

Positive Attitude

ATTITUDE means the way someone thinks, feels, and responds to situations. Attitude is a person's outlook on life.

A POSITIVE ATTITUDE means that a person looks for good in every situation.

LESSON 1

Read the definition of **POSITIVE ATTITUDE**. On the board, draw a picture of a glass with the fill line in the middle. Ask students if they would describe the glass as “half full” or “half empty.” Explain that people often use this simple example to illustrate a positive outlook. By seeing the glass as half full, they are focusing on the amount of water that is still in the glass, rather than worrying about how much is already gone. Consider a twist to the idea by asking the class to imagine that the glass is filled with nasty tasting medicine. Ask them which description, half full or half empty, would now show a positive attitude. (You’ve already taken half, so there is only half to go.) Discuss their ideas.

School/Home Link - Ask students to repeat the activity of the “half full glass” with a family member and discuss how it illustrates having a Positive Attitude.

LESSON 2

Review the definition of **POSITIVE ATTITUDE**. Teach students that a “Can-Do” attitude is another name used to identify a positive attitude. Draw two circles on the board and write the words “**I CAN**” in one circle and “**I CAN’T**” in the other. Read: **There is power in both of these phrases. “I CAN” provides energy and motivation, while “I CAN’T” seems to create doubt and gloom. A “Can-Do” attitude can help you overcome all kinds of challenges. Discuss, or have class-members role-play, what will happen if the student says “I can” or “I can’t” in each of the following scenarios.**

- **Taylor thinks it would be fun to enter a project in the science fair, but is nervous since he has never done it before. He says...** (I can’t / I can).
- **Meredith wants to try to win the class spelling bee. When she sees the hard words on the list, she says...** (I can’t / I can).

Mark a line through the “**I CAN’T**” circle telling students to try to avoid using that phrase. Encourage students to build a “**CAN-DO**” attitude.

School/Home Link - Ask students to talk to a family member about the power in the phrase “**I CAN**”.

LESSON 3

Review the definition of **POSITIVE ATTITUDE**. Discuss the meaning of the saying: “**Every cloud has a silver lining**.” Explain that there is something to be gained, even from things that go wrong or don’t turn out as planned. Write on the board: “**Look for the Silver Lining**.” Teach students that it takes practice and determination to be hopeful and upbeat when bad things happen, but it is worth all the effort! Scientific studies show that optimistic people are healthier, happier, and more successful than people who are negative. Read the following situations and allow students to discuss positives and negatives about each example.

- **You forgot your lunch on the school bus.** (“I am going to be hungry,” or “I am lucky to have a friend who will share with me.”)
- **Your best friend is moving to another school.** (“I am really sad. I will be so lonely” or “I am glad he is close enough so I can go visit.”)
- **You missed scoring an A on your math quiz by one point.** (“I am so mad – that stinks!” or “I was so close, I’ll work hard for an ‘A’ on tomorrow’s test.”)

School/Home Link - Ask students to talk with a family member about the importance of thinking positively.

LESSON 4

Review the definition of **POSITIVE ATTITUDE**. Ask students to raise their hand if they like eating lemons. If students raise their hand, have fun by having them explain what they like about the sour, mouth-puckering taste. Ask students to raise their hand if they like lemonade. Write the following saying on the board: **When life gives you lemons, make lemonade**. Ask students how this saying relates to having a positive attitude. Explain that it means turning something negative into something that is positive. Consider writing a simple Homemade Lemonade recipe on the board for the students to copy. (Squeeze 4 fresh lemons; add ½ cup sugar and 2 quarts of cold water. Mix well and pour over ice cubes. Enjoy!)

School/Home Link - Ask students to interpret the expression “**When life gives you lemons, make lemonade**” to a family member.

LESSON 5

Review the definition of **POSITIVE ATTITUDE**. Write on the board: **I CHOOSE MY ATTITUDE**. Teach your students that having a positive attitude is a choice each person can make. Explain that while people and circumstances can make us mad or sad, we alone choose how we respond. Read the quote by Irving Berlin: “**Life is 10 percent what you make it and 90 percent how you take it**.” Discuss what the quote means. Help students understand that much of what happens in life is in not within their direct control (illness, accidents, other people’s choices), but how they respond is completely (or 100%) their choice. Reinforce the idea from the quote by asking students to complete the following math problems. $90 \div 10 = \underline{\hspace{1cm}}$ (9) Ask: **Which is the dividend? Which is the quotient?** As an extended lesson, ask students to think of other examples using a mathematical process to describe the benefits of having a positive attitude. An example would be, a positive attitude can sum up all the good in a day, or positive attitudes multiply success, etc. Tell students to remember the examples the next time they have to respond to a difficult situation.

School/Home Link - Ask students to interpret the quote discussed in class to a family member and ask for examples of how it applies in their family.