Understanding My Triggers: Self-Awareness and Emotional Responses

Everyone experiences strong emotions from time to time. Sometimes, certain situations, words, or actions can cause us to feel upset, angry, anxious, or sad without us fully understanding why. These are known as “triggers.” A trigger is anything that causes an intense emotional reaction. Learning to recognize your triggers is an important part of emotional intelligence and self-awareness. When you know what your triggers are, you can start to manage your reactions in healthier ways and communicate more effectively with others.

Fill in the Blank: Fill in the blank with the correct words.

1. A _ is something that causes a strong emotional response.
2. Learning to recognize your _ helps you manage your reactions.
3. If you notice you feel anxious during certain situations, those situations might be your _.
4. Being aware of your triggers can help you respond instead of _.
5. _ is the ability to understand and manage your own emotions.

Word bank:
trigger, triggers, reacting, self-awareness, triggers

Multiple Choice Questions: Choose the correct answer from the choices for each question.

1. What is a trigger?
    - a) Something that always makes you happy
    - b) Something that causes a strong emotional reaction
    - c) A fun activity
    - d) A type of food
2. Why is it important to recognize your triggers?
    - a) To ignore your feelings
    - b) To get angry more often
    - c) To manage your emotions better
    - d) To blame others
3. Which of the following is an example of a trigger?
    - a) Listening to your favorite music
    - b) Studying for a test
    - c) Being criticized in front of others
    - d) Eating lunch
4. What should you do when you notice you are triggered?
    - a) Yell at others
    - b) Ignore your feelings
    - c) Pause and think before responding
    - d) Leave school immediately

5. What is self-awareness?

    - a) Knowing all the answers in class
    - b) Being aware of your thoughts and feelings
    - c) Playing sports well
    - d) Making jokes

Open-Ended Questions: Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. Describe a time when you noticed you were triggered. What happened, and how did you feel?

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1. Why do you think it is helpful to be aware of your own triggers?

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1. List two strategies you can use to manage your emotions when you are triggered.

ANSWER KEY

Teachers: Please review the answers for accuracy and appropriateness for your classroom. For open-ended responses, sample answers are provided but student answers may vary.

Fill in the Blank:

1. trigger
2. triggers

3. triggers
4. reacting
5. Self-awareness

Word bank: trigger, triggers, reacting, self-awareness, triggers

Multiple Choice Questions:

1. b) Something that causes a strong emotional reaction
2. c) To manage your emotions better
3. c) Being criticized in front of others
4. c) Pause and think before responding
5. b) Being aware of your thoughts and feelings

Open-Ended Questions (sample responses):

1. Example: I noticed I was triggered when someone interrupted me while I was speaking in class. I felt frustrated and embarrassed.
2. Example: It is helpful to be aware of my triggers because it helps me control my reactions and communicate better with others.
3. Example: I can take deep breaths to calm down and talk to someone I trust about how I am feeling.