



PHOTOS BY CHRISTINE COUSINS

LESSONS TO ENCOURAGE BODY POSITIVITY

MY BODY HELPS ME SHINE

(GRADES K TO 2)

BIG IDEA:

Our bodies do not decide our worth – we do.

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:

Health and Physical Education

Overall expectation

A1: Demonstrate an understanding of factors that contribute to healthy development (including self concept and emotional well being).

Specific expectation

A1.1/A1.2: Identify personal strengths and describe positive qualities about themselves.

Language (Expressive and Receptive)

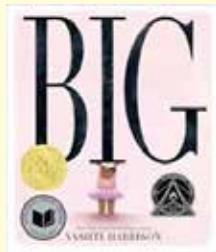
- Share ideas and feelings clearly in small and whole group discussions.
- Demonstrate understanding of texts by connecting them to personal experiences.
- Express ideas using simple sentences and drawing.

Social Emotional Learning

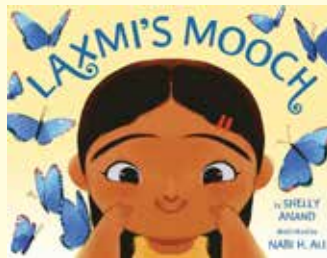
LEARNING GOALS:

- I can name parts of my body and say what they help me do.
- I can tell others something I like about my body.
- I understand that all bodies are different and valuable.

MATERIALS



Big by Vashti Harrison



Laxmi's Mooch by Shelley Anand

- Chart paper and markers
- Drawing paper or body outlines
- Crayons, markers, pencils

SUCCESS CRITERIA (SAMPLES):

- I can share one thing my body does that helps me.
- I listen kindly when others share.
- I use kind words about myself and others.

MINDS ON (10 MINUTES)

Teacher prompt: “Turn and talk: What is something your body helps you do every day?”

Guided discussion (ensuring some of these key ideas are generated):

- Our bodies come in many shapes, sizes, and colours.

- Every body is good at different things.
- Our bodies can show feelings and help us connect with others.

Create an anchor chart titled: “Our bodies are amazing because...”

Record student ideas (walk, hug, smile, talk, run, listen, rest).

ACTION

Read Aloud #1: *Big* by Vashti Harrison

Before reading:

Look at the cover: “What do you think ‘big’ might mean in this story?”

During reading:

Pause to ask:

- “How do the words people say make the character feel?”
- “What changes as the character learns about herself?”

After reading:

Discuss key ideas such as:

- Being “big” or “small” is not bad or good.
- Words can affect how we feel about our bodies.
- We get to decide who we are and what we can do.

Key message:

Our bodies do not decide our worth – we do.

Read Aloud #2: *Laxmi's Mooch* by Shelley Anand

Before reading:

“What is something that makes your face special?”

During reading:

Pause to notice expressions in the illustrations; how Laxmi’s feelings change

After reading:

Discuss key ideas such as:

- How does Laxmi feel about her mooch at the beginning?
- How does she feel by the end?
- What might faces and bodies tell us about feelings?

Key message:

Our bodies help us show feelings and connect with others.

Main Activity: “I love my body because...”
(20–30 minutes)

Students will choose one part of their body that they feel particularly proud of. Students are encouraged to describe what that part helps them do, or what feeling or emotion it helps express.

Share examples such as:

- “I love my feet because they are strong and help me run fast.”
- “I love my cheeks because they change colour and show how I feel, even when I don’t have words.”

Students create a drawing and sentence to share their ideas.

DEBRIEF AND CONSOLIDATION**Sharing & reflection (10 minutes)**

In a sharing circle, invite students to share their work.

Encourage reflection using questions such as:

- “*What did you learn about your body today?*”
- “*Did someone’s sharing make you think differently?*”

ACCOMMODATIONS

Use sentence starters such as:

- “I love my _____ because...”
- “My _____ helps me...”
- “My _____ shows how I feel when...”

Use words, labels, or speech bubbles.

Have students draw the picture and dictate their sentence.

**Differentiation & Inclusivity:**

- Use inclusive language (avoid “normal” or “perfect”).
- Allow multiple ways to express (drawing, talking, writing).
- Validate all body descriptions (size, ability, appearance).
- Provide quiet options for students who do not want to share aloud.

ASSESSMENT (OBSERVATION BASED)**Look for:**

- Students can identify a body part and its function or emotion
- Students use positive or neutral language about themselves
- Students participate respectfully in discussion

EXTENSION: NEXT STEPS

- Create a class book: *Our Bodies Help Us Shine* (using paper or a digital tool).
- Add photos or traced outlines of students.
- Connect to emotions lessons or mindfulness activities.

COMFORTABLE IN YOUR OWN SKIN:

UNDERSTANDING BODY IMAGE IN MEDIA (GRADES 5 TO 8)

BIG IDEA:

Being comfortable in your own skin doesn't mean feeling confident all the time.

It means accepting yourself as you grow, change, and learn.

CURRICULUM

CONNECTIONS:

Health and Physical Education

Overall expectation

D1/A1: Demonstrate an understanding of factors that influence personal well being and self concept.

Specific expectations:

- Identify ways self concept is influenced by media, peers, and society.
- Demonstrate self awareness and self acceptance.

Language – Media Literacy

- Analyze how media texts present information and influence attitudes.
- Identify missing or underrepresented perspectives.
- Think critically about whose voices and images are included.

Social Emotional Learning

LEARNING GOALS:

- I can explain what “comfortable in your own skin” means.
- I can think critically about how media images affect body image and confidence.
- I understand that confidence looks different for different people.

MATERIALS:

- Video: *50 People 1 Question* – “When Do You Feel Comfortable in Your Own Skin?” youtu.be/f0tEcxLDDd4?si=qPibCwIZ_oq2_INI
- Chart paper/digital board
- Student notebooks or reflection sheets

SUCCESS CRITERIA (SAMPLES):

- I contribute thoughtful ideas during discussion.
- I can identify at least one way media influences how people view themselves.
- I recognize that confidence can change over time.

MINDS ON (10 MINUTES)

Before viewing:

Brainstorming with students using the initial question: “What Does Comfortable in Your Own Skin Mean?”

Think-Pair-Share, students discuss:

- “What do you think ‘comfortable in your own skin’ means?”
- “What might make someone feel uncomfortable in their own skin?”
- “Do you think this feeling stays the same throughout your life? Why or why not?”

Focus on building vocabulary and a shared understanding around self esteem and body image (i.e., self esteem, confidence, body image, identity). Emphasize: There is no single “right” answer.

ACTION

- Viewing the video (5–7 minutes)
- Watch the video once without stopping.
- Ask students to listen to: feelings people mention; life experiences that affect confidence; differences in responses across age, gender, and background.

After viewing (15 minutes):

- Whole class discussion
- Create an anchor chart with two columns:
- Things That Can Build Confidence
- Things That Can Affect Confidence

Encourage students to consider internal factors (feelings, self talk) and external factors (media, comments from others, expectations).

Key ideas to discuss:

Confidence looks different for everyone; feeling confident and insecure at different times is normal.

Move discussion into critical media thinking around how media shapes “comfort” and confidence.

Use discussion questions such as:

- “Do media images usually show people feeling ‘comfortable in their own skin?’”
- “What kinds of bodies, faces, or lifestyles do we see most often?”
- “Who might feel left out or unseen in media?”



DEBRIEF AND CONSOLIDATION

Reflection Activity

Students complete one of the following (choice encouraged):

Option A: Written reflection

“I feel most comfortable in my own skin when...”

“One thing that affects how people feel about their bodies is...”

Option B: Media literacy response

Write a short paragraph or point form response: “If we mostly see one kind of image, how might that affect how people feel about themselves?”

Encourage students to consider concepts of unrealistic standards, editing and filters, and selective representation.

SHARING AND CLOSING REFLECTION (10 minutes)

Invite students to share with the class. Consider questions such as:

- “Did anything in the video surprise you?”
- “How can we be more mindful of how we talk about bodies – ours and others?”

End with statements that help reinforce that confidence is personal, changeable, and not based on appearance alone. Everyone’s journey with self esteem is different.

ACCOMMODATIONS

- Provide sentence starters or graphic organizers.
- Allow verbal reflection instead of writing.
- Encourage examples beyond appearance (skills, values, relationships).
- Normalize discomfort and growth across all ages.

ASSESSMENT (Observation & Reflection)

Look for:

- Thoughtful participation
- Use of new vocabulary
- Evidence of critical thinking about media messages
- Respectful listening and discussion

EXTENSION: NEXT STEPS

- Compare this video with advertisements or social media posts.
- Create a “media myth vs. reality” chart.
- Connect to lessons on digital citizenship and self talk.
- Write a response from a perspective not often seen in media.

Lesson adapted from the Jubilee Project and Dove Self-Esteem Project.