



Children's Book Network

Putting children and books on the same page

HAPPINESS PROJECT WEEK 1

Happiness Project Ideas for Adults

We want to make the CBN children happy. We can do some of that for them, but they need to think about happiness themselves and find ways to enjoy experiences as much as possible.

There are 5 main senses that we use to explore our world:

- Sight (Seeing)
- Sound (Listening)
- Touching (Feeling)
- Scent (Smelling)
- Taste (Eating)

We use different parts of our brain to bring information to our brains. This information can be pleasant or unpleasant – for example:

	Pleasant	Unpleasant
Sight	Sunset	Somebody crying
Sound	Music	Screeching tyres
Touch	Teddy bear	Thorn Tree
Scent	Rotten Fruit	Flowers
Taste	Chocolate	Vinegar

Some of these things make us careful of danger (rotten fruit, for example). Many things that we sense give us pleasure and make us happy like (eating chocolate while listening to our favourite music).

In this project, we are going to do some reading, writing and thinking that will make us happy using our senses.

To do this, we are going to do a lot of different kinds of reading about happiness, many examples of writing about happiness – and also creative activities and thinking.

In most sections you will also listen to music, taste happy things, think about how important touch is to us. – and examine ways of looking, and ways of really seeing what we are looking at.



HAPPINESS!

PROJECT FOR CHILDREN

We all want to be happy. Sometimes it is easy. On our birthdays we feel happy because we feel special. On the last day of school before the holidays, we feel happy. People feel happy when they get married or when they graduate from college.

But we can also be happy when small, small things happen. When times are difficult, we have to look for happiness – and thinking about the small, small things is where we will find it.

Looking for things that make us happy is a very important skill. Reading can be one of those ways to find happiness, when we use our imagination to go to other places and other times. Happiness is where you look for it.

Your big happiness notebook is yours to keep and for writing and drawing in. We would like to see what you have done sometimes, so we can see if this project is working. You can write as much as you like! You can use it to do writing and pictures of your own. Keep it safe!





READING

Happiness through our senses

We feel happy because we see, hear, touch, taste and smell things that make us smile. Seeing is usually given as the most important of these. Is it?
Now read some of these stories and see what senses you can find in them.

The first Day of Forever (Reading Aloud: Books supplied)

This story was written about the children of Arniston. Listen to it carefully and then stop to think.

- Why are the children at the harbour with their mothers?
- What emotion are they feeling?

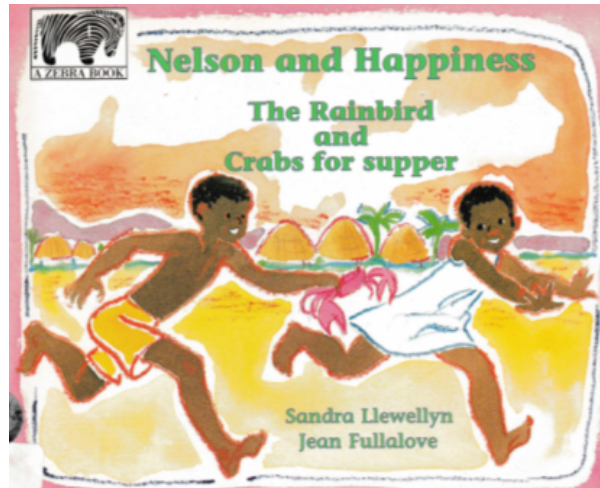
Now listen again.

- Where are the children going with their tractor tyre?
- What emotion are they feeling?

Now listen a third time, just for fun. In your notebook, write 5 sentences about how this story makes you feel.

Nelson and Happiness by Sandra Llewellyn (Reading aloud)

This story comes from KwaZulu Natal. You won't hear the rain-bird in Stanford, but you will hear the fish eagle down at the river. Listen for them next time you are there.



Read the story carefully and listen, look and feel what is happening in the story.

The Day the Storm Came (Quiet Reading)

It was pouring with rain. Hard rain that hurt when it fell on me. I was soaked and cold. My feet slid on the mud. When I fell, I could feel the cold oozy mud on my face and my hands. The smell of mud and wet grass was everywhere. I felt tears come to my eyes.

When I came in from the rain, the house was warm. Ma had the kettle boiling.

‘Take your wet school uniform off’ she said. ‘The kettle is boiling for some hot tea, and I have put the heater on for you.’

I sat in front of the heater, in my warm dressing gown and my thick, dry socks and I began to feel like a human again.

While I drank my tea, Ma took some rusks out of the oven. The smell was just wonderful!

‘Here,’ she said. ‘Have a fresh rusk with your tea.’

Outside, the rain still hammered down. But I was safe, and warm – and happy.

These feelings (hot, cold, oozy mud, warm dressing gown) are simple things. But they make us happy or unhappy. In this six-part reading course, we are going to look at many ways of making ourselves feel happy – and reading is one of them.

We will make you work quite hard! The more you put into this course, the more you will get out – and the happier you could feel.



Dancing on the sand (Quiet Reading)

In this ending to a book. Catuba and Peter have had many adventures. Now they are sitting on the beach. They are happy.

*(*Phosphorescence is the light some creatures give off, particularly under the sea. Usually it is a green light that flickers (comes and goes).*

The moon had not yet appeared. The stars spangled, bright in the southern sky. When I stood up, I saw the green of phosphorescence* under my feet. Catuba took some slow steps, faster and faster as his happiness grew. It was a wild dance, a dance of celebration, a dance of Africa.

The green light flickered under his feet and fireflies flickered around his head. He showed me I should join him and I felt the beat of the land in his steps. Our feet stamped in time. The stars blinked as we circled our fire. Fireflies flew and shooting stars shot. Catuba and I danced, danced with the fire of a million sea creatures at our heels.

Nyasha's Story (Quiet Reading)

Song of Nash and the children

Once, there was a girl and her name was Nyasha – although most people called her Nash.

Nash lived at the bottom end of Africa, where the sun usually shone and where the sea was blue, with white waves. In the winter, there were huge grey whales in the blue sea. You could see them, if you went to look. You could hear them if you cared to listen. They brought songs from the ice sea far to the south, songs of slow green glaciers that slid sweetly to the sea and became icebergs. The whales knew many ice secrets. Some they told in their songs. Some they kept quiet in their hearts.

Nash could dance as well as sing. She could laugh as well as smile. Sometimes she did all of these things at the same time – dancing and laughing and singing together. Sometimes she was quiet; thinking. She thought, sometimes, about the children.

The children lived in a place outside. It was outside many people's stories because they had never been there. The people had heard about them, and sometimes they worried about the children, but they didn't go and see them. They didn't find the stories of the children and the stories the children kept in their hearts.

Nash did. She danced with the children and she sang. She smiled at the them too, and she listened. She heard the stories in their songs and her voice sang with them. She made the



children happy. Nash was a person who listened. She listened to the whales and she listened to the people who watched the whales. She too sang some of her secrets, and some of them she kept in her heart.

When she went away to another land, to learn new things, the children missed Nash. They made letters on coloured paper with crayons and told her they loved her. They missed her and they wanted her to come home, to sing and play, and laugh and listen.

Nash couldn't come. It was not possible. But she thought and she thought. She had a friend. He was a boy. Maybe he was a boyfriend? But that was a song Nash kept in her heart. Her friend had a Mama who made beautiful books. And that is where the Happiness Project began.



READING FOR FACTS

Non-Fiction - How our senses work

This extract is from a book by Judy Tatchell called How our senses work. It is published by Usborne in England.

'Your body has lots of ways of finding out about the world around you. It uses things called senses.

- Your ears hear things
- Your skin feels things
- Your eyes see things
- Your tongue tastes things
- Your nose smells things



Your eyes, ears, skin, nose and tongue send messages to your brain. The messages travel along tiny pathways called nerves,

Your brain gets the messages, and then decides what to do.

WRITING (In your own happiness book)

Writing Exercises

- 1 What makes me happy? Think about what you have learned from the reading section and write 5 sentences about what makes you happy. Take time to think about this before you start.
- 2 Write five sentences that are facts about how we use our senses.
- 3 Now write a story called: *The day I was born*. Write about two of the people who were there, and what they felt when they saw a new person – YOU!
- 4 Now make an illustration for one (or all) of these writing exercises.

WORDS

Words can tell us very quickly how somebody feels. Have a look at these words and think whether they are happy, or unhappy words. Do they make you feel good?

Furry, slimy, fluffy, stinky, dreamy, warm, shivery, dark, shiny, dazzling, black, light, harsh, burning, smelly.

Now choose five words and write in your notebook about how they make you feel. What senses are you using when you write?

CALM AND PEACE

This year of 2020 has been difficult for everyone in the world. Our lives have changed everywhere. We need to think peaceful calm thoughts and search for happiness where we find it. Read this little story and then think about what it means.



Quiet Reading

It was very quiet. Tom could hear his own heart beating after the long climb up the hill. He lay back on the soft grass and let himself rest. Quiet. That's what he needed.

His heart grew quieter and he listened to his own breath going in and out, in and out. There was a bird singing. It was quite close. Tom let himself listen only to that sweet sound. Then he heard the sound of water – that was the river, far below him. It was also the little stream that ran down to the river.

He opened his eyes. When he turned his head, he could see little ants in the grass. They were busy little things, climbing and searching, running and stopping to look for seeds. Tom smiled. He liked ants.

He sat up. Down below was the village where he lived. He knew that people would be getting ready for the evening meal. Ouma was making stew. Suddenly, Tom could almost taste that stew! He had watched Ouma getting ready this morning, chopping carrots, slicing the small bit of meat she had bought at the shop yesterday. He could almost smell the onions!

Tom started to walk back down the hill. His mouth watered at the thought of the stew. Maybe it was time to go home? He didn't think about it, but he was happy.

PEOPLE AND HAPPINESS

We can't always choose happiness. But we can choose to look for it instead of just waiting for it to happen. Like Tom, we might find it in the small things.

In films and television there is much more drama about happiness. We begin to think it can only happen if we are rich and famous. We begin to believe that happiness is only about BIG things. Wrong!

GOOSEBUMPS (What word would you use?)

Feelings can give us goosebumps – not always scary feelings. Think about:



- A beautiful piece of music
- A soft cushion
- A lovely view
- Home
- The face of somebody you love

READING THE PICTURES

A Way to the stars. Let's make a picture book! Read the story and then make the pictures in the booklet in your pack! Only pictures, no words! Here are the words! Maybe draw the cover last when you have really worked on the story.

The boy wanted to find a way to the stars.
His friends just laughed
In your dreams! They said
But his dad said he would help.

They had some food
They had a think
They made a ladder
Up they went
Whoops!

They built a tower
Up they went.
Crash!
They built a rocket.
Up they went.
Crash!

And then a trampoline. A pair of wings.
A cannon!
Up! Up! Up! Up!
No! No! No! No! No!

What a mess! What a laugh!
They had some food.
They had a think.
They built a shed.
So beautiful.

They went inside.
So very dark.
They painted moons. They painted stars.
So beautiful and bright.
They fell asleep.



That's it! (For this week.) Let us know in your Big Black Workbook, what you liked and what you found difficult! This book will be your record to keep. Maybe when you are old (like 21 years old!) You can look back and see what you were thinking. Make it beautiful!

Happy Reading!
Love,
The CBN team.

REFERENCES AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We have quoted, with thanks, short extracts from several books that will be reviewed on CBN's website.

They are:

Usborne Flip-Flaps, *How do your senses work?* By Judy Tatchell with illustrations by Maria Wheatly.

My Story, Our Stories by the children of South Africa – story *My The first day of forever*, by the children of Boplaas Primary. These stories were first published in the Sunday Times as part of a project commissioned by the Parliament of South Africa.

Way to the Stars is from a book produced during the Covid 19 emergency for children everywhere. It is called: *The Book of Hopes*. The stories were collected by the author Kathrine Rundell and the book was published by Bloomsbury Children's Books. You can find out more about it at:

<https://www.bloomsbury.com/us/the-book-of-hopes-9781526629890/>

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Other writing given by Lesley Beake.