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| **Grade** | **Course** |
| **8** | **ELA** |
| **Unit Focus** |
| **Students will read “Can We Cultivate Our Own Happiness” to determine the central idea and evaluate the argument. Students will apply the information gained from the text to develop a deeper understanding of what makes them happy.** |
| **Standard(s)** |
| **8.RI.KID.2****8.RI.KID.8****8.RI.KID.4** | **8.RI.KID.1****8.W.2** |
| **Resource(s)** |
| **Texts:** * **“Can We Cultivate Our Own Happiness”**

<https://www.commonlit.org/en/texts/can-we-cultivate-our-own-happiness>**Videos** * <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ARmVvZU68Pw>
* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MOWDb2TBYDg>
 |
| **Task(s)** |
| Day 1 – Read the article: “Can We Cultivate Our Own Happiness?”- Determine word meanings and connotationsDay 2 – Close Read article to determine Central Idea of text and provide textual evidence– Comprehension QuestionsDay 3 - Synthesize text and related video – SummarizationsDay 4 – Create Happiness vision board – Text/Video to self-connectionsDay 5 – Chart happiness category - Evaluate argument |
| **Expected Outcomes** |
| **Students will determine which category of happiness they identify with and develop an action plan on how to increase their happiness with consideration to that category.** |
| **Additional Instructional Resources** |
| **I-Ready****All Rutherford County 6-8 grade students now have access to I-Ready ELA lessons. These lessons can be accessed via Clever. All available lessons have been assigned.****PBS Lessons**<https://www.tn.gov/education/pbsteaching.html> |

**Can We Cultivate Our Own Happiness?**

By ABC News 2002

*Martin Seligman coined the term “positive psychology” to describe his exploration of how people can improve their own happiness. In this report from 2002, ABC News explains Seligman’s research and findings in the field of positive psychology. As you read, take notes on how Seligman defines happiness.*

1 If you want to be happy, forget about winning the lottery, getting a nose job, or securing a raise.

2 In his new book, *Authentic Happiness*, psychologist Martin Seligman argues that overall lifetime happiness is not the result of good genes, money, or even luck.

3 Instead, he says we can boost our own happiness by capitalizing on the strengths and traits that we already have, including kindness, originality, humor, optimism, and generosity. He has christened the discipline “Positive Psychology,” arguing that we would be better off building on our own strengths rather than bemoaning, and, hence, trying to repair, our weaknesses.

4 By frequently calling upon their strengths, people can build up natural buffers against misfortune and negative emotions, he said.

**An Epidemic of Depression?**

5 Seligman is leading the charge in what might be called Happiness Revolution in psychology.

6 Since World War II, psychologists have focused on fixing what is broken — repairing psychosis, and neurosis. Research has piled up steadily when it comes to looking at patients who are neurotic or dysfunctional, while the happy or joyful people among us have received little scientific scrutiny.

7 When Seligman did a search to find academic articles about such “positive psychology” he found only 800 out of 70,000.

8 “Psychologists tend to be concerned with taking a negative 8 person, and helping him get to negative 2,” said Seligman, a University of Pennsylvania psychology professor. “My aim is to take a plus 2 person and boost him to a plus 6.”

9 In the last 50 years, statistics have shown that we are less happy as a people.

10 “While our quality of life has increased dramatically over that time, and we’ve become richer, we’re in an epidemic of depression,” Seligman said. “Depression is 10 times more common now, and life satisfaction rates are down as well.”

11 Seligman argues that the new science he writes about is shifting psychology’s paradigm away from its narrow-minded focus on pathology, victimology, and mental illness towards positive emotion, virtue and strength, and positive institutions that increase people’s happiness quotient.

**Three Roads to Happiness**

12 Science has shown that there are three distinct roads to being a happy person — though happy might not mean what you think. Material goods — even simple ones like ice cream cones, and massages — are only stimuli, things that fleetingly give people a boost.

13 Research found that lottery winners are no happier years after their windfall than they had been before, and that paraplegics tended to be no less happy in the years after their misfortune than they were before.

14 “We used to think that a happy person was just someone who giggled a lot,” Seligman said. “But if you define it solely by how much you laugh, you confine yourself to one category.”

15 Here are the three happy people categories that Seligman has set forth in the book:

16 The Good Life: Some happy people are low on pleasure, but high on “absorption and immersion,” meaning they take great pleasure in the things that they do.

17 “Think of these people as hobbyists who become so immersed in their work that time ceases to exist,” Seligman said. “A person who enjoys gardening discovers that the day has gone by without notice, for example.”

18 The Pleasant Life: This is someone who laughs a lot, and thrives on pleasures, such as eating good food. These are people who seem surrounded with contentment, pleasure and hope.

19 The Meaningful Life: Those who apply their highest strengths and virtues for the greater good, as through charities and volunteer work, religion or politics.

20 There are vast benefits to leading a happier life, Seligman said. A study of cloistered nuns found that those scoring high on happiness tests at age 20 lived the longest. (Cloistered nuns make for good research subjects, since variables such as environment and financial status are the same for all.)

21 To cultivate happiness, you must first identify which of the aforementioned happiness categories you fall into, then ascertain your individual strengths and virtues. Next, apply the qualities in such a way as to enhance your happiness-generating category.

22 For example a student of Seligman’s who fell into the “good life” category was a grocery bagger and did not like it. Further testing identified that one of his key strengths was excelling in social interaction. So Seligman advised the student to try to make the check-out process the social highlight of each of his customers’ day.

**Day 1 Task: Vocabulary**

As you read the article, write down the following vocabulary words to clarify meaning. Look up each word in dictionary to determine meaning. Choose the best synonym for each word based on how it is used in the text. Determine if each word has a positive, negative, or neutral connotation (feeling associated with the word and how it’s used).

Positive connotation means the impact of the word is positive.

Negative connotation means the impact of the word is negative.

Neutral connotation means the impact of the word does not reflect positive or negative.

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| **Vocabulary Word** | **Synonym****Directions: Choose between the 4 words. Circle the one the most reflects the synonym of the word from the article.** | **Word Connotation****Directions: Determine the impact of the author’s word choice.****(Positive/Negative/Neutral)**  |
| **Authentic** | Sham/Genuine/Fake/Unreal |  |
| **Capitalizing** | Defund/Gain/Lose/Take back |  |
| **Bemoan** | Laugh/Cheer/Mourn/Smile |  |
| **Buffers** | Heighten/Intensify/Sharpen/Barrier |  |
| **Revolution** | Turn/Authority/Command/Control |  |
| **Paradigm** | Worst/Pattern/Worst/Lie |  |
| **Ascertain** | Determine/Disprove/Ignore/Overlook |  |

**Day 2 – Close read for better understanding (Summarization and Comprehension Questions)**

***First, the synonym chart filled out from DAY 1.***

Utilize your synonym chart as you re-read the text to help you further comprehend the text and identify the central idea. Pay close attention to Paragraphs 16, 17, 19, and 21.

Summarize each paragraph right after you read it.

Answer the following questions that focus on determining the Central Idea and providing evidence.

1. **Which paragraph would be the best choice that reflects the central idea of the article?**
2. **Paragraph 16**
3. **Paragraph 17**
4. **Paragraph 19**
5. **Paragraph 21**
6. **Summarize the answer you chose from Question 1, write your answer in first person point of view. (Hint: You will use “I” statements.)**

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1. **Refer back to your answer to Question 1. Explain why the answer you chose is the correct answer. (Think: What is the central idea, and what in that paragraph best reflects the central idea?)**

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**Day 3 – Comparing Text and Videos. Click on links below to access videos**

**Cultivating Happiness Video** - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ARmVvZU68Pw>

**Happy – Pharrell feat. Minions Video** - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MOWDb2TBYDg>

**Synthesize more than 1 medium (more than one way to express a thought).**

**There is always more than one way to say the same thing or something similar. Look at the 2 videos and compare them to “Can We Cultivate Our Own Happiness?” article. All 3 mediums share meanings of being happy and ways to achieve it. Synthesize the central idea of the text and the 2 videos.**

**Guided practice.**

1. **Write the gist of the text in 5 words or less.**
2. **Look at first video. Write the central idea of this video in 5 words or less.**
3. **Look at second video. Write the central idea of this video in 5 words or less.**
4. **Look at all three of your central ideas from each medium. Pull out similar words or meanings from each medium. This is how you synthesize information to come up with ONE central thought.**

**Can We Cultivate Our Own Happiness? \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_**

**Cultivating Happiness (Video) \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_**

**Happy – Pharrell feat. Minions \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_**

**Your synthesized/combined central thought about the article and the two videos**

**\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_**

1. Which medium (article or either video) would you use to teach a lesson on being happy? Explain your answer by presenting a claim and evidence from text or video that backs up why this is the best medium that teaches one to be happy. Include an example from your own life experience to add to help make your argument sound.

**Article – Can We Cultivate Our Own Happiness?”**

**Video 1 – Joy: Cultivating Happiness**

**Video 2 – HAPPY – Pharrell Williams (feat. Minions)**

**The best medium to teach one to cultivate happiness is\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**

**I think this is the best medium because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**

**I connect my life with this article/video in this way\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**

**Day 4 - Create Happiness vision board – Text/Video to self-connections**

Based on the article you’ve read and videos you watched, create your own happiness vision board. This board should reflect the things that make you most happy. On a piece of paper, chart/doodle all the words that come to your mind which elicits your happiness. Come up with at least 10 words. Draw words in different fonts, sizes and colors. Create something you can hang up and refer to anytime you feel you need a boost of happiness.

**Example:**

|  |
| --- |
|   **friends**  **friends****Happiness is…***Pets*Family |

**Day 5 - Chart happiness category - Evaluate argument**

Refer to Summary activity you completed on Day 2. Paragraph 15 of the article introduces the three happy people categories. Paragraphs 16-19 explains the three distinct ways of being a happy person. Hint (you should already have these summarized from Day 2 activity). After Re-reading these paragraphs and your summary, decide which of these categories helps to define your type of happy. Use this chart to help you organize your thoughts.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **The Good Life** | **The Pleasant Life** | **The Meaningful Life** |
| **Add your summary to each paragraph here**  |  |  |  |
| **Add your personal experience or evidence here** |  |  |  |

**Now that you have charted the different categories of happiness, this should better help you understand what cultivates your individual happiness.**

**Quick write:**

**On the back or bottom of your happiness vision board created on Day 4, write out your plan of action on how you can increase your happiness. Refer to the happiness category completed today as you write down at least 2 goals.**

**Goal 1:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Goal 2:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**