

Working with PERMA

Examples of Classroom Strategies

- Strength Cards/ Strength Tree / Flower/Identify and celebrate strengths
- Mindfulness practices
- Flow activities
- Celebrate progress & growth-oriented feedback
- Gratitude and strength activities to foster positive relationships- Gratitude journals/Gratitude Tree / Jar / Flower

Example of activity; Strength Tree

Duration: 15–25 minutes

Materials: Large paper or poster board, markers, sticky notes or leaf-shaped cutouts

Description:

The Strength Tree is a visual activity that helps students identify and celebrate their personal strengths. A tree is drawn on a poster or board, and students write down their strengths (or strengths they see in classmates) on leaves or sticky notes. These are then placed on the branches of the tree, creating a collective display of positive qualities.

Steps:

1. Draw or display a large tree with branches on the board or poster paper.
2. Provide students with sticky notes or leaf-shaped cutouts.
3. Ask each student to write one or more personal strengths (e.g., creativity, kindness, perseverance) or strengths they notice in others.
4. Students place their notes on the tree branches.
5. In the group:
 - o What patterns do you notice?
 - o How do these strengths help us in school and life?

Why: Builds self-awareness, promotes positive self-image, and strengthens classroom community.

Example of activity; Strength Cards

Duration: 15–30 minutes

Materials: A set of strength cards (with words or pictures representing character strengths)

Description:

Strength cards are a practical tool to help students identify and reflect on their personal strengths and the strengths of others. Each card represents a positive quality (e.g., creativity, kindness, perseverance). Students use the cards in individual or group activities to build self-esteem, foster empathy, and encourage positive classroom interactions.

Steps:

1. Introduce the concept of character strengths and why they matter.
2. Spread out the strength cards so students can see all options.
3. Activity ideas:
 - o Personal reflection: Ask students to choose 3 cards that represent their own strengths.
 - o Peer recognition: Have students pick a card for a classmate and explain why they chose it.
 - o Goal setting: Students select a strength they want to develop and brainstorm how to practice it.

Reflective questions:

- o How can these strengths help you in school and life?
- o How can we use our strengths to support each other?

Why: Builds self-awareness, promotes positive relationships, and supports a strengths-based approach to learning.

Example of activity; Gratitude Tree

Duration: 15–20 minutes

Materials: Large sheet of paper or poster board, markers, sticky notes or leaf-shaped Cutouts

Description:

The Gratitude Tree is a visual classroom activity that helps students reflect on and share things they are grateful for. A tree is drawn or displayed on a poster, and students write their gratitude statements on sticky notes or paper leaves. These are then placed on the branches of the tree, creating a collective display of positive thoughts.

Steps:

1. Draw or display a large tree on the board or poster paper.
2. Provide students with sticky notes or leaf-shaped cutouts.
3. Ask each student to write one or more things they are grateful for.
4. Students place their notes on the tree branches.
5. In a group:
 - o What patterns do you notice?
 - o How does focusing on gratitude make you feel?

Why: Encourages positive thinking, strengthens classroom community, and promotes emotional well-being.

Example of activity; Kindness Challenge – “Three Acts of Kindness”

Materials: Paper or digital journal for reflection. Optional: kindness cards or prompts

Description:

Students are invited to perform three acts of kindness during the day or week. These acts can be small and simple, such as:

- Complementing a classmate
- Helping someone with schoolwork
- Writing a thank-you note to a teacher or peer

After completing the acts, students reflect on:

- How did it feel to do something kind?
- How do you think the other person felt?
- Did this change the atmosphere in the classroom?

You can make it a group challenge by creating a “Kindness Wall” where students post their acts anonymously.

Why:

Research in Positive Psychology shows that practicing kindness:

- Boosts happiness and life satisfaction
- Reduces stress and anxiety
- Strengthens social bonds and trust
- Promotes empathy and prosocial behavior

Acts of kindness activate positive emotions and create upward spirals of wellbeing

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