

# Mood (Affect)

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## OBJECTIVES/RATIONALE

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Emotion—or *affect*, as it is called by psychologists—gives richness and meaning to our world and depth and scope to the “human experience”. When affect becomes inappropriately extreme, emotion can become a source of overwhelming psychological distress. The student will identify mood disorders and their symptoms.

TEKS: 121.26 (c) 1H, 1I

TAKS ELA 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6  
Science 2

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## KEY POINTS

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- I. Affective Disorders: Early Recognition
  - A. both mania and depression (*melancholia*) were described in detail by Hippocrates in fourth century B.C.
  - B. first century A.D., Greek physician Aretaeus observed that manic and depressive behavior sometimes occurred in same person
  - C. in reoccurring episode of depression, Abraham Lincoln wrote: “If what I feel were equally distributed to the whole human family, there would not be one cheerful face on earth.”
  - D. Winston Churchill spoke of this struggles with what he referred to as “the mad dogs of depression”
- II. Three Major categories:
  - A. **Mood episodes**
    1. major depressive episode
    2. manic episode
  - B. **Depressive disorders**
    1. major depressive disorder
    2. dysthymic disorder
  - C. **Bipolar disorders**
    1. bipolar I and II disorder
    2. cyclothymic disorder
- III. **Mood Episodes**
  - A. **Major Manic Episode** (“high” on life)
    1. typical manic episode begins suddenly (over course of few days)
    2. episode may last from several days to several months
    3. usually ends as abruptly as it began
      - a. hyperactive, talkative, and endlessly energetic
      - b. find great pleasure in things that never pleased them before
      - c. become intensely involved with variety of people and activities
      - d. self-image becomes grossly inflated; believe they can do anything
      - e. ignore their limits and often do many reckless things
      - f. love and admire themselves without reservation
      - g. irritable with others (especially those who try to interfere with their ill-advised schemes)
  - B. **Major Depressive Episode** (depths of despair)

1. onset is usually gradual (occurring over period of several weeks or several months)
  2. typically lasts longer than manic episode and then ends, as it began, slowly and gradually
    - a. sleep disturbances
    - b. loss of appetite
    - c. reduce interest in sex
    - d. profound feelings of sadness
    - e. guilt and futility
    - f. no glimmer of hope or source of pleasure
    - g. no reason to go on living
- C. **Major Depressive Disorder**
1. persons who undergo one or more major depressive episodes (with no intervening manic episodes)
  2. may attempt suicide after reaching the bottom of the depression cycle
- D. **Dysthymic Disorder**
1. chronic, low-level depression that appears for most of the day, nearly every day, for at least 2 years (1 year in children and adolescents)
  2. poor appetite or overeating
  3. insomnia or hypersomnia
  4. low energy
  5. low self-esteem
  6. poor concentration or difficulty making decisions
  7. feelings of hopelessness
  8. no manic episodes
- E. **Bipolar Disorder**
1. strong, exaggerated cyclic mood swings of mania and depression
  2. stages of swing:
    - a. slow but steady increase in mood elevation and hyperactivity up to a climax of frenzy
    - b. followed by a slow decrease in activity down to normal behavior
    - c. start into opposite cycle of hypoactivity, accompanied by depression
  3. types of bipolar disorder:
    - a. Bipolar I – characterized by bouts of full blown mania and one or more Major Depressive Episodes
    - b. Bipolar II – characterized by recurrent major depressive episodes with at least one bout of hypomania (less severe mania)
- F. **Cyclothymic Disorder**
1. tends to swing between moods of exhilaration and depression, but not to pathologic extremes (like bipolar)
  2. two sub forms are often seen, in which person shows one of the moods much more than other:
    - a. hypomanic person
      - i. tends to be outgoing, cheerful and thoroughly enjoy life
      - ii. vivacious, buoyant, confident, aggressive, and optimistic
      - iii. have ready excuses for their failures and can usually talk themselves out of their difficulties
    - b. melancholic person
      - i. tends to be easily depressed
      - ii. often kindly, quiet, sympathetic, and even-tempered
      - iii. in “moody” periods is lonely, solemn, submissive, gloomy, and self-deprecating

- iv. often has feelings of inadequacy and hopelessness
- v. easily discouraged and indecisive
- vi. suffers in silence, and weeps readily (not in presence of others)
- vii. tends to be overly meticulous, conscientious, and preoccupied with work
- viii. fearful of disapproval and feels responsibility keenly

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## ACTIVITIES

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- I. Analyze poetry or literature of person with a mood disorder. See Analysis Guideline. (Poetry web site address under MATERIALS NEEDED)
- II. Analyze music from your parent's generation that deals with loneliness, despair, or introspection (the song interpretations from the late 1960s and early 1970s are good choices—many of which are available on CDs at local music stores) (Example of student song analysis.)

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## MATERIALS NEEDED

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Video: *Straight Talk About Mental Illness*, (an overview of major depression, manic depression, and schizophrenia); acted out vignettes are interspersed with a classroom discussion led by a psychiatrist; order: NAMI, 800-950-NAMI (price \$10.00—such a deal!)

*Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*—Fourth Edition (DSM-IV), ISBN 0-89042-062-9

<http://www.windsofchange.com/winds1.htm> - links for poetry, art, literature, and photos by people who have mood disorder (good for analysis-type activity)

<http://www.artlink.net/~jebilele/bestofboris.html/Catching-A-Darkness.html> - photo/essay by brother who tries to record glimpses of his college-age sister's mania; profoundly interesting site; gives insight and compassion for one young woman's struggle with mental illness

Three very good personal story web sites for mood disorders:

<http://www.embracingthefever.com/christ-luci.html>

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Styx/7554/depression.html>

<http://pages.prodigy.com/bipolarcyclone/>

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## ASSESSMENT

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Poetry Analysis Rubric

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## ACCOMMODATIONS

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For reinforcement, the student will view, list, and describe mood disorders observed on the video *Straight Talk About Mental Illness*. (See MATERIALS NEEDED for source.)

For enrichment, the student will create a poem on his/her perspective of what it must feel like to have a mood disorder. (Student example.)

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## REFLECTIONS

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## Poetry/Essay Analysis Guideline

Select a poem from one of the personal story sites (as listed under MATERIALS NEEDED) and hand out a copy to each of the students.

Ask them to read the poem carefully and write down what they each consider to be the major theme of this writing.

Next, have the students select and copy meaningful passages that they feel best describe the writer's feelings.

Have the students identify specific words from the poem that might be symbolic of the writer's mood disorder (i.e. isolation, loneliness, despair, euphoria, duplicity, hopelessness, sadness, elation, etc.) **examples:** "cyclone" – confusion, "roller-coaster" – happiness/depression (duplicity), "darkness" – despair, etc.

Ask the students to write in their own words what they think the writer was trying to convey.

In summary, have each student write what he/she learned after reading and analyzing this poem (insight, fear, compassion, etc.).

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Period \_\_\_\_\_

**Rubric: Poetry Analysis**

<b>Criteria</b>		<b>Comments</b>	<b>Score</b>
Thoroughness	<b>50%</b>		
Logic & Coherence of analysis	<b>20%</b>		
Spelling	<b>15%</b>		
Grammar	<b>15%</b>		

**Total** \_\_\_\_\_

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

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**Total** \_\_\_\_\_

*Teachers, here is an example of a song analysis written by one of my former high school psychology students. Remind your students that there is no “right” interpretation. Their analysis will be a reflection of their own belief system and worldview.*

**OBJECTIVE:** Promote critical thinking and introspection

## Song Interpretation: The Sound of Silence Simon and Garfunkel

The song “The Sound of Silence” tells a story of a sensitive, thoughtful individual who is unsuccessfully trying to mesh his ideals with the stringent codes of society. This person foresees inherent problems with the way social issues are addressed. He tries to offer his warnings, but finds that the general public is deaf to his concerns.

The song begins in a reminiscing style: “Hello darkness my old friend . . .” This “darkness” suggests the return of the speaker to the bleakness of his reality. At this stage, the action of the song has already taken place and the speaker is recalling past events. Simon speaks of a “vision softly creeping”, which “left its seeds while I was sleeping”. This vision, although not clearly defined, could be a harbinger of social disaster, which will soon occur.

Next Simon explains his dream. He sees himself walking alone through a cobblestone alley. Perhaps the “cobble-stone” represents the uneven, fragmented path he feels himself traveling. Next, Simon refers to the weather being cold and damp and the street dimly lit. I believe that the “cold and damp” weather represent his inner feelings and the dimly lit street represents social apathy. Suddenly, his eyes are “stabbed by the flash of neon light”. This passage may refer to the mute, yet glaring way in which people are communicating, not with each other, but with their inanimate signs.

Simon next gives his warning to the crowd of people. He exclaims, “ ‘Fools,’ said I, ‘you do not know, silence like a cancer grows.’ ” Simon is warning that this type of superficial communication is comparable to a malignancy. He pleads: “Hear my words that I might teach you—hear my words that I might reach you”. Sadly, though, the people are deaf to his warnings (“But my words like silent raindrops fell.”) and prefer to “bow” to their “neon gods”. This may be a symbol of our insidious seduction of and relentless devotion to technology, not other people.

Even before ultimate snowballing of disaster occurs, a sign itself flashes out a warning to the people. The sign says, “The words of the prophets are written on the subway walls, and tenement halls”. The passage may mean that we sometimes overlook basic ideas simply because they are commonplace or deep within our souls. The song ends without describing the disaster, which perhaps may be what we are living right now—a disconnected, impersonal state.

The point that Simon is trying to make, I believe, is that people are living superficial lives. They are embracing the wonders of technology instead of looking deeply inside themselves and others for a truer meaning of life.

The “Sound of Silence” is an interesting bit of culture. It characterizes an era of personal freedom unlike any other time period. This revolution forever changed the way Americans think. This song contributed to the creation of the individual thinking and the revolt against technology.

*Below is a copy of a poem created by a former psychology student, which demonstrates his perspective of how it must feel to have a mental illness.*

### Mental Storm

There is a storm blowing over  
He searches trying to find some cover  
But he finds none, all in vain  
He waits patiently, to face the rain  
Lashing, whipping, at his face  
He runs to find a safe, warm place  
A flash of lightning strikes out from the sky  
A crumpled body, a desperate cry  
Dark despair engulfing his brain  
Trying to escape the unthinkable pain  
Desperately out of the void he reaches,  
Infinitely waiting for a hand to meet his  
And guide him from the dark to the light  
Releasing his inner self to take flight  
Silently gliding until he finds  
The key to lock out the storm from his mind