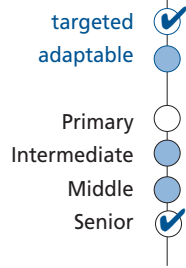


Paying attention to emotions when learning

identifying and responding to emotions that may arise when learning about historical experiences or events



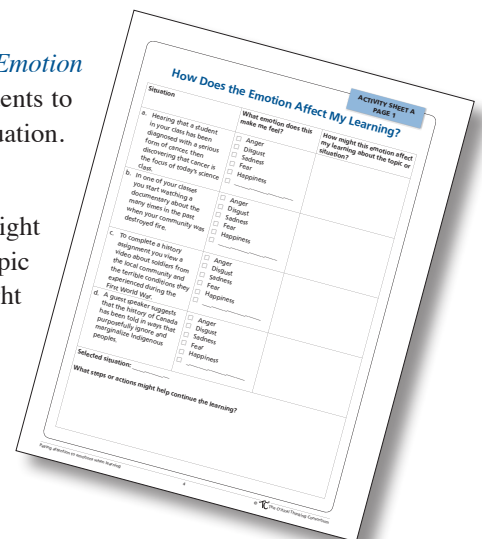
- Objectives:**
- develop the ability to identify emotions that may arise when learning about historical experiences or events
 - understand the effects that emotions can have on learning and thinking
 - use a strategy to address the emotions that may arise when learning about historical experiences or events

How can we thoughtfully respond to our emotions when learning about challenging experiences or events?

Use the following activities to develop the strategy

Introduce the strategy

- Organize students into small groups (2-3 students) and ask them to think of a learning situation, in or out of school, that caused them feel to a strong emotional reaction. Invite students to share their ideas with the class. As students share, explain that while there is no general agreement among psychologists and other experts about the exact number or types, most sources identify five main emotions: anger, disgust, fear, happiness, and sadness. If time permits, consider introducing each emotion by showing a clip from the movie *Inside Out*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C1CvTC1CH7Y>
- Invite students to suggest examples of school-related situations where each of the emotions might arise.
- Encourage students to share their examples with the class. As students share, explain that in addition to affecting our physical bodies and behavior, emotions can also impact our learning. For example, emotions prompt our bodies to release chemicals in our brains, and these chemicals then influence how we think and learn. Less stressful memories and emotions allow our brains to learn and think, while more stressful memories and emotions can hinder our ability to learn and think.
- Provide each student with a copy of *How Does the Emotion Affect My Learning?* (Activity sheet A). Ask students to identify the emotions that might arise in each situation. Invite students to share their ideas with the class.
- Prompt students to suggest how the emotion might impact their ability to learn and think about the topic or situation. Examples of student responses might include:
 - Hearing about a classmate’s diagnosis may lead to sadness, which could prompt them to learn more about the cause of the sickness. Alternatively, sadness may make it difficult to focus on learning.



- Viewing a documentary about the many times a community was destroyed by fires might give rise to fear, which could make it difficult to learn about the causes of the fires.
 - Watching a video about soldiers from the local community and the terrible conditions they experienced during the First World War might them feel disgust, which could it make it difficult to learn about the contributions of Canadian soldiers.
 - Listening to a guest speaker who suggests that the history of Canada has been told in ways that purposefully ignore and marginalize Indigenous peoples may lead to anger. This emotion might make them feel like disengaging from learning. Alternatively, this emotion might motivate learners to discover more about Indigenous perspectives and experiences.
- Invite students to select one of the sample situations and then draw students' attention to the bottom of the activity sheet. Ask students to list any thoughtful actions or steps that could be used to explore and engage with the emotions that might arise in their selected situation.
 - Encourage students to share their actions and steps with the class. As students share, emphasize the importance of not denying, "squashing" or suppressing, or judging any emotion that may arise when learning about events or experiences. Use students' suggestions to co-develop or present the following steps to engage any emotions that may arise when learning:
 1. *Identify the reactions:* What reactions or physical sensations does the content or situation cause you to feel?
 2. *Name the emotion:* What emotion is causing these reactions and sensations?
 3. *Reflect on the source:* What about the content or situation prompts you to feel this emotion?
 4. *Determine the impacts:* How might this emotion help or hinder your ability to think and learn?
 5. *Select a strategy:* What strategy might help you to continue learning about the topic or situation? Strategies could include talking with a trusted friend or adult, breathing exercises to help reduce stress, using art to express an emotion, or other similar mindfulness practices.
 - Direct students' attention to the page two of the activity sheet and prompt them to revisit their selected situation. Guide students in using the five steps to think through how they might engage with the emotion that may emerge in their situation.
 - Inform students that they may encounter learning situations that evoke strong emotions. These emotions will help or hinder their learning. Ask students to suggest why it might be important to learn about events, issues, or experiences even though the learning might provoke emotional responses. For example, learning the truth about conditions at a local residential school may cause strong emotions to arise. Emotions can also be triggered when exploring and questioning dominant narratives about historical experiences and events, even those from local communities. Explain that the objective of this lesson is to learn a strategy that will help identify and use the emotions that may arise when learning about important but challenging historical events or issues.
 - Provide each student with a copy of *Thinking Through the Emotions Behind My Learning* (Activity sheet B). Inform students that they will use the strategy to respond to emotions that arise when learning more about the residential schools.

Practise the strategy

Thinking Through the Emotions Behind My Learning ACTIVITY SHEET B
PAGE 1

Background information
In the 1970s the government of Canada created residential schools to educate Indigenous children. More than 150,000 Indigenous children were removed from their families and communities and placed in these schools. The effects of residential schools continue to be felt throughout generations and across Canada.

In June 2008, The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established to aid all Canadians in the process of learning the truth about the residential schools. The Commission used information from the private files, oral histories, their own research, and other sources to learn about the residential schools and the experiences of those who were affected by the residential schools. Their report includes many disturbing accounts of abuse.

Thoughtful steps

1. Identify the reactions	Your reflection and ideas
2. Name the emotion	
3. Reflect on the source	
4. Determine the impacts	
5. Select a strategy	

- Direct students’ attention to the top of the activity sheet and review the background information about residential schools in Canada. Explain that they will view a first-person account from Chief Robert Joseph, a survivor of residential schools, that describes the impacts of residential schools. Emphasize that the account may cause students to experience a range of emotions.
- Show the video “Namwayut: we are all one. Truth and reconciliation in Canada.” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2zuRQmwaREY> Invite students to complete the activity sheet as they listen to the consequences of residential schools presented in the video. Provide students with time following the video to complete the activity sheet if additional emotions surface.

Note to teachers: You may wish to provide students with more time to reflect on the emotions that can arise when working with potentially challenging content. This may be particularly important when exploring and questioning dominant knowledge and narratives. To create and hold space for this, consider inviting students to work with trusted classmates or using a sharing circle.

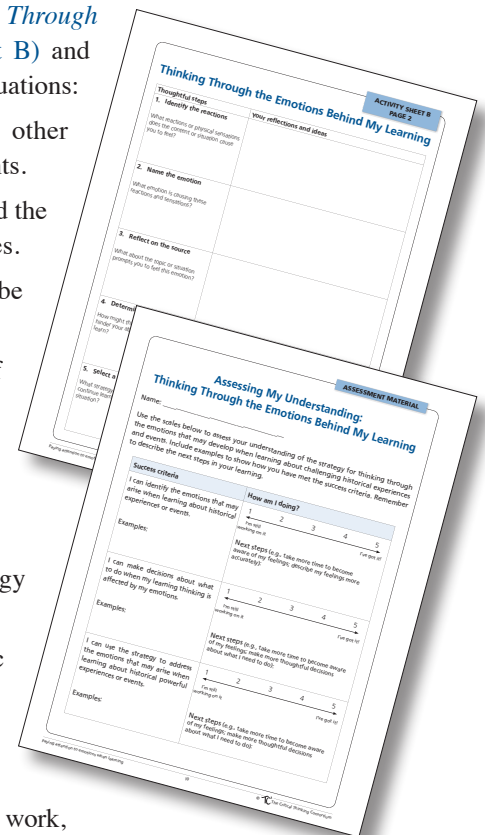
- Encourage students to share their thoughts and reflections for each step with the class. As students share, ask them to suggest how this strategy might support their thinking and learning about challenging historical experiences and events.
- Guide students through the steps, helping them see how the strategy can help them avoid denying or suppressing any emotional effects of what they are learning. Pay particular attention to the final step, discussing what strategies might be used to support their learning and thinking about the effects of residential schools.

Apply the strategy to learn more about a local history

- Provide students with a blank copy of *Thinking Through the Emotions Behind My Learning (Activity sheet B)* and encourage them to use the strategy in a variety of situations:
 - Thinking about the emotions experienced by other people during and after important historical events.
 - Exploring and questioning the motivations behind the accounts of local historical events and experiences.
 - Examining primary source materials that describe traumatic events.
 - Hearing or reading first-person accounts of oppression, abuse, neglect and violence.

Assess use of the strategy

- Encourage students to use *Assessing My Understanding: Thinking Through the Emotions Behind My Learning*:
 - Allow students opportunities to apply the strategy two or three times without assessment.
 - Guide students in interpreting and using the rubric to assess their own responses.
 - Encourage students to use the rubric whenever they use this strategy.
 - To use the rubric for teacher assessment of student work, remove the first person (student) reference from each descriptor.



How Does the Emotion Affect My Learning?

Situation	What emotion does this make me feel?	How might this emotion affect my learning about the topic or situation?
a. Hearing that a student in your class has been diagnosed with a serious form of cancer, then discovering that cancer is the focus of today's science class.	<input type="checkbox"/> Anger <input type="checkbox"/> Disgust <input type="checkbox"/> Sadness <input type="checkbox"/> Fear <input type="checkbox"/> Happiness <input type="checkbox"/> _____	
b. In one of your classes you start watching a documentary about the many times in the past when your community was destroyed fire.	<input type="checkbox"/> Anger <input type="checkbox"/> Disgust <input type="checkbox"/> Sadness <input type="checkbox"/> Fear <input type="checkbox"/> Happiness <input type="checkbox"/> _____	
c. To complete a history assignment you view a video about soldiers from the local community and the terrible conditions they experienced during the First World War.	<input type="checkbox"/> Anger <input type="checkbox"/> Disgust <input type="checkbox"/> Sadness <input type="checkbox"/> Fear <input type="checkbox"/> Happiness <input type="checkbox"/> _____	
d. A guest speaker suggests that the history of Canada has been told in ways that purposefully ignore and marginalize Indigenous peoples.	<input type="checkbox"/> Anger <input type="checkbox"/> Disgust <input type="checkbox"/> Sadness <input type="checkbox"/> Fear <input type="checkbox"/> Happiness <input type="checkbox"/> _____	

Selected situation: _____

What steps or actions might help continue the learning?

How Does the Emotion Affect My Learning?

Thoughtful steps	Your reflections and ideas
<p>1. Identify the reactions</p> <p>What reactions or physical sensations does the content or situation cause you to feel?</p>	
<p>2. Name the emotion</p> <p>What emotion is causing these reactions and sensations?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Anger</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Disgust</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sadness</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Fear</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Happiness</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____</p>
<p>3. Reflect on the source</p> <p>What about the topic or situation prompts you to feel this emotion?</p>	
<p>4. Determine the impacts</p> <p>How might this emotion help or hinder your ability to think and learn?</p>	
<p>5. Select a strategy</p> <p>What strategy might help you to continue learning about the topic or situation?</p>	

How Does the Emotion Affect My Learning? (Sample)

Situation	What emotion does this make me feel?	How might this emotion affect my learning about the topic or situation?
a. Hearing that a student in your class has been diagnosed with a serious form of cancer, then discovering that cancer is the focus of today's science class.	<input type="checkbox"/> Anger <input type="checkbox"/> Disgust <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sadness <input type="checkbox"/> Fear <input type="checkbox"/> Happiness <input type="checkbox"/> _____	I would probably be too sad to focus on learning in science class.
b. In one of your classes you start watching a documentary about the many times in the past when your community was destroyed fire.	<input type="checkbox"/> Anger <input type="checkbox"/> Disgust <input type="checkbox"/> Sadness <input type="checkbox"/> Fear <input type="checkbox"/> Happiness <input type="checkbox"/> _____	
c. To complete a history assignment you view a video about soldiers from the local community and the terrible conditions they experienced during the First World War.	<input type="checkbox"/> Anger <input type="checkbox"/> Disgust <input type="checkbox"/> Sadness <input type="checkbox"/> Fear <input type="checkbox"/> Happiness <input type="checkbox"/> _____	
d. A guest speaker suggests that the history of Canada has been told in ways that purposefully ignore and marginalize Indigenous peoples.	<input type="checkbox"/> Anger <input type="checkbox"/> Disgust <input type="checkbox"/> Sadness <input type="checkbox"/> Fear <input type="checkbox"/> Happiness <input type="checkbox"/> _____	

Selected situation: _____

What steps or actions might help continue the learning?

How Does the Emotion Affect My Learning? (Sample)

Thoughtful steps	Your reflections and ideas
<p>1. Identify the reactions</p> <p>What reactions or physical sensations does the content or situation cause you to feel?</p>	<p>I can imagine that I would feel like crying and would probably have trouble talking about the situation. Even though my classmate might like my support and I should learn, I also would want to be left alone.</p>
<p>2. Name the emotion</p> <p>What emotion is causing these reactions and sensations?</p>	<p> <input type="checkbox"/> Anger <input type="checkbox"/> Disgust <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sadness <input type="checkbox"/> Fear <input type="checkbox"/> Happiness <input type="checkbox"/> _____ </p>
<p>3. Reflect on the source</p> <p>What about the topic or situation prompts you to feel this emotion?</p>	<p>I think I am feeling this emotion because some of my uncles have passed away after battling cancer. I still remember how hard that was for me and my family...</p>
<p>4. Determine the impacts</p> <p>How might this emotion help or hinder your ability to think and learn?</p>	<p>I may be too sad to focus on learning...I probably wouldn't want to work or talk with anyone for a little while.</p>
<p>5. Select a strategy</p> <p>What strategy might help you to continue learning about the topic or situation?</p>	<p>There are two strategies that might be helpful. I should probably take a moment to myself. After that, I am going to find a trusted friend to talk to about this. Perhaps we can work together to learn more about our classmate's diagnosis and how we might support her.</p>

Thinking Through the Emotions Behind My Learning

Background information

In the 1870s the Government of Canada created residential schools to eliminate Indigenous parents' involvement in the lives of their children. More than 150,000 First Nations, Métis, and Inuit children were removed from their families and communities and placed in these schools. The impacts of residential schools continue to be felt throughout generations and across Canada.

In June 2008, The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established to tell all Canadians the truth about what happened in residential schools. The Commission used information from the groups who operated and funded the schools, reports from school and government officials, and testimonies from survivors, their families, communities, and anyone affected by the residential schools. These testimonies included many disturbing accounts of abuse.

Thoughtful steps	Your reflections and ideas
<p>1. Identify the reactions</p> <p>What reactions or physical sensations does the content or situation cause you to feel?</p>	
<p>2. Name the emotion</p> <p>What emotion is causing these reactions and sensations?</p>	
<p>3. Reflect on the source</p> <p>What about the topic or situation prompts you to feel this emotion?</p>	
<p>4. Determine the impacts</p> <p>How might this emotion help or hinder your ability to think and learn?</p>	
<p>5. Select a strategy</p> <p>What strategy might help you to continue learning about the topic or situation?</p>	

Thinking Through the Emotions Behind My Learning

Thoughtful steps	Your reflections and ideas
<p>1. Identify the reactions</p> <p>What reactions or physical sensations does the content or situation cause you to feel?</p>	
<p>2. Name the emotion</p> <p>What emotion is causing these reactions and sensations?</p>	
<p>3. Reflect on the source</p> <p>What about the topic or situation prompts you to feel this emotion?</p>	
<p>4. Determine the impacts</p> <p>How might this emotion help or hinder your ability to think and learn?</p>	
<p>5. Select a strategy</p> <p>What strategy might help you to continue learning about the topic or situation?</p>	

Assessing My Understanding: Thinking Through the Emotions Behind My Learning

Name: _____

Use the scales below to assess your understanding of the strategy for thinking through the emotions that may develop when learning about challenging historical experiences and events. Include examples to show how you have met the success criteria. Remember to describe the next steps in your learning.

Success criteria	How am I doing?
<p>I can identify the emotions that may arise when learning about historical experiences or events.</p> <p>Examples:</p>	<div style="text-align: center;"> 1 2 3 4 5 </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p style="font-size: small;">← I'm still working on it I've got it! →</p> </div> <p>Next steps (e.g., take more time to become aware of my feelings; describe my feelings more accurately):</p>
<p>I can make decisions about what to do when my learning thinking is affected by my emotions.</p> <p>Examples:</p>	<div style="text-align: center;"> 1 2 3 4 5 </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p style="font-size: small;">← I'm still working on it I've got it! →</p> </div> <p>Next steps (e.g., take more time to become aware of my feelings; make more thoughtful decisions about what I need to do):</p>
<p>I can use the strategy to address the emotions that may arise when learning about historical powerful experiences or events.</p> <p>Examples:</p>	<div style="text-align: center;"> 1 2 3 4 5 </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p style="font-size: small;">← I'm still working on it I've got it! →</p> </div> <p>Next steps (e.g., take more time to become aware of my feelings; make more thoughtful decisions about what I need to do):</p>