

What Is My Child Learning?**Unit Themes**

Your child is learning behaviors and habits to help them succeed at school and in life. First graders discover that paying attention helps them learn and stay safe in different situations, such as on the playground or while crossing the street with an adult. They learn that distractions are things that take your attention away and ways to refocus their attention if they get distracted—for example, by reminding themselves to focus or moving to a different spot. Toward the end of the unit, they learn two new skills: the “hand jive” dance and drawing Pepito, a character from the Second Step program. While learning these skills, they practice using helpful thoughts, like “Keep going!” to encourage themselves.

Why is it important?

Research shows that children who learn the skills in this unit are more likely to:

- **Seek challenges**
- **Do better academically**
- **Handle transitions more easily**

**Practice at Home****What to Look For**

Notice and praise your child when they show that they can pay attention despite distractions. You can say, **I noticed you moved away from the TV when you were reading your story. Great job helping yourself pay attention!**

Try This!

Discuss: Talk to your child about learning to do the “hand jive” dance or learning to draw Pepito. Ask, **How did you feel when you first tried to learn it? What helped you get better?** Have them show you the steps they remember and tell you how they think they can continue to get better (practice and keep trying!).

Practice: Help your child choose something to learn or improve. For example, throwing a ball, writing a story, or drawing a rainbow. Set aside a few minutes each day for them to practice. Remind them to use helpful thoughts to keep going, and suggest ways they can manage any distractions.



What Is My Child Learning?

Unit Themes

Your first grader is learning how to use clues, like looking at a person's face and body and what's going on, to guess how someone is feeling. They also learn words to describe more complex feelings—worried, calm, and frustrated. Toward the end of the unit, they practice 2 ways to feel calm when they experience strong emotions: asking for help and slow counting.

Why is it important?

Research shows that children who learn the skills in this unit are more likely to:

- **Be better learners**
- **Build stronger relationships**
- **Have higher self-esteem**
- **Be better problem-solvers**



Mateo felt frustrated when he had trouble putting stickers on a toy rocket. He used slow counting to help himself feel calm.

Practice at Home

What to Look For

Notice and praise your child when they recognize and label how someone else is feeling by looking at their face and body and what's going on. You can say, **It does seem like your cousin is frustrated! He's frowning and he can't get to the toy on the table. Good job using clues to guess how he feels.**

Try This!

Discuss: A few times a week, ask your child, **When did you feel frustrated or worried today? What did you do to feel calm?**

Discuss: Show your child the picture above. Ask them to tell you how the character (Mateo) felt in the video, and what he did to feel calm.

Practice: After your child has learned slow counting at school, practice with them. Count slowly from 1 to 10, clapping quietly with each number.

What Is My Child Learning?

Unit Themes

Your child is learning about the power of kindness to let others know we care about them. First graders talk about ways they can be kind to people at school and elsewhere, including asking “Are you okay?” and “Would you like some company?” when they notice someone is upset. Later in the unit they practice offering to help and inviting someone to join them in play.

Why is it important?

Research shows that children who learn the skills in this unit are more likely to:

- Display greater empathy
- Engage in positive behaviors
- Avoid aggressive behaviors



Practice at Home

What to Look For

Notice and praise your child when they show kindness or do a kind act for others. For example, when they offer to help someone, ask a family member “Are you okay?”, or invite a friend to play with them. You can say, **I noticed you did a kind act when you offered to help me clean up. That’s a great way to show you care!**

Try This!

Discuss: A few times a week, ask your child, **What was a kind act you did today?** or **What were some kind acts that others did for you?**

Practice: After your child has practiced offering to help at school, have them practice with people they know. Remind them that asking “Do you want help?” is a way to show others we care about them.

Practice: After your child has practiced inviting someone to join them when they’re at school, help them practice with friends or siblings. Remind them that asking “Do you want to play with me?” is a kind act that helps everyone have fun together.



What Is My Child Learning?

Unit Themes

Your child is learning ways to solve interpersonal problems. First graders learn that a problem is something that happens between people that causes someone to feel upset, like when someone takes the last snack without sharing or something gets broken. They practice describing common problems respectfully, without blaming others, and learn that some problems are caused by accident. Toward the end of the unit, they practice asking for what they want or need in order to solve a problem and learn to say “I’m sorry. It was an accident. Are you okay? How can I help?” when they cause a problem by accident.

Why is it important?

Research shows that children who learn the skills in this unit are more likely to:

- **Make positive choices**
- **Experience greater well-being**
- **Contribute to a better school environment**



Practice at Home

What to Look For

Notice and praise your child when they take steps to help solve problems, such as when they ask for what they want or need to solve a problem. You can say, I noticed you felt sad when Alex and Xian weren’t playing with you, and you asked if you could join their game. Great job asking for what you need to solve the problem!

Try This!

Practice: If problems or disagreements arise—for example, between siblings or friends—help your child say the problem respectfully without blaming others. Encourage them to say “Aditi, I’ve been waiting for a turn with the basketball” instead of “Aditi, you never take turns with the basketball!”

Discuss: When reading books or watching a show, help your child recognize problems and what the characters might want or need to solve them. Ask, **What is the problem?** and **What can they ask for to help solve the problem?**