

Lesson	Wheel of Emotions
Grade	3-5
Learning Intention	Students will explore the nuances of a range of emotions.
SEL Competency	Self-Awareness
Duration	20 minutes
Materials Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotion Wheel with Prompts sheet, 1 per group of 3-4 students • Emotion Wheel Key, for educator • Emotion Slips, cut apart, grouped in sets, placed in envelopes

Lesson Structure

Begin the lesson by explaining that understanding our emotions – what causes them and how to manage them – is an important part of understanding who we are as individuals. Ask students how many emotions they think they experience on a regular basis. Allow several students to answer. Then, share that many different scientists study emotions, but they do not all agree about the number of human emotions. They *do* agree that, no matter where they are from, all humans experience what are called “universal” or “core” emotions and that each core emotion has many “shades” or “flavors.”

Project an Emotion Wheel with Prompts sheet or show the class a printed one. Explain that emotion wheels are designed to show the different variations of emotions and how they are related. Some wheels are very complex, showing dozens of emotions. The wheel you are using shows eight core emotions and is based on research by an American psychologist named Robert Plutchik. Core emotions are like categories and each can include a number of “sub-emotions., which are related to a core emotion, but can be used to describe an emotional response more specifically.

Tell students that they are going to work in groups to explore an emotion wheel.

- Split the class into groups of 3-4 students and give each group an Emotion Wheel with Prompts sheet and envelop with a set of Emotion Slips.
- Students will take turns pulling a slip from the envelope and placing it where they think it belongs on the wheel. As they place each emotion, they should answer the three prompts on their sheet.

- As the activity progresses, students may rearrange the slips as needed.
- Circulate to listen for conversation in the groups that demonstrate understanding of the concepts and how individual students apply that knowledge to themselves.
- When students have placed all 32 slips (or fewer, if you choose), have them raise hands to indicate they are done. Show them the answer key to check their work.

Assessment

- After students have checked their wheel against the key, ask each group to share any disagreements or “aha moments” they experienced during the activity.
- If desired, record data about students’ engagement, ability to define emotions, and ability to apply concepts to their own lives. Make note of students who struggled with the activity.

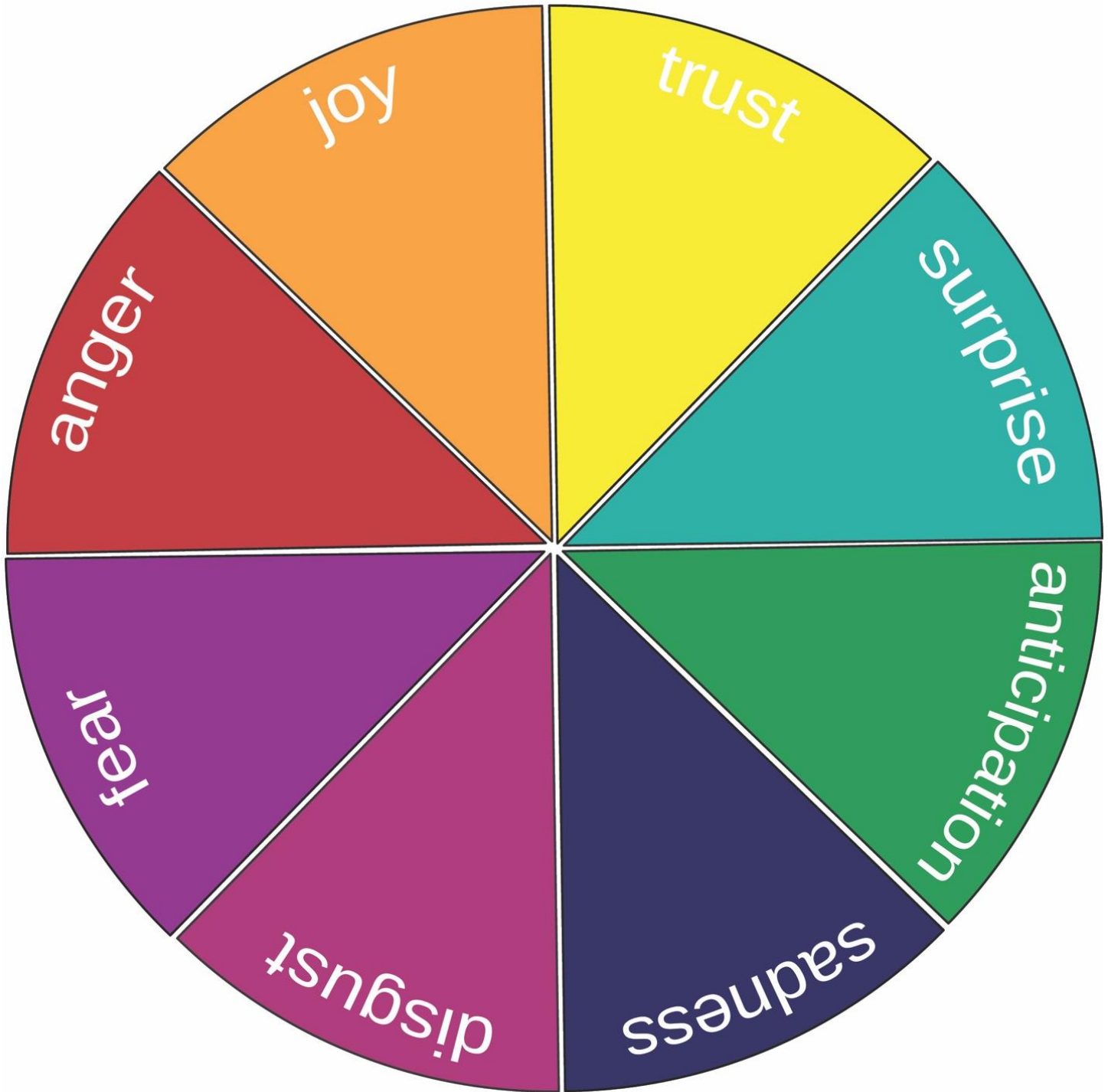
Extensions

- Have students create word clouds by brainstorming words they associate with a chosen emotion and inputting them into an online generator, such as Wordle.net or WordClouds.com.
- Integrate the emotion wheel concept into ELA. Have students use an emotion wheel to write some sentences (vary the number by age and ability) about a book character’s emotions in 2-3 situations. Students can choose a character in an independent reading book, book group selection, or class read-aloud.

Virtual Modifications

- Set up a virtual spinner with the 32 “sub-emotions” shown on the Emotion Slips. Share a blank Emotion Wheel with Prompts doc with students digitally. In a video call, introduce the concepts, then group students into virtual breakout rooms and share the spinner link. Have students take turns spinning the virtual spinner. For whatever emotion they land on, they should assign it to a core emotion and then answer the three prompts. Go as long as time allows for students to discuss as many emotions as possible. To wrap up, bring the class back together and ask each student to share an emotion they spun and tell how they handled it when they felt it.
- Introduce the concepts in writing or in a video call. Then, share the Emotion Wheel with Prompts and Emotion Slips docs with students digitally. Ask students to print or recreate the Emotion Slips doc, make a key, and then use eight colors, one per core emotion, to shade the emotion slips according to how they would categorize each emotion on the wheel. After shading the emotions, students should pick two emotions (one they feel is positive and one they feel is negative), and answer the prompts in writing or in a video or voice recording that they share with you. They should also send you a photo or share a digital file of their shaded Emotion Slips table to check understanding of how the emotions are organized on the wheel.

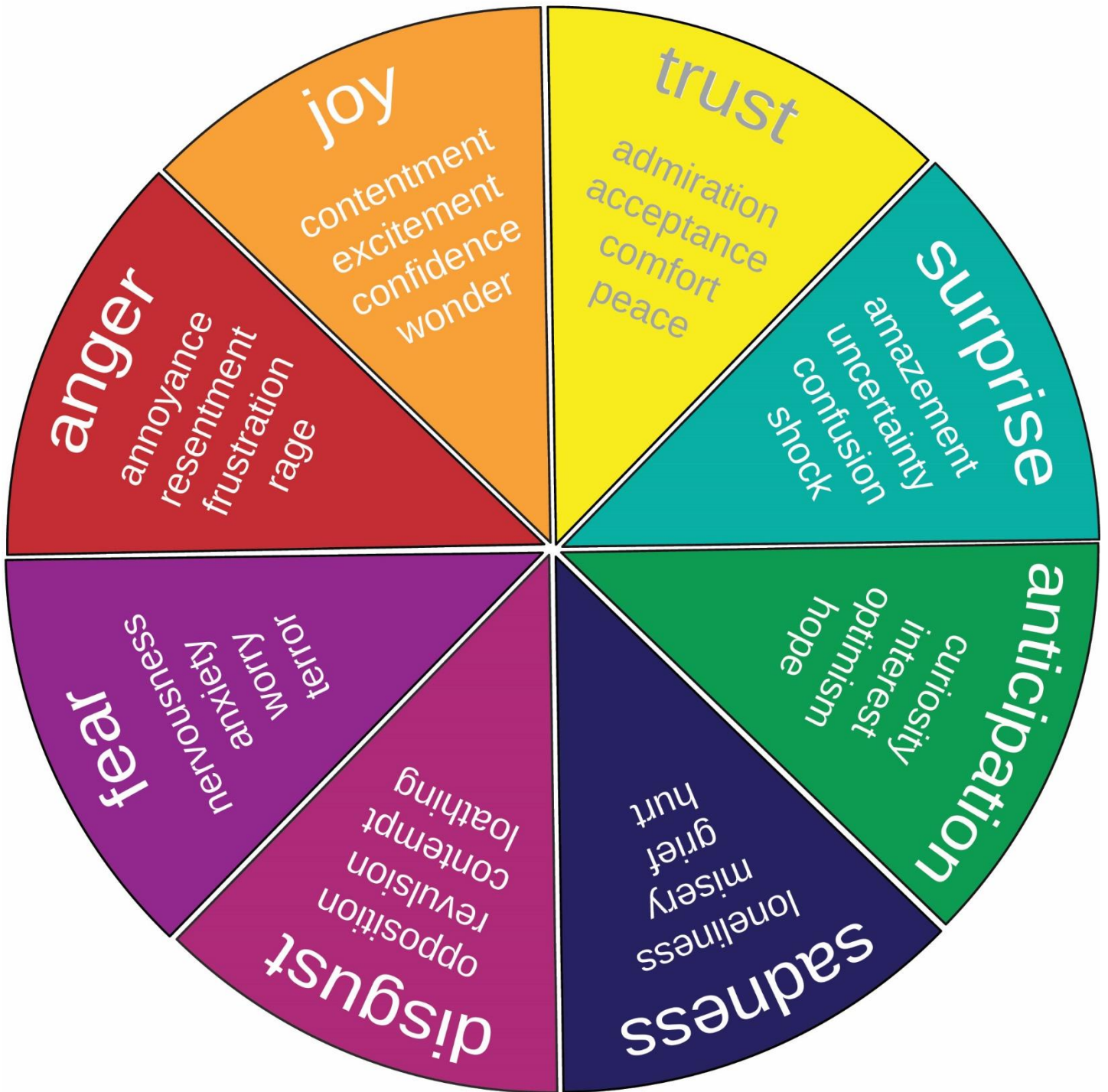
Emotion Wheel



Prompts

- How does the emotion feel to you?
- Think about a time when you felt that emotion. What happened?
- What did you do when you felt that emotion?

Emotion Wheel Key



Emotion Slips

Contentment	Admiration	Nervousness	Hurt
Acceptance	Worry	Uncertainty	Loathing
Contempt	Confusion	Excitement	Curiosity
Hope	Misery	Shock	Comfort
Grief	Confidence	Revulsion	Anxiety
Amazement	Optimism	Peace	Interest
Rage	Annoyance	Terror	Wonder
Frustration	Opposition	Loneliness	Resentment

8 Core Emotions	
Joy	Trust
Surprise	Anticipation
Sadness	Disgust
Fear	Anger