

**Objectives:** Students will partake in a series of creative activities and discussion that will help them understand the concept of Empathy and how they can apply it to their lives.

**Outcome:** The students will have a better understanding of not only the meaning of empathy, but the meaning of kindness, caring, and helpfulness that will be an important lesson for them to digest as they move later on into their educational journey.

## The Lesson: Defining Empathy

**Introduction / Background information on the topic:** used to set up the lesson but also help instructor teach it

- **Key points:** information/content that should be provided
  - **Supplemental information:** at the discretion of the educator. Can be things such as primary and secondary texts, images, audio or video recordings, etc.
- Definitions to discuss with the class:
  - Kindness:
  - Caring:
  - Helpful:
  - Respect:
- Before jumping into the meat of the lesson, have a discussion with the students on what they know about kindness, care, help, and respect. Having a good understanding of these concepts will help them in today's activities, as they learn about the word empathy. There are 3 key questions that guide the lesson and that the students should grasp by the end of it.
  - What is Empathy?
  - Why is Empathy important?
  - How can you practice empathy with others?

### Individual / small-group activity:

Part 1: Peer Discussion

- Have the students turn to a partner next to them and ask this series of questions
  1. Have you ever gotten hurt?
  2. What has made you upset before?
  3. Why did it make you upset?
  4. Did anyone help you at that moment? (Family, friends, etc.)
  5. What made you feel better?
  6. Why do you think that help made you feel better?
- The students should share some of their discussion with the class. Ask them what their partner said on what made them feel better when they were upset, and how their family member or friend helped them in that situation. Ask the partner what they learned from their friend's story.

## **Whole-group activity:**

### Part 2: Shoes

- Have the students stay in those pairs. Partake in an activity where they take off their shoes, and switch shoes with their partner and act like they are their partner. This is a fun way for them to understand the metaphor of “putting yourself in someone else’s shoes.” Ask them these questions afterwards:
  1. How did it feel being in another person’s shoes?
  2. Was it weird? Was it normal?
  3. How was it acting like the other person?
  4. Did you think you could understand what they feel and say when in their shoes?

### Part 3: Good friend

- Give each student four individual sticky notes. Have the students their sticky notes and write:
  - What makes someone a good friend?
  - How can someone show they are a good friend?
  - What do you do to be a good friend?
  - How do you feel when someone is a good friend to you?
- Have the students share with each other what they wrote and compile all the sticky notes together, and read them out to the entire class as part of a list

### Part 4: Feeling Better

- Pose a situation to the students - have one of them act that they are sick. Get a volunteer to be the empathizer, a superhero whose power is empathy. Have them act out this situation where the superhero helps the sick student and have the class watch and tell the superhero what to do.
  - How could they make the sick person feel better?
  - What should they do to show the person care?
  - How can the person understand what the other is feeling?
  - How should they use that to help the sick person?

**Concluding the lesson:** can be questions regarding how the information connects to events happening today or perhaps to student’s own personal lives

1. What do you think Empathy is?
2. Why is Empathy important?
3. How can you practice Empathy with others?