

## Marcus Aurelius | Lesson Plan

How does Marcus Aurelius' life demonstrate emotional balance as a key to a healthy attitude?

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Students will understand that there is an appropriate time and place to express emotion. They will recognize the meaning of maintaining a stoic attitude, as Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius did when facing challenges.

### Learning Objectives:

- Describe the military career of Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius and the role a stoic attitude played in his success as a ruler.
- List ways to combat negative feelings to achieve emotional balance.
- Recognize the importance of choosing to focus on things in which they have control.

### Key Vocabulary:

- **Emperor:** The ruler of a country or region.
- **Barbarian:** A person without culture, refinement, or education.
- **Stoic:** Staying calm even when things are challenging.
- **Philosopher:** A person who observes, does experiments, and thinks deeply.

**Educational Standards:** CCRA.L.1, CCRA.L.2, CCRA.L.4, CCRA.W.4, CCRA.R.7, CCRA.SL.1, CCRA.SL.2, CCRA.SL.4, CCRA.W.2

**Academic Subject Areas:** Biography, Character Development, Hard Work

### What You'll Need

- Video: *Marcus Aurelius: The Wise Roman Emperor* (Watch [Here](#))
- Worksheet: *Marcus Aurelius: The Wise Roman Emperor* (Click [Here](#))

### Lesson Plan (45 minutes)

Warm-Up: (20 minutes)

1. Instruct students to "act out" the following emotions with their faces as you name each one.
  - happiness
  - sadness
  - disappointment
  - excitement
  - fear
  - boredom
  - anger



- surprise
  - embarrassment
  - frustration
  - jealousy
  - bravery
  - calm
2. Explain that it is normal to feel emotions—good and bad (we all do!), but it isn't always wise to express every emotion we feel in every situation.
  3. Ask students for examples of times when it might not be wise to express emotions (examples could include excessive excitement in a bragging way or being a “bad sport” during a competition).
  4. Communicate that the upcoming video will feature a Roman Emperor named Marcus Aurelius and reveal ways he remained calm, even in stressful situations.
  5. Display the “Marcus Aurelius Worksheet” and distribute individual copies to students.
  6. Read over the worksheet as a class so students know what to listen for during the video.
  7. Invite students to predict what they might learn about Marcus Aurelius.

Watch and Complete: (15 minutes)

1. Watch the video.
2. Pause throughout the video to allow students to complete answers on the worksheet. Assist as needed.

Wrap-Up: (10 minutes)

1. Allow students 10 minutes to complete the worksheet independently.
2. Invite volunteers to share their answers to the chart on question #10.
3. Wrap up the lesson by reminding students that it's normal to feel different emotions, but it's important to choose when and how to express them. Marcus Aurelius remained calm even in tough situations by practicing a stoic attitude. Students should choose to focus on things they can control and find ways to combat negative feelings in order to achieve emotional balance.
4. Collect the worksheet as a formative assessment or participation grade.

**Don't have time for the full lesson? Quick Activity (15-20 minutes)**

Distribute the worksheet and allow students to complete it while they follow along with the video.