



IGNITE MY FUTURE

LESSON TITLE

If You're Happy and You Know It

Guiding Question: What does happiness mean?

SUBJECTS

English/Language Arts
Social Studies

COMPUTATIONAL THINKING PRACTICE

Fostering an Inclusive
Computing Culture

COMPUTATIONAL THINKING STRATEGIES

Abstract
Decompose

MATERIALS

Computers with internet access
(optional)

Copies of the World Happiness
Report 2020 (printed or online)

Paper and pencils

Sticky Notes

Large chart paper or whiteboard

[Consider This](#)
Student Capture Sheet

Ignite Curiosity

- Does where we live impact how happy we are?
- Are the things that make people happy the same in every culture?
- Can you measure happiness? Are some cultures happier than others?
- Does happiness have a cost?

In this lesson, students will analyze data from different countries around the world in order to determine if there are common keys to happiness. In **THINK**, students will review data from the World Happiness Report. They will find patterns and commonalities between cultures that have high scores in the report and contrast them with countries that had low scores. In **SOLVE**, students will use the computational thinking strategies of abstraction and decomposition to identify common components of happiness across the top-ranking cultures. In **CREATE** students work in groups to develop a three-page Happiness Impact Report in the style of the World Happiness Report. Their reports will demonstrate what the happiest countries in the world have in common. They will also provide recommendations for the world's least happy countries on how they should increase happiness. They will end their report with a call to action which summarizes why spreading happiness is important. In **CONNECT**, students will learn how the concepts of well-being and happiness are key concerns for world leaders and how they can help spread happiness through a variety of careers.

Students will be able to:

- **Analyze** data on happiness and identify patterns,
- **Evaluate** qualitative and quantitative data in order to identify common factors that contribute to happiness across cultures, and
- **Apply** various data collection methods to conducting research on happiness.



IGNITE MY FUTURE

Teacher note: Happiness is a highly subjective topic. Individual happiness cannot be fully defined by global studies such as the one presented here. None of the content in this lesson is meant to make students feel that they should be happy or unhappy based on their country of origin. Students will be asked to review data and make their own conclusions on one set of criteria used to measure 'happiness' and the bias associated with it. This topic is an excellent springboard to discuss social justice themes from a student's perspective.

Something to consider before you start

There is more than one set of data that tries to measure happiness on a global scale. While the data in the World Happiness Report is the largest collection of information on the topic, another interesting collection of data to look at is the [Better Living Index](#) by the OECD. While it only covers 34 nations, it emphasizes that [happiness is not a competition](#) and the story of each nation and region is unique and multifaceted.

To prepare your class to critically analyze the data in the lesson, share the TED Talk video on the [danger of a single story](#) (first 4 minutes). In her speech, Novelist Chimamanda Adichie shares that, "Our lives, our cultures, are composed of many overlapping stories. ...if we hear only a single story about another person or country, we risk a critical misunderstanding."



Students simulate the role of world leaders who are attending a global development summit. They will review the 2020 World Happiness Report to identify common characteristics of countries that have high scores and low scores.

1 Read the following to students:

John F. Helliwell, an editor of the annual happiness report, "explains that the report reflects a measure of general satisfaction with life and, more important, the confidence that one lives in a place where people take care of one another. Happy people don't have to smile all the time. They trust one another and take care of each other."

(Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/20/world/europe/world-happiness-report.html> retrieved April 16th 2020)

Imagine you are the representing Canada at a global development summit on the subject of happiness and well-being. Your country is among the happiest in the world, based on the 2020 World Happiness Report (11th out of 153). Other representatives have asked you to create a Happiness Impact Report that identifies common elements among the world's happiest countries and gives instructions to other countries on how their citizens can become happier. Can thinking like computers help make happier citizens? Let's find out!

2 Provide students with sticky notes and pencils or pens. Ask students to write one or two words on one sticky note that describe something that makes them happy.

3 Ask one student to share his or her experience of happiness and put their sticky notes on the board. Have each student come up to the board and put up their own sticky notes, grouping those that are similar.

4 When each student has put their sticky notes on the board, identify names for each of the groupings.

5 Summarize and check for understanding by asking the following critical thinking questions:

- Were the things that made us happy mostly similar or mostly different?
- What do you need in order to achieve happiness? Money? Time? Something else?

6 Divide students into groups. Distribute a copy of the [2020 World Happiness Report](#) to each group.

7 Instruct groups to identify the following elements of the report and record them on the [Consider This](#) student capture sheet:

- The criteria used in assessing happiness
- How happiness is measured in the report
- The happiest country and the least happy country
- The change in the happiest and least happy countries from the previous year
- Geographical/cultural similarities amongst the most and least happy countries

Teacher Prompt: "Each country in the report is ranked on six variables that relate to well-being, income, freedom, trust, healthy life expectancy, social support and generosity. Then those six factors are compared against 'Dystopia', an imaginary country that has the least happy people in the world that's used as a benchmark that all countries can be favourably compared to."

(Source: [Narcity](#), Retrieved April 16th, 2020)

 Find more easy-to-implement resources to integrate computational thinking practices into your classroom by visiting [ignitemyfutureinschool.ca](https://www.ignitemyfutureinschool.ca)



Students will review data about happiness among people of different cultures and abstract out common elements.

- 1 Instruct** students to remain in their groups. Each group will study the top five happiest countries in the world, the countries with the biggest change in happiness and the countries with the lowest happiness rankings.
- 2 Each group should research** the countries using the [Encyclopedia Britannica](#) and identify five common characteristics of the countries in each group.
- 3 When each group has completed their research,** check for understanding by asking the following critical questions:
 - How could the criteria used to gather data create bias in the results?
 - What did you learn by identifying the common elements of happiness and unhappiness?
 - Do you think that you could apply these common elements to any country to make it happier? Why or why not?
 - What are the benefits of “zooming out” to a global scale to research happiness? What are the downsides of looking at the big picture?
 - Why is it useful to abstract out common elements in the world’s happiest and unhappiest countries?
 - Could geography and history effect a country’s happiness? Why or why not?



- 1 Instruct** students that they will be working in their groups to develop a Happiness Impact Report. This report is meant to show other countries around the globe how they can make their citizens happier. Students must abstract out common elements of happiness among the world's happiest countries while also decomposing the elements of happiness into smaller pieces in order to apply them to different cultures and climates.
- 2 Each group's report should be divided into three sections:**
 - Common characteristics of happy countries
 - Provide recommendations for how a country can increase happiness in its citizens
 - End with a call to action that provides a thorough argument for why it's important that countries care about and measure the happiness of their citizens
- 3 Students may develop** reports in any of the following formats:
 - Google slides
 - PowerPoint
 - Microsoft Word
- 4 The final report** should be a three-page PDF document that can be printed and distributed among student groups.



Select one of the strategies listed below to help students answer these questions:

- How do this problem and solution connect to me?
- How do this problem and solution connect to real-world careers?
- How do this problem and solution connect to our world?

- 1 Write** the three questions on PPT or flip chart slides and invite students to share out responses.
- 2 Display** chart paper around the room, each with one question written on it. Ask students to write down their ideas on each sheet.
- 3 Assign** one of the questions to three different student groups to brainstorm or research, and then share out responses.
- 4 Invite** students to write down responses to each question on a sticky note, and collect them to create an affinity diagram of ideas.

How does this connect to students?

Students will gain insight into the feelings of happiness and pursue the research question "Are the building blocks of happiness the same across the world?"

Students will learn that while some characteristics of happiness are universal, others are highly dependent on culture and context. For instance, some cultures welcome the cold weather and it contributes to their happiness. Other cultures don't like cold weather as much and it reduces their happiness.

Students will research the link between mindset and economic growth and develop an argument for why world leaders should care about the happiness of their people.

How does this connect to careers?

Anthropologists use research skills to improve products and services in many fields such as community studies, ecology, cognitive psychology, international development, and police investigations.

Geographers consider how humans interact with the natural world, plan for health and well-being needs of communities and understand different perspectives on complex human activity.

Economists study how people use resources and make decisions. They must understand historical trends to make predictions about people's needs and future behaviors. The microeconomics of happiness includes the need to save for retirement and budgeting for everyday life.

Psychologists research emotional and physical health. They study human behavior in economies, family systems and other social groups.

How does this connect to our world?

Happiness contributes to motivation. Achieving happiness requires setting goals and working to attain those goals.

As students develop their Happiness Impact Reports, they gain insight into how they can improve their own lives and help others develop skills that improve their lives. As more individuals understand happiness, societies can improve the human condition.

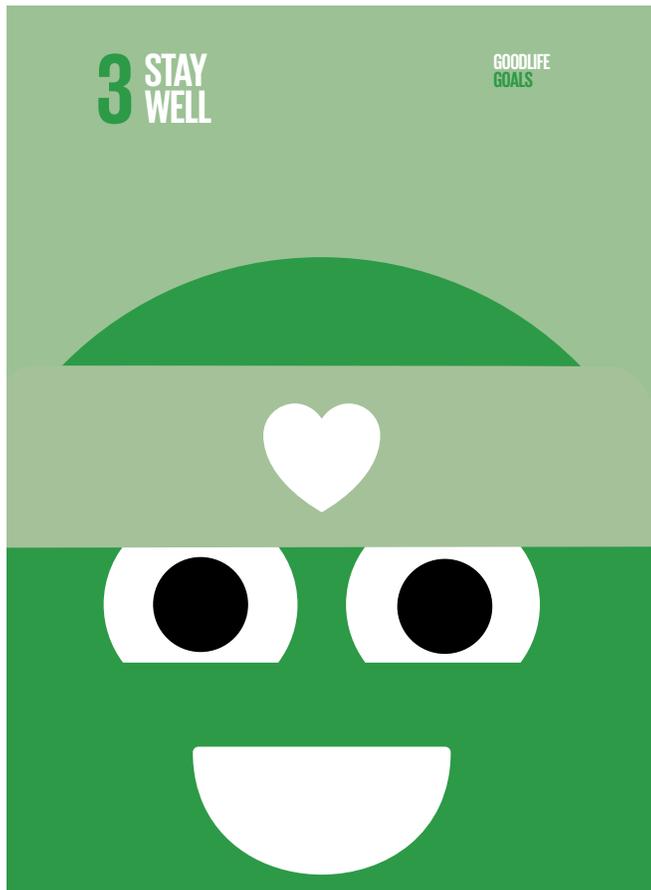
Curriculum Connections

UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



“For the goals to be reached, everyone needs to do their part: governments, the private sector, civil society and **people like you.**”
-The United Nations

“The Sustainable Development Goals are the blueprint for a better future. And together we can reach them. By following the Good Life Goals, we can all help make tomorrow better than today. Let’s do this! #GoodLifeGoals”



STAY WELL
Actions

3

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1
Learn about, and share, ways to stay healthy | 4
Value mental health and well-being |
| 2
Wash your hands and exercise regularly | 5
Demand medical care and vaccinations for all |
| 3
Stay safe on or near roads | |



Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Source:

[The Good Life Goals by Futerra Sustainability Communications Ltd and 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Lifestyles and Education Programme](#) is licenced under CC BY-ND 4.0.

Global Competencies

CMEC (Council of Ministers of Education, Canada) Pan-Canadian Global Competencies Descriptions

Highlighted sections apply to this lesson

Global Competency	Definition	Student Descriptors
Collaboration	Collaboration involves the interplay of the cognitive (including thinking and reasoning), interpersonal, and intrapersonal competencies necessary to participate effectively and ethically in teams. Ever-increasing versatility and depth of skill are applied across diverse situations, roles, groups, and perspectives in order to co-construct knowledge, meaning, and content, and learn from, and with, others in physical and virtual environments.	<p>Students participate in teams by establishing positive and respectful relationships, developing trust and acting co-operatively and with integrity.</p> <p>Students learn from and contribute to the learning of others by co-constructing knowledge, meaning, and content.</p> <p>Students assume various roles on the team, respect a diversity of perspectives, and address disagreements and manage conflict in a sensitive and constructive manner.</p> <p>Students network with a variety of communities/groups and use an array of technology appropriately to work with others.</p>
Communication	Communication involves receiving and expressing meaning (e.g., reading and writing, viewing and creating, listening and speaking) in different contexts and with different audiences and purposes. Effective communication increasingly involves understanding both local and global perspectives, societal and cultural contexts, and adapting and changing using a variety of media appropriately, responsibly, safely, and with regard to one's digital footprint.	<p>Students communicate effectively in different contexts in oral and written form in French and/or English through a variety of media.</p> <p>Students communicate using the appropriate digital tools and create a positive digital footprint.</p> <p>Students ask effective questions to acquire knowledge, listen to understand all points of view, voice their own opinions, and advocate for ideas.</p> <p>Students gain knowledge about a variety of languages and understand the cultural importance of language.</p>

Global Competencies cont.

Highlighted sections apply to this lesson

Global Competency	Definition	Student Descriptors
<p>Global Citizenship and Sustainability</p>	<p>Global citizenship and sustainability involve reflecting on diverse worldviews and perspectives and understanding and addressing ecological, social, and economic issues that are crucial to living in a contemporary, connected, interdependent, and sustainable world. It also includes the acquisition of knowledge, motivation, dispositions, and skills required for an ethos of engaged citizenship, with an appreciation for the diversity of people, perspectives, and the ability to envision and work toward a better and more sustainable future for all.</p>	<p>Students understand the ecological, economic, and social forces, their interconnectedness, and how they affect individuals, societies, and countries.</p> <p>Students take actions and responsible decisions that support quality of life for all, now and in the future.</p> <p>Students recognize discrimination and promote principles of equity, human rights, and democratic participation.</p> <p>Students understand Indigenous traditions and knowledge and its place in Canada, learn from and with diverse people, develop cross-cultural understanding, and understand the forces that affect individuals, societies, and nations.</p> <p>Students engage in local, national, and global initiatives to make a positive difference.</p> <p>Students contribute to society and to the culture of local, national, global, and virtual communities in a responsible, inclusive, accountable, sustainable, and ethical manner.</p> <p>Students as citizens participate in networks in a safe and socially responsible manner.</p>

Global Competencies cont.

Highlighted sections apply to this lesson

Global Competency	Definition	Student Descriptors
<p>Critical Thinking and Problem Solving</p>	<p>Critical thinking and problem solving involve addressing complex issues and problems by acquiring, processing, analysing, and interpreting information to make informed judgments and decisions. The capacity to engage in cognitive processes to understand and resolve problems includes the willingness to achieve one's potential as a constructive and reflective citizen. Learning is deepened when situated in meaningful, real-world, authentic experiences.</p>	<p>Students will solve meaningful, real-life, complex problems by taking concrete steps to address issues and design and manage projects.</p> <p>Students will engage in an inquiry process to solve problems as well as acquire, process, interpret, synthesize, and critically analyse information to make informed decisions (i.e., critical and digital literacy).</p> <p>Students will see patterns, make connections, and transfer what they have learned from one situation to another, including in real world applications.</p> <p>Students will construct, relate, and apply knowledge to all domains of life such as school, home, work, friends, and community.</p> <p>Students will analyze the functions and interconnections of social, economic, and ecological systems.</p>
<p>Innovation, Creativity and Entrepreneurship</p>	<p>Innovation, creativity, and entrepreneurship involve the ability to turn ideas into action to meet the needs of a community. The capacity to enhance concepts, ideas, or products to contribute new-to-the-world solutions to complex economic, social, and environmental problems involves leadership, taking risks, independent/unconventional thinking and experimenting with new strategies, techniques, or perspectives, through inquiry research. Entrepreneurial mindsets and skills involve a focus on building and scaling an idea sustainably.</p>	<p>Students formulate and express insightful questions and opinions to generate novel ideas.</p> <p>Students contribute solutions to complex economic, social, and environmental problems or to meet a need in a community in a number of ways including; enhancing concepts, ideas, or products through a creative process, taking risks in their thinking and creating, making discoveries through inquiry research, and by hypothesizing and experimenting with new strategies or techniques.</p> <p>Students demonstrate leadership, initiative, imagination, creativity, spontaneity, and ingenuity in a range of creative processes and motivate others with an ethical entrepreneurial spirit.</p>

Global Competencies cont.

Highlighted sections apply to this lesson

Global Competency	Definition	Student Descriptors
<p>Learning to learn and to be self-directed and self-aware</p>	<p>Learning to learn and to be self-directed and self-aware, means: becoming aware and demonstrating agency in one's process of learning, including the development of dispositions that support motivation, perseverance, resilience, and self-regulation. Belief in one's ability to learn (growth mindset), combined with strategies for planning, monitoring and reflecting on one's past, present, and future goals, potential actions and strategies, and results. Self-reflection and thinking about thinking (metacognition) promote lifelong learning, adaptive capacity, well-being, and transfer of learning in an ever-changing world.</p>	<p>Students learn the process of learning (metacognition) (e.g., independence, goal-setting, motivation) and believe in their ability to learn and grow (growth mindset).</p> <p>Students self-regulate in order to become lifelong learners and reflect on their thinking, experience, values, and critical feedback to enhance their learning. They also monitor the progress of their own learning.</p> <p>Students develop their identity in the Canadian context (e.g., origin and diversity) and consider their connection to the environment. They cultivate emotional intelligence to understand themselves and others. They take the past into account to understand the present and approach the future.</p> <p>Students develop personal, educational, and career goals and persevere to overcome challenges to reach these goals. They adapt to change and show resilience to adversity.</p> <p>Students manage various aspects of their lives: physical, emotional (relationships, self-awareness), spiritual, and mental well-being.</p>

Consider This

Directions: Use information found in the [2020 World Happiness Report](#) to respond to the following questions.

What criteria does the World Happiness Report use to measure happiness?

You can learn more about this by reading about [Canada's performance in the survey](#).

What countries are the world's happiest? Why?

What countries are the world's least happy? Why?

Is there bias in the ranking system? Why or why not?

What similarities do you notice about the world's happiest countries? What differences do you notice?

Do you think that someone from the happiest or least happy countries would agree with their ranking? Why or why not?

What are the benefits of ranking systems? What are the drawbacks?