

# Lesson Plan: Social Detectives

**Target Grade:** 3rd Grade (Applicable Up or down in Grades and group composition)

**Group Size:** 3 Students

**Focus:** Pragmatics (Social Cues) & Social-Emotional Learning (Problem Scaling)

## 1. Objective

Students will identify non-verbal social cues in others and determine the "size" of a social problem to choose an appropriate reaction.

## 2. Materials Needed

- **Social Detective Scenario Cards** (included below)
- **Size of the Problem Visual** (included below)
- A "Detective" prop (optional: magnifying glass or paper badge)

## 3. Instructions for Implementation

### Step 1: Introduction (5 Minutes)

- Explain that today, the students are "Social Detectives."
- **The Mission:** Detectives look for "clues" on people's faces and bodies to see how they feel. They also check if a problem is a "Big Deal" or a "Little Deal."

### Step 2: Investigation (10 Minutes)

- Use the **Social Detective Scenario Cards**.
- Read a scenario aloud.
- Ask the Group: 1. "What are the clues?" (Eyes, mouth, hands, voice).  
2. "How is the person feeling?"
- Have the students practice the facial expressions described in the cards to build empathy.

### Step 3: Scaling the Problem (10 Minutes)

- Show the **Size of the Problem Visual**.
- Re-read the scenarios. For each one, ask: "Is this a Level 1 (Tiny), Level 3 (Medium), or Level 5 (Emergency) problem?"
- Discuss the "Expected Reaction": "If I lose a pencil, should I scream like it's a Level 5 problem?"

## Step 4: Wrap-Up (5 Minutes)

- Ask each student to name one "clue" they can look for when talking to a friend (e.g., "I can look at their eyes to see if they are bored").
- Dismiss students back to class.

## 4. Prepared Assets

### Social Detective Scenario Cards

*Cut these out or display them to the group.*

Scenario	Clues to Look For
<b>Scenario A:</b> You are telling a story. Your friend is looking at their watch and leaning away from you.	Eyes looking away, body turned, checking time. (Feeling: Bored/In a hurry)
<b>Scenario B:</b> You accidentally bumped into a classmate's desk. Their face is red, their fists are clenched, and they are breathing fast.	Red face, tight fists, heavy breathing. (Feeling: Angry)
<b>Scenario C:</b> A friend is sitting alone. Their head is down, and their shoulders are slumped.	Head down, quiet, slumped posture. (Feeling: Sad/Lonely)

### Size of the Problem Visual

#### Level 1: Tiny Problem

- *Example:* I lost my eraser; I got an answer wrong.
- *Reaction:* Stay calm, solve it myself.

#### Level 2: Little Problem

- *Example:* Someone cut in line; I can't find my favorite book.
- *Reaction:* Use a "bug and a wish" (It bugs me when..., I wish you would...).

#### Level 3: Medium Problem

- *Example:* I had a small argument with a friend; I tripped and scraped my knee.
- *Reaction:* Ask an adult for help or talk it out.

#### Level 4: Big Problem

- *Example:* Someone is being mean on purpose; I am feeling very sick.

- *Reaction:* Need an adult immediately.

### **Level 5: Emergency**

- *Example:* Someone is hurt; there is a fire.
- *Reaction:* Stop everything and get help now!

**SLP Note:** For this specific group, if SEL concerns involve "over-reacting" to small glitches, spend extra time comparing Level 1 problems to Level 1 reactions.