

Emotions Charades:

Babar experiences a wide range of emotions in *The Story of Babar* by Jean de Brunhoff. The accompanying music composed by Francis Poulenc beautifully reflects many of the emotions Babar feels. In this activity participants will name at least three emotions, discuss specific moments when those emotions come up in the story, then take turns acting those moments out.

Materials Needed: Several sheet of paper and a writing utensil to write or draw.

Directions:

Step 1: Prepare Your List of Emotions

- Brainstorm a list of emotions. You will need at least three emotions for this activity. For example: Joy, fear, and excitement.
- Write each emotion on a slip of paper. If you have pre-readers in your group, you may want to have them draw a face expressing the emotion on the paper as well.

Step 2: Connect Your Emotions to an Action

- Draw a slip of paper and work together to think of a time in *The Story of Babar* when Babar or another character felt that emotion. Alternative: Make a personal connection to a time someone in your group has felt the emotion on the slip of paper.
- Identify an action to go with each emotion. For example if the emotion is fear, and the time in the story is after the hunter attacked Babar and his mother, the action could be running away. Or if the emotion is joy, and the time in the story is when Babar saw his cousins Celeste and Arthur, the action might be smiling. If you haven't listened to the program yet, think of an action you might do if you were feeling that emotion. Example: If you were mad, you might frown and stomp your foot.
- Practice acting out your ideas.

Step 3: Play Emotion Charades!

- Put your slips of paper in a box or a bag.
- Person #1 pulls a paper out of the bag and looks at the emotion, being careful not to let the others see.
- Person #1 performs an action associated with that emotion, or acts out a scene associated with the emotion.
- The other members of the group guess which emotion person #1 is acting out.
- When someone guesses correctly, person #1 says, "You named it!"
- Repeat until everyone has had a turn.

Closing:

- How do you feel now? Excited? Happy? Proud? Or maybe all that acting has made you feel hungry or tired and ready for a nap. However you feel, give yourselves a round of applause and save your slips of paper to play Emotion Charades another day.

“Name it to Tame It: When big, right-brain emotions are raging out of control, help your kids tell the story about what’s upsetting them. In doing so, they’ll use their left brain to make sense of their experience and feel more in control. Let the clouds of emotion roll by: Remind kids that feelings come and go.”
- Daniel J. Siegel and Tina Payne Bryson, Refrigerator Sheet: *The Whole-Brain Child*

DRAMA

The Story of Babar

Bonus:

- Try this same activity using other stories or books that you know. Soon you will have a library of emotions and experiences to refer to and discuss. When someone in your family is feeling strong emotions you can make a connection to how Babar or another character felt in a similar situation, then “name it to tame it,” recognizing and naming your feelings to help your brain to calm down and feel more in control.
- To learn together about the science of our brains and emotions, check out videos or books by Dr. Dan Siegel about his hand model of the brain and discover more about what he means by “name it to tame it.”
- For a challenge, follow [this link](#) to listen to the musical program *The Story of Babar* again, and see if you can hear the emotions you chose in Francis Poulenc’s music.