



## FLEXING YOUR MENTAL HEALTH MUSCLE GRADES 3-8

Use poetry and your love for nature to guide you through a lesson that focusses on mental health and self-reflection.

### WHAT YOU'LL LEARN:

- Self-expression by creating poems that describe places
- Developing mental health awareness

### CURRICULUM OUTCOMES:

- Learners would learn how their actions contribute positive change in the communities.
- Think critically to enhance the health of self, those around oneself, and within a global context.

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### MATERIALS

- Pens
- Luggage or gift labels
- Paper

**This is an individual outdoor activity**, it can be done in outdoor spaces of the school, home, backyard, or nearby parks/trails

### WHAT TO DO:

1. Take the class for walk at various locations in the school. Visit the places which are quiet, noisy, places to walk, explore, sit, learn, eat etc. Write the names of the places on the labels.

2. Work with the students and come up with the list of descriptive words and adjectives that could describe the places. Add them to the labels. Examples could include dark, open, bright, dull. Tie these labels on a tree or fence.
3. Begin a discussion of the kinds of activities they do in those areas. Examples could be play, run, think, hide, eat.
4. Next, discuss the emotions that they have associated to those areas. Add these words to those labels.
5. Allow learners to reflect about the places. Then initiate a class discussion:
  - Are places designed for specific purposes?
  - Are some are quiet and some noisy?
  - How do these places make you feel?
  - Are there special places where you would like to spend more time than another? If yes, why is that?"
6. Facilitate the process of metamorphosing words to phrases, to sentences and then finally to poems according to the grade level. Older learners may be able to complete poems with minimal assistance. These poems could be hung on other trees and that tree could be called a poet tree. Let visitors and other school members read the poems.

### ASSESSMENT:

- Learners can identify and associate words to describe physical and mental and emotional attributes associated to places.
- Learners can associate mental and emotional climates of places with their own emotional responses.
- Demonstrate the linguistic capability of expressing the physical attributes of places and emotional and mental responses of the self.

### EXTENSION:

- Learners can write an essay as an additional assignment and express in detail their most favorite and least favourite places in the school and suggest activities that could perhaps uplift the mental and emotional responses to a specific space. Shifting the inquiry from identification to solution finding.

### CREDIT/REFERENCES:

This activity has been modified from the <http://www.playlearninglife.org.uk/>