Big Feelings & Self-Regulation · Grades 3–5 / 6–8 · 15 minutes · FREE

Pause–Plan–Respond

Choose real or fictional examples. Skip private details; never include passwords, medical information or contact details.

Learning goal: Separate a trigger, feeling, possible response and likely consequence.

A feeling can arrive quickly; a response can still be chosen. Imagine a classmate interrupts your idea, your group changes the plan or a game rule seems unfair. You do not have to ignore the feeling. Practice a pause that makes room for a constructive next move.

Your steps

1. Choose one school scenario from the cards.
2. Separate the trigger from the feeling.
3. Compare two responses and likely results.
4. Rehearse one constructive response and a support backup.

1. Scenario cards

Circle one card to investigate. Add a trigger and possible feeling beneath it.

A · a classmate interrupts your explanation	B · your team changes a plan you liked
C · a game rule seems unfair	D · invent a school situation without names

2. Response laboratory

Write the trigger and feeling first. Compare choices rather than judging the feeling.

Trigger + feeling	Possible choice	Likely consequence
Choice A		
Choice B		
Constructive choice I select		

Free for classroom and personal educational use; do not resell.

Big Feelings & Self-Regulation · Grades 3–5 / 6–8 · 15 minutes · FREE

Pause–Plan–Respond · Practice & next steps

Continue your ideas from page 1. Write, draw, use symbols or ask someone to scribe. Share only what you choose.

3. Pause, plan, respond

Choose a pause that works for you, then practice your words.

PAUSE · breath / movement / quiet option	PLAN · what outcome matters?
RESPOND · “I feel… Could we…?”	If I need help, I can ask a trusted adult to…

My next step

In a future disagreement, my first pause will be…

Optional stretch · Grades 6–8

Identify a response that protects both your boundary and the group’s goal. Explain an unintended consequence to watch for.

Optional teacher / parent follow-up: Practice calmly with fictional cards. Do not ask learners to tolerate bullying or unsafe behavior; involve a trusted adult.

Free for classroom and personal educational use; do not resell.