



# Changing Looks Without Harming Bodies

**Grade-4**

Lesson

2

**Lesson Objectives – Students describe at least three ways to change their looks without harming their bodies (e.g., changing their hairstyle).**

	Time	Page
<b>Prepare Students</b> .....	5 min. ....	86
<b>Attention Grabber</b> .....	5 min. ....	86
<b>Explain/Demonstrate/Practice</b> “Freckle Face” .....	12 min. ....	87
<b>Review</b> .....	3 min. ....	88
<b>Total Time</b> .....	<b>25 min.</b>	

- Equipment & Materials**
- ✓ Chalkboard/chalk or poster paper/markers
  - ✓ Story: “Freckle Face” in Appendix 4-2, p. 89.

- Teacher Preparation**
- Prior to the start of this lesson:
- ✓ Make a copy of the story, “Freckle Face.”

**Additional Preparation**

This lesson may generate discussion that reveals a risk of eating disorders among students. Before presenting the lesson, verify procedures for referring a student for evaluation and intervention.

*This lesson addresses the following content standards:*

Michigan Standards		National Standards	
Physical Education	Health Education	Physical Education	Health Education
Standard #12	Standard #3	Standard #6	Standard #3
Standard #14		Standard #7	

**This lesson relates to Michigan Model for Comprehensive School Health Education:**

Grade 3 Lesson VI-5 Planning a Nutritious Meal and Grade 6 Lesson VI-4: Food for Growth.

**Key Message & Background Information for Teachers****Key Messages:**

I believe there is no such thing as a “perfect” body size and/or shape.

**Background Information:**

This lesson links closely with Lesson 4-1. Students must first recognize that attractiveness is a relative, rather than absolute, concept and it’s unwise to subject one’s body to discomfort or pain in order to be “beautiful.” This lesson aims to move students from the concept of a “perfect body” to the concept of “the right body for me.” This lesson focuses on identifying healthy ways that they can experiment with their looks rather than trying to change their bodies.

**Prepare Students****5 min.**

**Gather** students together in a group seated on the floor.

**Introduce** the lesson:

- Today we are going to talk about some ways we can change the way we look without hurting our bodies.

**Attention Grabber****5 min.**

**Tell** the class:

- Some people wish their bodies were different from how they really are.
- Close your eyes and think about the people you know.
- Raise your hand and keep it raised if you know someone who would like to change his/her body in some way.
- Open your eyes and look around the room without saying a word.

***Teacher tip:** Teacher’s hand should be raised when students open their eyes.*

**Tell** the class:

- See how common it is for people to want their bodies to be different.

**Tell** students:

- Where do we get our ideas about how we should look? (Potential responses might include parents, peers, teachers, and the media.)
- Do you think we can really have our body look any way we want it to? (Accept all answers.)

**Tell** students:

- Today we’re going to think about what happens when we want our bodies to change.
- We’ll begin with a story about a girl who wants to change her looks.

## "Freckle Face"

12 min.

## Explain/Demonstrate

## Practice

**Read** aloud the "Freckle Face" story as a class.

*Teacher tip:* Have students take turns reading.

**Ask** students:

- What did Annie learn? (She learned that it was okay to be the way she was.)
- How does Annie's story apply to us? (We should accept ourselves as we are.)

**Explain** to students:

- There are many ways we can harm our bodies by trying to change the way we look. But there are many things we can do to change the way we look that don't hurt our bodies at all.

**Ask** students:

- What can we do to change the way we look without hurting our bodies? (Write all students' ideas on the chalkboard or poster paper. Discuss each idea in terms of safety, cost, acceptability to parents and school. If the class decides an idea is not appropriate, cross it off the list.)

Potential responses might include:

Δ *Accessories:* Collect a style of jewelry you like and wear it consistently. Wear a hat. Wear scarves. Wear a temporary tattoo.

Δ *Clothes:* Gradually change the color of the clothes you wear, or the color combinations. Wear brighter colors. Wear darker colors. Start wearing all one color. Get someone to take you to a second-hand store and buy some really different style clothes. Lace your shoes a different way. Get different colored shoe laces.

Δ *Nails:* Trim nails neatly. Grow them longer. Cut them shorter. Put on nail polish.

Δ *Posture:* Stand up straighter and taller. Change the way you sit (legs crossed or not, hands folded or not). Avoid nervous hand movements.

Δ *Hair:* Get it cut shorter. Let it grow longer. Wear a pony tail. Wear braids. Get interesting barrettes. Curl it. Try new hair styling products.

**Discuss** safe and appropriate ways that eating and exercise can affect appearance:

- Eating a healthy diet and exercising moderately can also change the way we look. Being active can help build and define muscles. Eating well gives us energy, which definitely affects the way we look. A healthy diet can also help make our skin, hair, and nails more attractive.

**Discuss** the concept that extreme eating and exercise behaviors may affect appearance, but can be harmful. Topics to emphasize:

- Extreme eating behaviors, such as fasting, severe dieting, skipping breakfast, etc.—Remind students that growing bodies, like theirs, need plenty of energy. By not giving their bodies the energy they need, they could do both short- and long-term damage. In the short run, they may lack energy to do the things they like to do. Also, their grades in school may suffer, since brains don't work very well without a regular supply of energy. In the long run, depriving bodies of energy could have very serious consequences, including growth stunting. Encourage students to listen to their bodies by eating when they're hungry and stopping when they're full. If students focus on eating healthy foods, including plenty of fruits, vegetables, grains, and low-fat dairy products, they will have less room for high-fat, high-sugar "junk" foods.
- Extreme exercise behaviors, such as exercising many hours per day—Emphasize the importance of moderation. Just because something is good for us doesn't mean that it is good for us in unlimited amounts. Warn students that getting too much exercise could interfere with their growth. Experts recommend that children and adolescents aim for about an hour's worth of physical activity per day. Note that the hour doesn't have to be all at once.

**Review****3 min.**

**Ask** students:

- What would you say if a friend came to you and said they were going to go on a diet to lose weight?

**Discuss** possible responses, drawing on information contained in the lesson. Be sure the following points are mentioned:

- Not getting enough food can cause both short- and long-term damage—lack of energy, grades may suffer, your body may not grow the way it should

**Remind** students:

- Instead of trying to control the size and shape of our bodies, like Annie, we should focus on what's great about being just the way we are.
- There are many ways you can try out a different "look" without harming your bodies.

## Freckle Face

I want to tell you the story of a little girl named Annie who lived in the town just next to where you live. Annie had brown curly hair, brown eyes, and freckles. She was nine years old, and she lived with her mom and sister in a yellow house with a big tree in front of it. She had a best friend named Nadia. Nadia had brown hair, too, and brown eyes, and smooth skin without freckles. Annie had lots of other friends, too. Annie was in the fourth grade. Her teacher was named Ms. James.

Annie loved her family. She liked her house. She liked the big tree in front of it. Annie also liked her friends. She liked going to school, and she especially liked Ms. James. There was one thing Annie didn't like, though—she didn't like her freckles.

Every day when Annie looked in the mirror to comb her hair, she saw those freckles and they made her angry. She wanted her skin to be all one color, like Nadia's. One day she decided to make her freckles go away.

Annie decided she would scrub her face until her freckles were gone. She got one of her mom's pot scrubbers from the kitchen and went into the bathroom. She closed the door, put some soap on the pot scrubber and began to scrub her face. She scrubbed and scrubbed and then opened her eyes. But the freckles were still there.

So Annie put more soap on her face and scrubbed some more. "Owwwww!" she yelled. Her face stung and she started to cry. Annie's skin started to hurt—just like a sunburn or a rash.

Finally, she rinsed and dried her face. This was the moment she had been waiting for.

"The freckles must be gone by now," she thought.

Annie looked in the mirror again, and she started to cry. The freckles were still there!

Just then there was a knock on the door.

"Annie!" yelled her mom. "What's going on in there?"

Annie let her mom in and told her what she'd done. Her mom gave her a hug.

"Annie," she said, "your freckles are part of what make you who you are. Without your freckles, you wouldn't be you. The people who love you, love your freckles, too. Nadia is pretty in her way, but that's not your way. Only you can be pretty in your way. And if you try to be pretty in someone else's way, you will only lose your own beauty."

Annie listened with her arms wrapped around her mom. She knew her mom was right. She still didn't like her freckles, but she decided to keep them.

"And now," said Mom, "let's go get some lotion to help your face feel better!"

