how showing respect outwardly can have a positive effect inwardly.

Begin the unit with the whole class lesson and then aim to complete at least two of the mini lessons with your students throughout the week. Each mini lesson is designed to present elements of the main lesson in new and engaging ways.

Main Lesson

Whole Class Lesson
30 minutes



R.E.S.P.E.C.T. - The Respect Effect

This lesson introduces students to the brain and body's physical response to respect, which is to be happier, more productive, more creative, and more collaborative. Students also learn the effect of disrespect on the body, which causes us to feel anxious, angry, sad, etc. Students brainstorm a "Top 10" list for how they will show respect to others in the classroom. (See *page 2 for lesson details.*)

Mini Lessons

For Small Groups
15 minutes



Showing Respect in Grade 6!

In small groups, discuss how 6th graders show respect for one another and how they do not. Write down five action items your group can do to improve the respect among all 6th grade students at school.

For Partners
15 minutes



What I Respect about YOU!

Partner up and have students write or share three things they respect about the other person.

For Individuals
15 minutes



Respecting Others: Intentional Respect

Ask yourself, "How can I show more respect to others?" Identify three people you interact with daily and at least one thing you can do to show more respect to that person. Try it immediately and journal about their reaction.

Technology-Focused
15 minutes



The Respect Emoji

If you could design an emoji that represents respect, what would it look like? Draw it out and share with the whole class at the end of the allotted drawing time.

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Lesson Timeframe

30 minutes

Required Materials

- Brain diagram that can be projected on a smartboard or printed (can roughly draw the diagram, too)
- Whiteboard and markers for brainstorming
- Poster paper and markers for transferring the Top 10 from the whiteboard to a poster
- Learn more about the Respect Effect (including some ideas for how to improve respect in groups) here:
<https://paulmeshanko.com/10-simple-things-you-can-do-and-not-do-to-practice-civility-respect-inclusion-at-work/>

Standards Map

This lesson aligns with CASEL Competencies, National Health Education Standards, International Society for Technology in Education Standards, when applicable, and Common Core State Standards. Please refer to the [Standards Map](#) for more information.

Lesson Objective

Students will:

- Evaluate the "Respect Effect" and how showing respect or being in a respectful environment has a positive personal effect.
- Brainstorm ways to show respect to others.

Teacher Connection/Self-Care

Respect in the classroom begins with you. Hopefully you have taken some time to work on your ability to first respect yourself. Students will have a hard time respecting themselves if they don't see self-respect modeled for them. Remember how strong and good and valuable you are! Own that! This week, also evaluate how well you respect others. This may seem like a "no brainer" to teachers, as we love our students and what we do! But, we all get tired, we all experience burn-out, and we all have students who challenge us. This is especially true as these middle school-aged kids start pushing some boundaries and experience some strong physical, mental, and emotional changes. In these times especially remember that everyone deserves respect even if it doesn't feel like they have earned it. This doesn't mean we forgo classroom management or discipline strategies but we can approach every situation with respect and kindness. Some things to consider this week: How do you listen to your students (and to your colleagues, for that matter)? Do you listen to *hear* or listen to *respond*? How is your patience tank? Pretty full or running on fumes? Do you have parents who make it hard to want to show respect to them or to their students? When you feel challenged, tired, frustrated, or even sad, and struggle to respond in a kind and respectful way, remember that you are OKAY. Things will be okay. You can reinsert a measure of respect in a variety of ways: use active listening strategies, take five deep breaths before responding to a situation, use I-statements rather than you-statements, lower your voice and take a gentle approach to a challenging situation, or, call in backup (if you have a PLC group or teacher-partner and need a breather, ask for help!). You can grow in your ability to show respect for others, and if you fail, acknowledge it, apologize, and move on. Tomorrow is a new day.

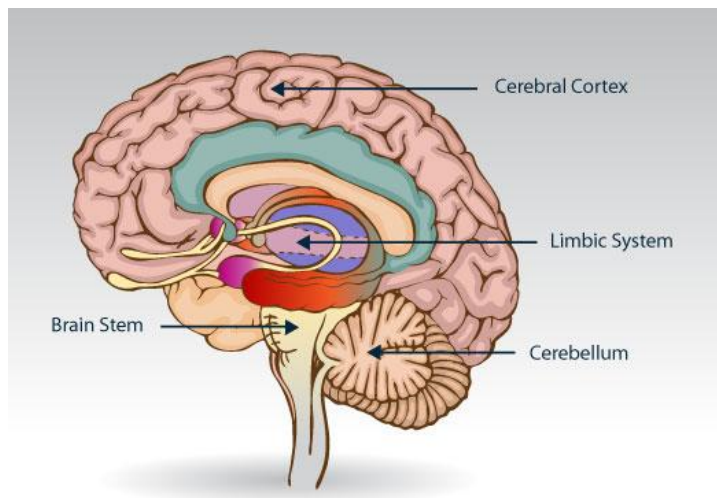


Share

5-7 minutes

Last week we talked about ways to show respect for ourselves. This week we are going to talk about how we can show respect for others and why this is going to be a very important part of our class this year. The reason why it is going to be important is because having an environment where everyone feels equally respected creates an environment that is happier, that is free from negative stress, and that helps us learn and interact better. How many of you would love to be in a place where people were happy, not stressed out, and learning and having fun? (Wait for student response.) Me too! I want to be in that place, too. So, today, we are going to talk a bit about the effects of showing respect to others can have on our own brains which translates to how we think and respond and interact.

To start, let's look at the brain: (Show the image below or another image of the brain that you have. Projecting on a smartboard is ideal, but a rudimentary drawing on the whiteboard or print outs would work, too.)



Source: <http://app.imcreator.com/static/FAAC356ED213474C9BBECA6FF5F06384/the-brain>

The Cerebral Cortex is known as the **thinking brain**. This is the part of our brains that help us make good choices; it helps us reason and rationalize. This is what makes us human. We can actually understand what is going on around us and make decisions and determinations about our situation.

The Limbic System is known as the **emotional brain**. This is the “fight, flight, or freeze” part of the brain. This is the part of the brain that *reacts* to stimuli vs. *responds* in a logical, rational way. The emotional brain is what triggers when we are scared, anxious, angry, or excited. The emotional brain is often in charge when we are faced with having to do something new or unfamiliar - or if we feel like someone is mad at us or not including us - or if something really exciting happens and we are running on adrenaline. In these situations, the emotional brain actually *takes over* the thinking brain. In fact, our emotional brain is in charge of our thinking *most* of the time.



Inspire

15 minutes

So, what does our brain's functionality have to do with respect? Well, let's talk about that. A researcher named Paul Meshanko has studied the brain and how it contributes to our need for respect (from ourselves and from others) and how we feel when we show respect to others.

Meshanko says that when we are shown disrespect (maybe someone ignores you or doesn't include you or is flat out rude to you), our thinking brain shuts down and our emotional brain fires up. We instantly feel angry, sad, defensive, or vengeful (as in, we want to get back at the person who is being disrespectful). When this happens, our bodies release a hormone called cortisol that keeps us in this state of heightened anxiety and awareness. What else do you think happens to our physical bodies (not just our brains) because of this extra cortisol in our systems? What happens to your body when you feel anxious or upset? (Invite student responses. Answers should include the following: my stomach hurts, my head hurts, I cry, I feel sick, I can't focus, I only think about the person and how he/she treated me, etc.)

And, Meshanko says it can take the body up to four hours to get rid of all that extra cortisol! So, when we feel disrespected, we are mentally and emotionally and physically at our worst for a long time! Who wants to feel like that?! Or, who wants to make someone else feel that way? Not me!



Empower

15 minutes

There are ways we can train our thinking brain to respond first (before our emotional brain), but today, we are going to talk more about how we can set up our classroom environment so that it is one of mutual respect so we aren't ever putting each other in this state of anxiety and discomfort. Meshanko says when people are in respectful environments, they are more productive, happier, better at working in teams, and more creative! This is called the Respect Effect. Now that is the type of classroom I want to be in!

So, we are going to take just a few minutes to brainstorm our Top 10 ways that we will show respect to others to increase the respect effect in this classroom. These can be really simple. In fact, I'll start: 1. We listen to everyone. (Invite students to call out their ideas. Begin each one with "We" to reinforce this is a group effort and group expectation.)



Reflect

5-7 minutes

Review the Top 10 and have the class read them out loud together. Transfer the list to a piece of poster paper and display in a prominent place in the room. If there's time and you have students who are artistic or need something to do, have those students create the poster.

Feeling Self-Portraits

This project will allow students to attribute emotion and feeling words to colors based on art and science. Use Plutchik's Color Wheel of Emotion and Color in Motion by Claudia Cortez to help explain these color/emotion associations. If a smartboard or computers are not available, invite students to explore these websites on their own and instead hand out a color wheel worksheet (image provided below). Students will use these color designations to create a self-portrait that is colored to reflect the various emotions the student experiences.

Respect Sub-Concept(s)

Self-care, Kindness

Project Timeframe

25-30 minutes

Required Materials

- Art paper
- Misc. art supplies

Teachers can learn more about Plutchik's Color Wheel of Emotions before starting this project at the following resources:

- [Plutchik's Wheel of Emotions: What is it and How to Use it in Counseling?](#)
- [Plutchik's Wheel of Emotions – 2017 Update](#)

Project Details:

We have been talking about different emotions and how our own emotional well-being and self-care is so important. We experience a lot of emotions and it's important to recognize that all our feelings are valid and give us information about ourselves. Today you are going to create a self-portrait showing an emotion and use color as a personal, symbolic expression of that emotion.

Show students the Color and Emotions wheel on a document camera or smart board, either a printed version or from the website listed above. Explain that artists use color to show emotions; the interactive video and color exercise by Cortez is a great way to further explain the colors and what they typically represent. If you have time and access, allow students time to explore that activity (must be on a device that is Flash enabled).

Ultimately, the students can use this color wheel and their new knowledge about color representations to choose colors for their self-portrait or they can be creative and use the colors in any way they choose.

Examples of these types of self-portraits can be found here:

<https://www.deepspacesparkle.com/emotion-portraits/>

Hand out paper, black markers, and watercolors. Allow time for students to create their self-portrait.

When we look at the self-portraits, they are all different and unique. Some of us used yellow, some used orange, some used a lot of green. I want you to show your portrait to the class and see if they can guess what emotion you were portraying. After we guess, then you can describe your portrait. Be sure to use respectful words that show caring towards yourself when you speak. Then have students present their portrait to the rest of the class one at a time.

Summary

Today you were able to communicate your feelings through the creation of a self-portrait. Communicating with others and understating our feelings allows us to better relate to one another and to respect one another. Kindness is often expressed through our acknowledgement of others or our own emotions.

Proposed Lesson Outcomes:

Students will:

- Explore the different meanings and emotional associations of each primary color.
- Apply the emotional significance of color to a self-portrait.
- Exhibit self-reflection in the art and presentation of the portrait.

Optional Extension Discussion Activity

To gauge understanding of the material, choose from either the evaluation or reflection questions as discussion, writing, or journal prompts. Consider providing additional time for deeper evaluation and reflection as needed.

Evaluation Questions

- What emotions or feelings are useful or tell us something about ourselves?
- Did everyone portray the same emotions?
- How do respect and self-care relate to describing your portrait?

Reflection Questions

- Why did you choose the emotion you did? Is that the emotion that best describes you?
- Did you choose to portray a strong emotion or a more subtle emotion? Why?
- Can you always tell how a person is feeling just by looking on the outside?



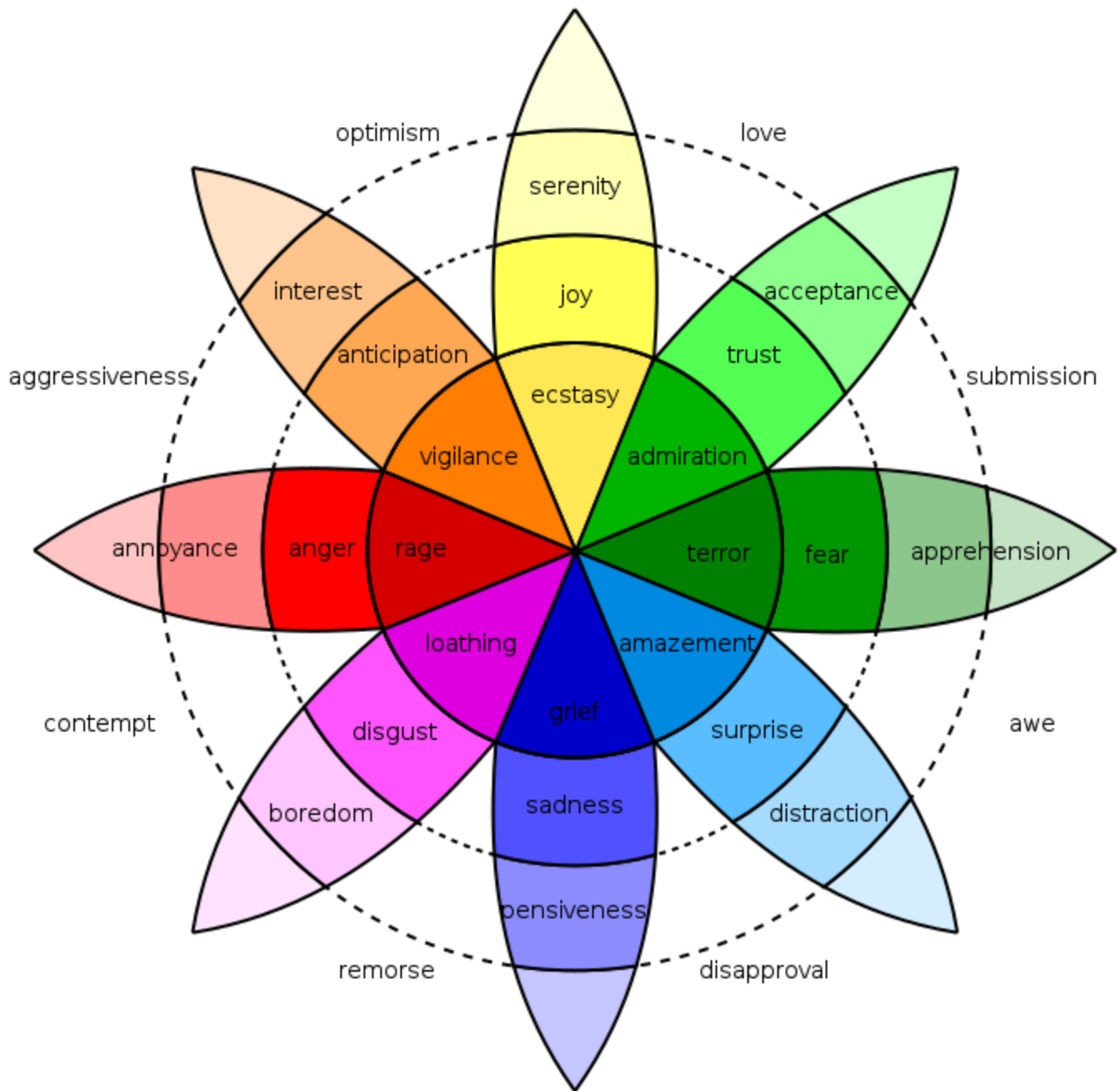
DESIGNATED BY CASEL
AS A RECOMMENDED
PROGRAM FOR SOCIAL
AND EMOTIONAL
LEARNING.

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) has been reviewing evidence-based SEL programs since 2003. Kindness in the Classroom® meets CASEL's SElect Program and is included in the CASEL Guide to Effective Social and Emotional Learning Programs.

Kindness in the Classroom® met or exceeded all of CASEL's criteria for high-quality SEL programming. Kindness in the Classroom® received CASEL's highest designation for high-quality SEL programming.

<https://casel.org/guide/kindness-in-the-classroom/>

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