

Lesson Plan: Savoring as a Tool for Self-Regulation

Grade band: 6-8

Subject: Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

Duration: 60 minutes

Montana Health Content Standard:

- **MTSEL.6-8.2.a** Apply self-monitoring strategies to regulate physical responses to emotions

Learning Objectives:

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- Define savoring in their own words.
- Discuss ways savoring could help regulate emotions.
- Practice one savoring technique.
- Identify a time they might use savoring in daily life.

Materials:

- Slide Presentation
- Student journals or paper
- Pencils or pens
- Calming images/nature photos (optional)
- Timer
- Three Good Things journal
- Small wrapped candy (e.g., mints or chocolate)

Lesson Outline:

1. Initial Engagement- *Fasten Your Seatbelt and Strategy Recap: (5 minutes)*

- “What do you usually do when you feel stressed, upset, or overwhelmed? Do you have a strategy? More than one?”
- Students write quietly for 2–3 minutes. Invite students to share and review any strategies previously taught, and when they could be helpful.

2. Explicit Instruction - *This is your Captain Speaking: (10 minutes)*

- Briefly explain: “**Savoring** involves slowing down and noticing positive experiences using our senses and attention. It can help calm the nervous system and shift our focus

away from stress. **To savor** means to notice and appreciate a positive experience. To enjoy something more completely. **Savoring** means slowing down and noticing, enjoying, and extending positive experiences.”

- If time permits, play the [Hand Model of the Brain](#) video.
- Review the video. The main messages will include:
 - The brain has a threat detector that turns on when stressed (amygdala)
 - Savoring helps activate the parts of the brain that regulate emotions (prefrontal cortex)
 - When we focus on positive sensory details, our breathing slows and muscles relax

3. Guided Practice: Take Off (15 minutes)

Allow students a moment to choose an option, then pass out candies if they choose option 1 and let them settle back down.

Option 1: Savoring a Small Treat

Use your senses: Sight Smell Taste Touch

- “Look at the color, shape, texture.”
- “Feel the texture.”
- “Breathe in to smell the aroma.”
- “When you take a bite, go slowly.”
- “Notice flavor, temperature, and how it changes.”

Option 2: Savoring a Memory

Use question words: Where What Who When How

- Close your eyes (optional).
- Think of a happy or peaceful moment.
- What did you see?
- What sounds were there?
- What smells?
- Who was with you?
- How did you feel?

4. Collaborative Activity: (15 minutes)

Students will do mutual savoring with a peer. Each person shares a recent positive experience, fun moment, or a favorite place to savor (2–3 minutes each). The listener's job is **not** to give advice or tell their own story. Instead, they:

- Ask curious questions.
- Reflect the speaker's emotions.
- Celebrate their experience.

After 2-3 minutes, students will switch roles.

Students will end the discussion by sharing ideas to answer the following questions:

- How could savoring be useful?
- When could savoring be helpful?
- Can savoring work if we're very angry? Why or why not?
- How is savoring different from distracting yourself?

5. Independent Application: (10 minutes)

Students will reflect on their savoring experience independently:

- What did you notice during the savoring exercise?
- Did your body feel any different?
- When could you use this strategy?

6. Closing: Remember Your Baggage (5 minutes)

- Savoring is simple.
- It's free.
- You can do it anywhere.
- The more you practice, the stronger the calming effect becomes.
- Savoring does not solve problems.
- It can help give you a reset, so it is easier to address concerns.

Exit Ticket

- Complete this sentence on an exit slip or verbally with teacher:
- "One time I could try savoring this week is _____."

7. Plan for Continued Integration: Souvenirs (Optional)

- Combine savoring with gratitude practice
- Bring in positive images for a savoring board
- Practice Savoring 2x a week and log your results