

Emotion Statues (Levels A-B)

PLAY

To build early emotional awareness and expression through a playful freeze game where students copy or create simple emotional "statues."



Learning Intentions

Recognise Basic Emotions:

Students will begin to notice simple feelings such as happy, sad, tired, and excited.

Express Emotions With Body or Face:

Students will practise showing emotions using facial expressions, gestures, or simple body positions.

Engage With Others:

Students will watch peers' statues and respond with smiles, gestures, or pointing to matching emotion visuals.



Success Criteria

Students attempt to make a statue that matches a shown or modelled emotion.

Students identify an emotion by pointing, looking, gesturing, or using AAC.

Students show enjoyment, smiling, vocalising, watching peers, or copying movements.



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Duration: 5 minutes

Objective

To build early emotional awareness and expression through a playful freeze game where students copy or create simple emotional “statues.”

What You Need

Emotion visual cards (happy, sad, excited, tired, nervous) (found in PDF resource)

AAC devices with symbols such as: “happy,” “sad,” “tired,” “excited,” “yes/no,” “I feel...”

Optional: mirrors, puppets, or emoji paddles

Setup

1. Print and cut out the emotion visual cards (one set is enough)
2. Students sit or stand in an open space with adult support nearby.
3. Teacher models each emotion using big, clear facial expressions and gestures.
4. Show emotion visuals before each turn to reduce cognitive load and aid understanding.
5. Encourage students to participate in any way that feels comfortable.

Gameplay / Activity Steps

Step 1: Show and Say the Emotion

The teacher holds up an emotion card (e.g., HAPPY).

Say: “We are making a HAPPY statue!”

Model a simple version: big smile + hands up, in a frozen statue pose.

Step 2: Students Freeze in the Emotion

Students attempt to show the same emotion by:

- copying the statue made by the teacher
- creating their own emotion statue
- Freezing in any statue pose

All attempts count, even small gestures or facial changes.

Step 3: Guess the Emotion

The teacher or peers create a emotion statue without holding a card up, the students need to guess the emotion being demonstrated by: The teacher can help by providing 2 emotions to choose from:

“Am I HAPPY or SAD?”



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Students respond by:

- pointing to an emotion card
- looking at the matching card
- pressing AAC
- vocalising
- performing the same statue pose

Step 4: Repeat as many times as you like!

Keep it playful, rotate the leader out the front demonstrating the emotion statues, try to use partner work, from here it's up to you, have fun!

Debrief

Use visual emotion cards and simple questions:

- "Show me your favourite emotion!"
 - "Which one was easiest?"
 - "Which one was silly or fun?"
 - "How do YOU feel now?" (students point to happy, calm, excited)
- Accept all responses, gesture, sound, AAC, or eye gaze.

Sensory-Seeking Learners Variation

1. Add Movement Before the Freeze

If movement helps regulation, use:

- clap → freeze happy
- stomp → freeze strong
- wiggle → freeze excited
- stretch → freeze tired

2. Use Props

Offer sensory items to enhance emotional expression:

- soft toy for "sad"
- ribbons for "excited"
- weighted cushion for "tired"
- smiley paddle for "happy"



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3. Emotion Pathway

Place coloured spots around the floor.

Students move to the spot and freeze in the matching emotion.

4. Big Body Statues

Encourage full-body shapes:

- wide arms = excited
- curled-up shape = tired or sad
- arms up + big smile = happy

AAC-Specific Supports

1. Prepare Vocabulary

Symbols for:

- happy
- sad
- tired
- excited
- more
- finished
- I feel...

2. Aided Language Input

Teacher models:

"Happy statue."

"You feel excited."

"Sad."

"That was fun."

3. AAC Choice-Making

Students choose which emotion to do next by pressing:

- "happy"
- "sad"
- "excited"

Teacher responds:

"You chose HAPPY!"



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4. AAC Guessing

When identifying statues, students press:

- happy
- sad
- tired
- excited

Any activation is counted as success.

5. AAC Reflection

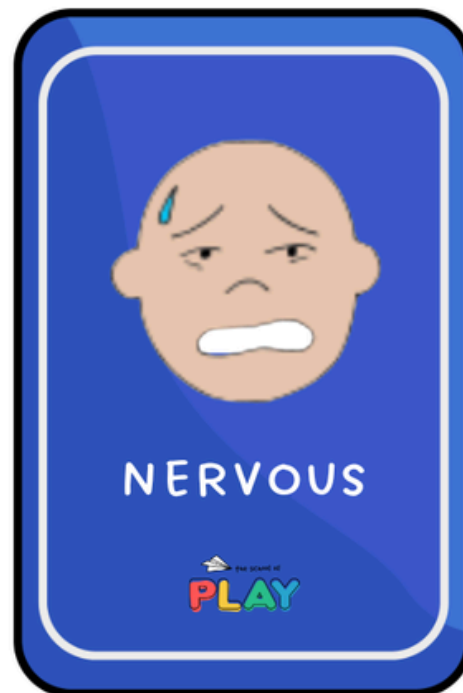
Students express how they feel using:

- "happy"
- "tired"
- "finished"
- "more"

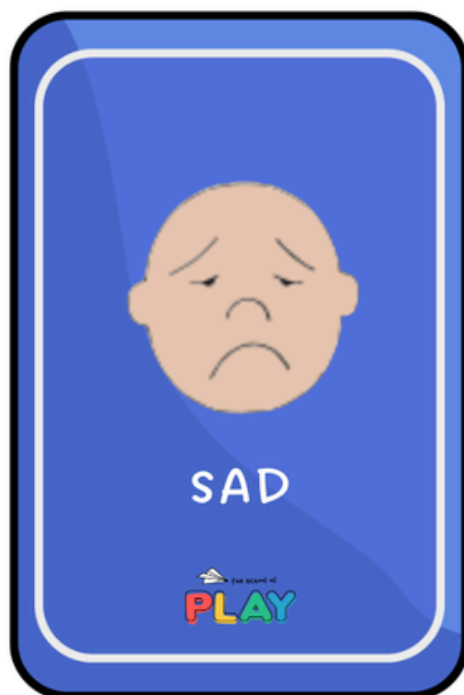


EMOTION VISUAL CARDS

PRINT AND CUT OUT THE CARDS. A STUDENT PICKS A CARD, AND EVERYONE FREEZES IN A "STATUE" THAT MATCHES THE EMOTION USING THEIR FACE, BODY, OR GESTURES. TAKE TURNS GUESSING THE EMOTION. CELEBRATE EVERY ATTEMPT, EVEN TINY FACIAL CHANGES OR STILL BODIES.



EMOTION VISUAL CARDS



EMOTION VISUAL CARDS



SILLY



LAUGHING



CELEBRATING



TIRED



EMOTION VISUAL CARDS



SLEEPY



SURPRISED



ANNOYED



DISGUSTED

