



Your Brain Wants You to Be Happy (🧠 An Emotional Health Story)
(1st – 6-7 yrs.)
Physical Activity: Happy Dance



STORY CONNECTION – SLIDES 9-10 (Approx Time: 10-15 mins)

Feeling happy makes us feel good about things. We like to be happy – but our brain knows that you cannot be happy all the time. Your brain can turn on your “happy place” when you do behaviors that help your body and your brain stay healthy. Your brain can shut off the “happy place” after you get what your body needs. Feeling happy for doing something that your brain knows your body needs to do is important. But your brain must make your body do lots of things – like going to school, sleeping, and drinking water.

Materials needed:

- Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Si0DF0rRF18> (3:16)
 - The video link above shows a dancer dancing to the song “Happy” by Pharrell. Most student(s) are familiar with this song.
 - As the song is playing, the words flash up on the screen (good reading practice) and the dancer is doing simple, repetitive dance moves for the student(s) to follow.
- Equipment to watch online video
- Space for student(s) to dance
- Extension activity included below (Optional)

Preparation needed:

- Locate and secure space for student(s) to dance

Instructions:

1. Research tells us that physical activity, such as dancing, is good for our health and good for our brain. More information can be found in this article [here](#). This activity includes components that are good for student(s)' health: music, movement, and following visual directions.
2. Explain to student(s) that they will have the opportunity to dance today! Let them know that you will begin the music video teaching them a dance. When they feel comfortable, they can join in! It is also okay if they just want to watch the first time.
3. Ask all student(s) to stand in the designated area.
4. Play the video.
5. Encourage all student(s) to join in and follow the moves of the dancer when you play the video this time.
6. Play the video again.
7. Continue to play the video until you feel your student(s) are ready to come back together.
***Suggestion: You might want to bookmark this video for future use for a good brain break or rainy-day activity to get student(s) going. ***

8. Bring the student(s) back together and talk about their “dance party.”

Suggested Probing Questions:

- Did they enjoy it? Why or why not?
 - How did they feel while doing it? Why?
 - Would they like to do it again? Why or why not?
 - Were you smiling, laughing, happy, embarrassed, shy, reserved? All of these are okay!! (Talk about anything you observed while they were dancing.)
9. In closing, tell student(s) that their brain wants them to be happy. One thing that makes their brain happy is when their body is physically moving, like dancing. They were feeling happy because they were doing something that was good for their brain and their brain was rewarding them.

Dancing Articles:

<https://hms.harvard.edu/news-events/publications-archive/brain/dancing-brain>