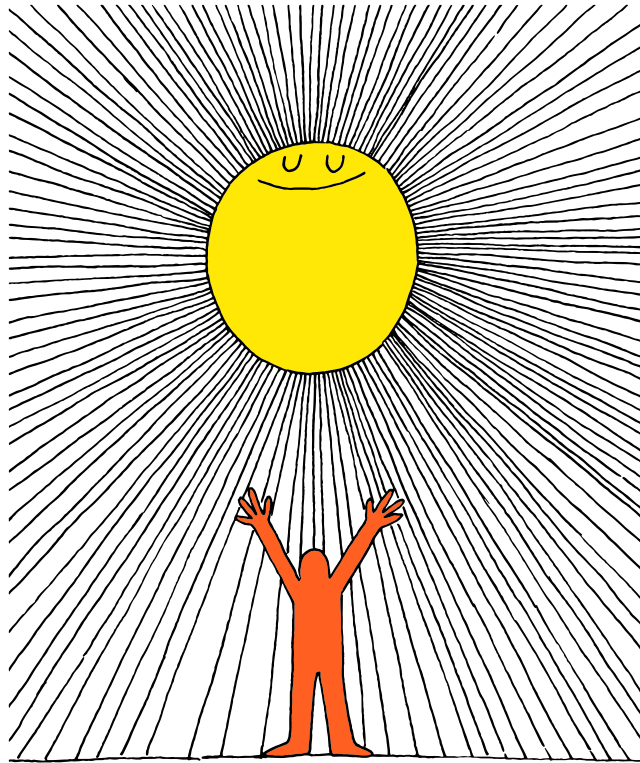


WELL-BEING CANADA CURRICULUM
**Learning About Empathy
and Compassion**



GRADES 4 TO 6

Lessons 8 and 9

THE ROAD TO POSITIVE WELL-BEING IN EVERY CLASSROOM STARTS HERE

WELL~ BEING CANADA



Well-being Canada is an educational program that uses evidence-based tools, resources and everyday actions to nurture and promote positive well-being in students of all ages.

This resource is focused on supporting 4-6 grade level to build the foundation of social-emotional learning and support educators in the integration of well-being into your classrooms through exploring positive human qualities, deeper dives into brain development and mindful communication.

The collection of 15 lessons is easy to use, classroom friendly and provides tools and activities to nurture well-being in your students.

The Road to Empathy



LESSON 8

THE ROAD TO POSITIVE WELL-BEING IN EVERY CLASSROOM STARTS HERE



Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to introduce the positive human quality, empathy. Via experiential learning, students will learn about the role of empathy in their lives and in their relationships. These concepts will help support students in an upcoming lesson on compassion.

Objectives:

- Students watch or listen to a story that serves as a catalyst for conversations about empathy.
- Students investigate and learn about empathy.
- Students apply their knowledge in a series of scenarios designed to foster empathy.

Skills Learned:



CRITICAL THINKING



COMMUNICATION SKILLS



REFLECTION SKILLS



SELF-CARE SKILLS



SELF MANAGEMENT SKILLS



SOCIAL AWARENESS SKILLS



SELF-AWARENESS SKILLS

Estimated Time:

This is a three-part lesson consisting of one opening activity (5 minutes) and two 30- to 40-minute activities. This lesson can be completed over several days.

Materials:

Projector and screen or monitor; writing paper; chart paper, markers, whiteboard/chalkboard or SMARTboard

Differentiation by Grade Level:

4th Grade:

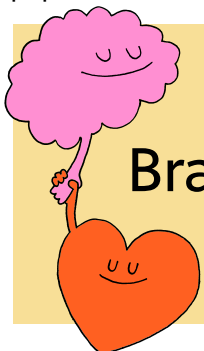
- Keep this lesson the same, differentiating as needed for your unique group of students.

5th Grade:

- **Part 3, Step 1:** Instead of brainstorming feelings, ask students to share how it makes them feel when others feel _____. Why?
- **Part 3, Step 2:** After completing one or two sample scenarios together, have students work in groups to come up with their own scenarios and act them out.

6th Grade:

- **Part 3, Step 1:** Instead of brainstorming feelings, ask students to brainstorm moments where they noticed how someone's feeling spread to themselves or others. For example, a time where someone was angry and it made them feel angry with them.
- **Part 3, Step 2:** *See 5th grade differentiation
- **Optional Extension:** Have students write a personal or fictional narrative that illustrates empathy.



Brain Bites

What's good for the body is good for the brain. What's good for the brain is good for the body! Throughout the lessons you will find brain icons with actions and facts about the brain. It is important that we take the time to educate our students about the importance of understanding the brain and how it impacts our well-being.

Review (optional)

Invite students to recap key words and concepts from previous lessons.

- What is well-being?
- What is mindfulness?
- How do we practise mindfulness?
- How does mindfulness support our well-being?
- What is the difference between setting a goal and setting an intention?

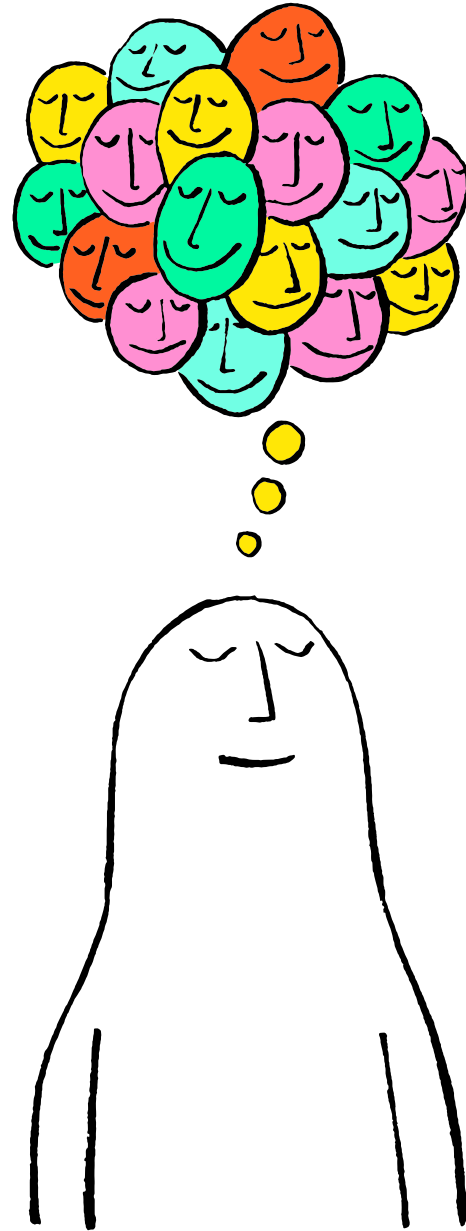
After students have shared their answers, provide the following information to the class.

Well-being is the state of being comfortable, healthy or happy.

Mindfulness means to pay attention to what is happening in the moment, without judgment. We can practise mindfulness by paying attention. This is done by being present with our senses and accepting our awareness of our thoughts without judgment.

Mindfulness supports well-being by strengthening our ability to manage emotions, by not reacting to situations but responding to them. It also strengthens our ability to manage our thoughts; gives our mind a break from thinking by bringing our awareness to the present, and strengthens our ability to focus and be present with non-judgment.

The difference between a goal and an intention: a goal is something you are trying to do or achieve and an intention is setting a belief to act in a certain way.



Part 1: Reflect and Connect (5 minutes)

Mindful Start and Setting an Intention

Objective: To prepare students for learning; to review lessons on mindful breathing and setting intentions.

Invite students to take a short mindful break.

- Let's begin by taking a short mindful moment.
 - First, find a comfortable seat in your chair. Place your feet flat on the ground. Rest your hands on your lap.
 - If it feels comfortable, you can close your eyes. If not, just look softly down toward your desk (or table).
 - Now, just begin by noticing how your body feels sitting here.
- No need to do anything but notice what you feel.
 - Turn your attention to your breath for a few moments.
 - At your own pace, take three deep breaths in through your nose and slowly out through your mouth.
 - Before we start our lesson today, reflect for a moment on our work on gratitude. Perhaps bring something to mind that you feel grateful for ... maybe a kind action from somebody or something in nature that made you happy.
 - Now, if you like, set an intention for today ... maybe to be curious or have gratitude. Choose an intention that best speaks to the attitude you'd like to have today.
 - When you are ready, you can open your eyes.



GABA

Gamma-aminobutyric acid, or GABA, is a neurotransmitter that helps to create a feeling of calm, reduces stress and anxiety, and helps with sleep.

Part 2: Reflection and Celebration (15 minutes)

Step 1: Set the Stage

Overview: Select either a video or book (see video and book lists at the end of this lesson) to spark students' thinking about empathy. Provide the Empathy Story Study Worksheet to students to complete while watching the video.

Directions to students:

We are now going to watch a short video (or read a short story). As you listen/watch, notice what you think and feel. After the video, you will spend a few moments on your own, writing or drawing about your reactions.

Step 2: Think-Pair-Share

After viewing the video (or listening to the story), ask students, on their own, to write down how they think the people they met in the video might have been thinking or feeling during specific events that happened in the video.

As you watched the video, what do you think the main person in the video, (INSERT NAME), was thinking and feeling?

Next, ask students to share their thoughts with a partner.

Step 3: Share Out

As a group, invite students to share out their thoughts about the video. Write their ideas on the board.

Step 4: Learn

Provide the following definition:

Empathy: The ability to understand and share the feelings of another.

Project or write the definition on the board.

Next, invite student ideas (popcorn style).

Select prompts from the following guiding questions to spark critical thinking and help students access their previous knowledge about the concepts.

What do you already know about empathy?

Where have you heard about these terms? (Note that it is ok if students are not sure or unfamiliar with the terms.)

How do these definitions relate to your reactions to the video?

What does empathy look like in your life?

How might empathy help in your friendships?

How does empathy impact our community?

Lastly, unpack the definitions a little more to ensure comprehension.

Empathy helps us form healthy relationships and communities.

Is there anything I missed?

What questions do you have?

Part 3: Application—Empathy Scenarios

(20–30 minutes)

Step 1: Empathy and Emotions

Objective: Students will practise perspective-taking and empathy via scenarios.

Educators will select from the following scenarios and invite students to reflect upon how they might feel if they were in that position. As an option, write each scenario on chart paper and post around the room. Invite students to visit each scenario page and write down the emotion they think the person might be feeling.

First, with your students, brainstorm a list of emotions and project or write them on the board.

Examples:

Happy	Sad	Angry
Excited	Disappointed	Frightened
Calm	Upset	Frustrated
Relaxed	Discouraged	Surprised

Step 2: Empathy Scenarios

Next, select from the following list of scenarios or come up with your own scenarios that best fit your students' cultural context:

- A classmate found out she was not included in an invitation for the birthday party of another classmate.
- A classmate has worked on a science project about a topic they're passionate about. They have put weeks of effort into the project and get selected to present their project in front of the whole school.
- One of your classmates has not studied for a test that you have tomorrow.

- A group of students at your school has started a fundraising campaign to give clean water access to a community in need. They received twice the amount of donations they expected, doubling their fundraising goal.

Share each scenario and then invite students to reflect upon what emotions might be present for the student character in the scenario.

Invite students to then share their ideas in small groups or as a class.

Guiding questions for students:

1. What might the student be thinking?
2. What might this student be feeling?
3. Have you ever felt that way?

Step 3: Reflection

Invite pairs to share out their scenarios and ideas for showing empathy toward their character.

Following the empathy scenarios, debrief with your students.

How does empathy help our relationships with others?

Give students the key message:

Empathy is important for our well-being. Empathy is central to having positive relationships with others!

Optional

Movie Scenario

In this scene, Riley and her parents have moved into a new home far away from their old neighbourhood. She struggles to deal with the changes and leaving her friends behind. Throughout the movie, Riley's emotions are shown as characters in her mind, Joy, Sadness, Fear, Anger and Disgust. The inner character of Joy takes charge in creating important memories as "islands" that form a part of Riley's personality and what's important to her. The one emotion that Riley struggles to understand is the role of Sadness. At one point in the movie, Fear, Disgust and Anger have taken control of Riley's emotions and behaviours. Joy has also pushed Sadness aside as she doesn't understand her and wants to focus only on making Riley happy.

After explaining the background of the movie clip, play the following videos for students: **Inside Out (1)** and **Inside Out (2)** (these videos are from the movie Inside Out and are appropriate for ages 6+)

As a class reflect on the following questions:

1. Can you explain what is the role of sadness and how is it important?
2. A leading emotion researcher defines happiness as "the experience of joy, contentment or positive well-being, combined with a sense that one's life is good, meaningful and worthwhile."
3. Why is it important to be mindful and know the difference between joy and happiness?
4. How is chasing joy only an unhealthy way of being?

At the end of the clip, we see Riley embracing her sadness and memories. She shares what she is feeling to her parents.

1. How do Riley's parents show empathy to her?
2. How is Riley empathetic towards herself?
3. What did Sadness help Riley understand?



GABA Boost

What are some healthy ways to boost GABA (gamma-aminobutyric acid)?

- Practise mindfulness or yoga
- Exercise
- Eat healthy food like bananas, almonds, spinach, potatoes, lentils, brown rice and citrus fruits (oranges, grapefruits and lemons)

Teaching to Diversity

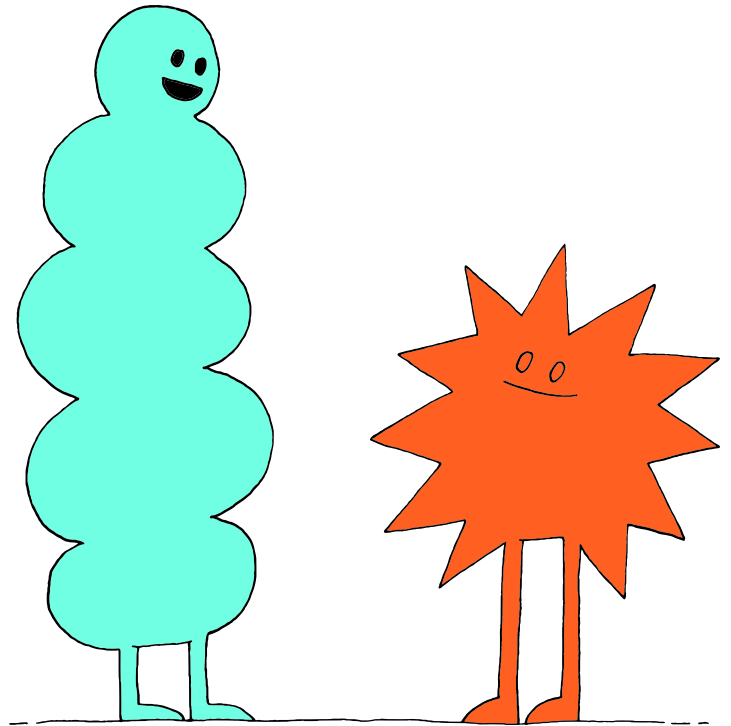
Optional: Use the following ideas to help you to calibrate the lesson to your particular group of students.

Differentiation

- Break this lesson up into several lessons, in order to give students more time and opportunity to process and absorb each abstract concept.
- Provide additional concrete examples of empathy. Sometimes providing examples of the opposite of each concept helps to give more of a context.
- Choose and assign scenarios to match each student's abilities.
- Give students advance access to the video or story you will be showing so they can become more familiar with it.

Challengers

- Instead of providing the definitions for empathy, ask students to look up the definitions online or in the dictionary.
- Add a written component to Think-Pair-Share activities by having students write down their ideas.
- Instead of watching the video as a group, break students into small groups and have each group find their own video to discuss and present.
- Book study: Invite students to choose a book from the book list and do a book study.
- Use the worksheet found at the end of this lesson to help students organize their reflection on their chosen book.



Empathy Book and Video List

A Sick Day for Amos McGee, Phillip S

(supports empathy for ages 2-6)

[Access read aloud video](#)

The Rabbit Listened, Cori Doerfeld

(supports empathy for ages 3-5)

[Access read aloud video](#)

The Story of Ferdinand, Munro Leaf

(supports empathy for ages 3-5)

[Access read aloud video](#)

You Hold Me UP, Monique Gray Smith

(supports well-being and resilience for ages 3-5)

[Access read aloud video](#)

The Teddy Bear, David McPhail

(supports empathy for ages 3-6)

[Access read aloud video](#)

Hey Little Ant, Phillip and Hannah Hoose

(supports empathy for ages 3-7)

[Access read aloud video](#)

Bear Feels Sick, Karma Wilson

(supports empathy for ages 3-7)

[Access read aloud video](#)

One, Kathryn Otoshi

(supports empathy for ages 4-6)

[Access read aloud video](#)

We're All Wonders, R.J. Palacio

(supports empathy for ages 4-8)

[Access read aloud video](#)

Chair for My Mother, Vera B. Williams

(supports empathy for ages 4-8)

[Access read aloud video](#)

Under the Lemon Moon, Edith Hope Fine

(supports empathy, compassion, social awareness and generosity for ages 5-8)

[Access read aloud video](#)

The Orange Shirt Story, Phyllis Webstad

(also supports resilience, fighting racism and bullying for ages 6-8)

[Access read aloud video](#)

Listening to My Heart, Gabi Garcia

(supports empathy and self-compassion for ages 6-10)

[Access read aloud video](#)

Wonder, R.J. Palacio

(also supports empathy and compassion for ages 8-12)

[Access read aloud video](#)

Charlotte's Web, E.B. White

(also supports resilience and empathy for ages 8-12)

[Access read aloud video](#)

The One and Only Ivan, Katherine Applegate

(also supports empathy and animal rights for ages 8-12)

[Access read aloud video](#)

Moo, Sharon Creech

(also supports empathy, volunteering and friendship for ages 8-12)

Loser, Jerry Spinelli

(also supports empathy, self-acceptance and kindness for ages 8-12)

[Access read aloud video](#)

Front Desk, Kelly Yang

(also supports empathy, resilience and self-confidence for ages 8-12)

[Access read aloud video](#)

Because of Mr. Terupt, Rob Buyea
(also supports empathy and taking personal responsibility for ages 8-12)

Access read aloud video

Crenshaw, Katherine Applegate
(also supports resilience and empathy and compassion for ages 8-12)

Access read aloud video

Blubber, Judy Blume
(also supports empathy and compassion for ages 8-12)

Access read aloud video

I Am Malala (Young Reader's Edition), Malala Yousafzai
(also supports altruism, resilience and compassion/ empathy for ages 10+)

Access read aloud video

Number the Stars, Lois Lowry
(also supports empathy and compassion for ages 10-12)

Access read aloud video

Lost in the Sun, Lisa Graff
(also supports empathy, resiliency, and self-compassion for ages 10-13)

Access read aloud video

Speaking Our Truth, Monique Gray Smith
(also supports resiliency and empathy for ages 9-11)

Rain Reign, Ann M. Martin
(also supports empathy and compassion for ages 9-12)

Access read aloud video

Same Sun Here, Silas House and Neela Vaswani
(also supports empathy, friendship and compassion for ages 9-12)

Fatty Legs, Christy Jordan-Fenton
(also supports resiliency for ages 9-12)

Access read aloud video

Videos to Support Learning

A Lesson in Compassion

(In this video we see a group of students journey with altruism and compassion for an elderly woman – grades 2 and up)

Compassion in Action

(In this video we see a person's random acts of altruism and compassion for the people in his community – grades 2 and up)

Canine Compassion

(In this video, we see how an organization and prison inmates work together to save abused dogs and in return receive unconditional love – grades 3 and up)

Empathy Story Study Worksheet

Describe the main conflict in the story.

Further Exploration:

Have you ever observed or experienced similar event(s) in real life? If so, which one(s)?

Describe three examples of empathy and compassion. Include the relationship between the character showing empathy/compassion and the one receiving.

1.

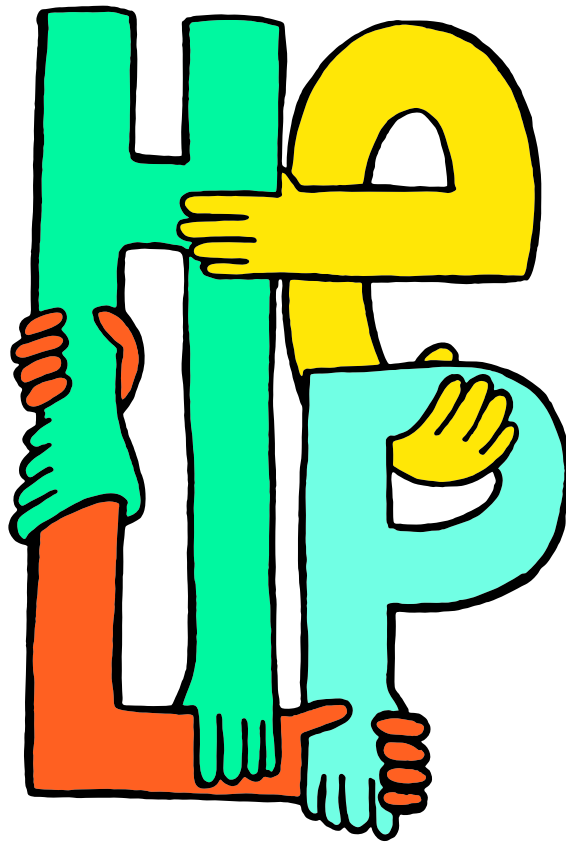
2.

3.

Further Exploration:

How might the story have gone differently if the examples you picked DIDN'T happen?

The Road to Compassion



LESSON 9



Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to introduce the positive human quality, compassion. Via reflective and critical thinking, and experiential learning, students will learn about the role of compassion in their lives and in their larger community. These concepts will help support students in an upcoming lesson on altruism.

Objectives:

- Students consider a quote that serves as a catalyst for conversations about compassion.
- Students investigate and learn about compassion.
- Students apply their knowledge in a series of scenarios (and/or skits) designed to help them understand how empathy moves into action with compassion.

Skills Learned:



CRITICAL THINKING



COMMUNICATION SKILLS



REFLECTION SKILLS



SELF-AWARENESS SKILLS



SELF-CARE SKILLS



SELF MANAGEMENT SKILLS



SOCIAL AWARENESS SKILLS

Estimated Time:

This is a multi-part lesson consisting of four 30- to 40-minute activities.

This lesson can be completed over several days. Part 4 is intended to extend learning and can be completed at a later time, following the completion of Parts 1–3.

Materials:

Projector and screen or monitor; writing paper; chart paper, markers, whiteboard/chalkboard or SMARTboard

Differentiation by Grade Level:

4th Grade:

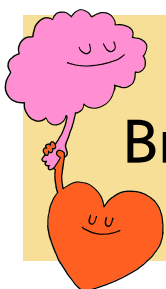
- **Part 2, Step 1:** Instead of having students do an independent writing reflection on the quote, they may think pair share instead before writing or discussing as a class.

5th Grade:

- **Part 3, Step 1 (reflection):** Allow students time to write about a time when they were shown compassion and how it made them feel.

6th Grade:

- **Part 3, Step 1:** Have students use their Empathy and Compassion Study worksheet as a planning sheet to write a narrative.
- **Optional Extension:** Have students choose one of the types of daily empathy/compassion actions (self, classroom/school, community, or home) and write a personal reflection on how they would like to take action in that area.



Brain Bites

What's good for the body is good for the brain. What's good for the brain is good for the body! Throughout the lessons you will find brain icons with actions and facts about the brain. It is important that we take the time to educate our students about the importance of understanding the brain and how it impacts our well-being.

Review (optional)

Invite students to recap key words and concepts from previous lessons.

- What is empathy?
- Why does empathy help our relationships?

After students have shared their answers, provide the following information to the class.

Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of one another. It helps us form healthy relationships and communities because it's central to having positive relationships with others. Empathy is important for us and also our communities' well-being.

Part 1: Reflect and Connect (5 minutes)

Mindful Start and Setting an Intention (optional)

Objective: *To prepare students for learning; to review lessons on mindful breathing and setting intentions.*

Invite students to take a short mindful break.

- Let's begin by taking a short mindful moment.
 - First, find a comfortable seat in your chair. Place your feet flat on the ground. Rest your hands on your lap.
 - If it feels comfortable, you can close your eyes. If not, just look softly down towards your desk (or table).
 - Now, just begin by noticing how your body feels sitting here.
 - No need to do anything but notice what you feel.
- Turn your attention to your breath for a few moments.
 - At your own pace, take three deep breaths, in through your nose and slowly out through your mouth.
 - Before we start our lesson today, reflect for a moment on our work on gratitude. Perhaps bring something to mind that you feel grateful for ... maybe a kind action from somebody, or something in nature that made you happy
 - Now, if you like, set an intention for today ...maybe to have gratitude or show empathy to others.
 - Choose an intention that best speaks to the attitude you'd like to have today.
 - When you are ready, you can open your eyes.

Part 2: Investigate and Learn (20–30 minutes)

Step 1: Set the Stage

Overview: *The intention of this activity is to provide students with a touchpoint for a conversation about compassion.*

Read aloud and display the following quote:

“Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle.”

Plato

Directions to students:

When you hear/read this quote, what does it mean to you? What do you think it is about?

Think-Pair-Share

Ask students, on their own, to write down or draw about their reaction to the quote, and then invite them to share their thoughts with a partner.

Share Out

As a group, invite students to share out their thoughts about the quote. Write their ideas on the board.

Note: Share with your students some background about Plato.

- Plato was an ancient Greek philosopher.
- In ancient Greek, philosopher means “lover of wisdom.”

Step 2: Learn

Provide the following definition(s):

- Compassion is: concern for the well-being of someone in distress, and includes a need or desire to alleviate that person’s suffering.

Project or write the definition on the board.

Next, invite student ideas (popcorn style).

Select prompts from the following guiding questions to spark critical thinking and help students access their prior knowledge about the concepts.

- What do you already know about compassion?
- Where have you heard about these terms? (Note that it is ok if students are not sure or unfamiliar with the terms.)
- How do these definitions relate to your thoughts about the quote?
- What does compassion look like in your life?
- How might compassion help in your friendships?
- How does compassion impact our community?

Lastly, ask students to think critically about the connection between empathy and compassion.

- How is compassion the same or different from empathy?
- Definition reminder: Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of another.
- How might these two positive human qualities work together?
- Is there anything I missed?
- What questions do you have?

Part 3: Application—From Empathy to Compassion (30 minutes)

Purpose: To help students apply their ideas about how empathy moves to compassion, students will be given scenarios and imagine what might be helpful if they were in their character's situation. Then, students will consider actions they could take in that situation to help their character.

Overview: In pairs, students will each be given a scenario (found at the end of this lesson). In their pair, students will describe how their character might feel. Then, they will come up with ideas for ways to express compassion to their character.

Step 1: Scenarios

Provide each pair a copy of the Empathy and Compassion Study worksheet found at the end of this lesson, then provide each pair one of the scenarios (found at the end of this lesson).

Instructions to students: Read your scenario and follow these four steps:

1. What might your character be thinking and feeling?
2. Have you ever felt that way?
3. What would help you if you were in a similar situation as your character?
4. What actions could you take to show empathy and compassion to your character?

Optional: Extend this activity by inviting students to put on a short skit of a scenario that they come up with. This helps to ensure examples are meaningful and relevant to your students' experience. Students can be put into groups of three to four.

Suggestions for scenarios:

- There is a new student joining the class
- A student is being teased (what would the bystanders do?)
- A student is left out of a game

Optional

Movie Scenario

In this scene, Mr. Grinch is stealing a Christmas tree. He is seen as a character who is everything evil and unpleasant, so he has been shunned by society. As a child Mr. Grinch was ridiculed for looking odd and unusual, causing him to not cope and recover from the negativity. He enjoys ruining Christmas for others and hating on everyone's festive mood.

After explaining the background of the movie clip, play the following video for students: [How the Grinch Stole Christmas](#)

(this video is from the movie *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* and is appropriate for ages 8+)

As a class reflect on the following questions:

1. How does Cindy have compassion for someone like Mr. Grinch?
2. What does she do and say that shows her compassion for him?
3. How does the quote, "Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle" relate to what Mr. Grinch is experiencing?
4. Why is compassion a strong trait and attribute of character?

Movie Scenario

In this scene, Ferdinand is a calf who has escaped a bullfighting farm after he realizes his father is dead. He runs away and finds himself accepted by Nina who lives on a flower farm.

After explaining the background of the movie clip, play the following video for students: **Ferdinand** (this video is from the movie *Ferdinand* and is appropriate for ages 6+)

As a class reflect on the following questions:

1. What hardship has Ferdinand experienced?
2. How does Nina, her father and the dog show compassion to Ferdinand?
3. What does compassion do for Ferdinand?

Reflection

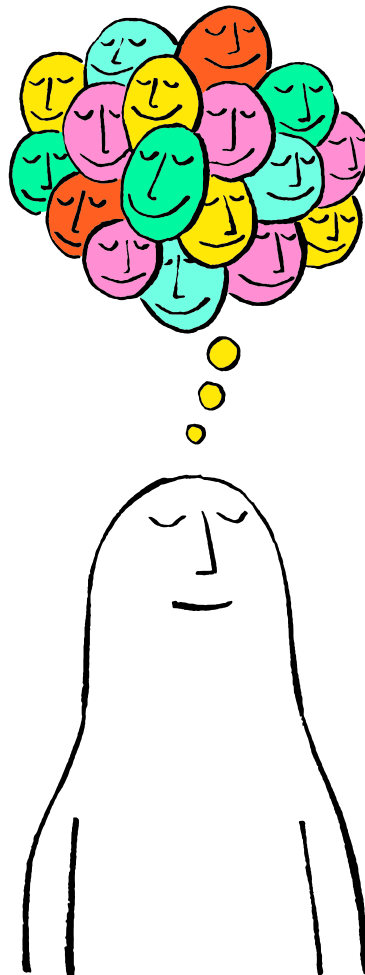
Invite pairs (or groups) to share out their scenarios and ideas for showing empathy and compassion toward their character.

Following the compassion scenarios, debrief with your students.

- How do empathy and compassion help our relationships with others?

Give students the key message:

- Empathy and compassion are important for our well-being. Empathy and compassion are central to having positive relationships with others!



Empathy and Compassion Steps

1. What might your character be thinking and feeling?

3. What would help you if you were in a similar situation as your character?

2. Have you ever felt that way?

4. What could you do to show empathy and compassion to your character?

Part 4: Daily Action (20 minutes)

See the Empathy and Compassion Daily Actions that are provided at the end of this lesson.

Ask students to consider Daily Actions that they could bring into their own life.

- Using the Daily Actions, or your own ideas, think about how you can add more empathy and compassion in your life at school, in your community and at home.
- Invite students to select one of these ideas to try out and create a reflection (for example, a journal, drawing or poem) of their experience.



Serotonin

Exposure to bright light has been linked to higher serotonin!
Get outside and enjoy the serotonin boost, but remember your sunscreen!

Teaching to Diversity

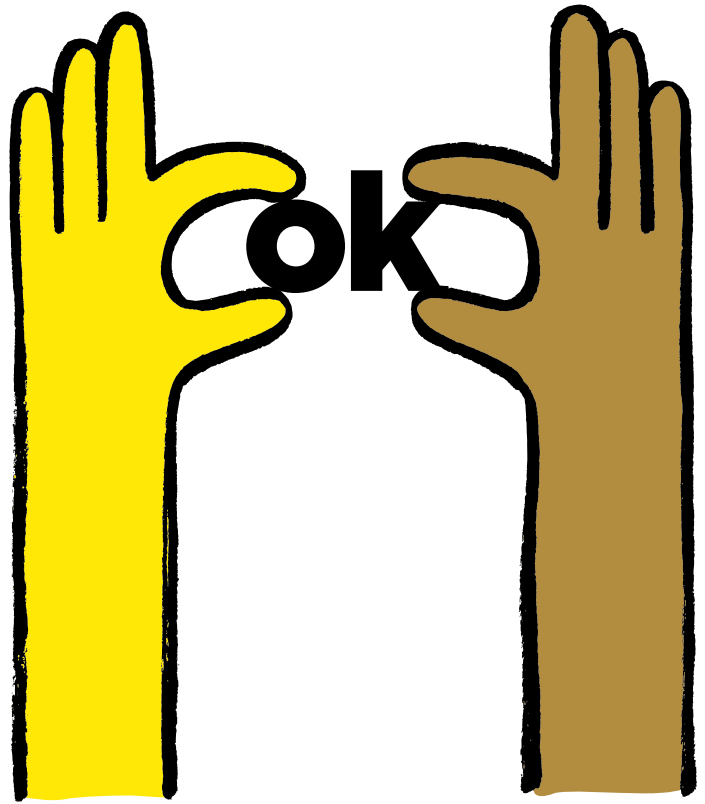
Optional: Use the following ideas to help you to calibrate the lesson to your particular group of students.

Differentiation

- Break this lesson up into several lessons, in order to give students more time and opportunity to process and absorb each abstract concept.
- Provide additional concrete examples of compassion. Sometimes providing examples of the opposite of each concept helps to give more of a context.
- Choose and assign scenarios to match each student's abilities.

Challengers

- Instead of providing the definition for compassion, ask students to look up the definitions online or in the dictionary.
- Add a written component to Think-Pair-Share activities by having students write down their ideas.
- Break students into small groups and have each group discuss and present their reactions to the quote.
- Invite students to create empathy and compassion skits and perform them for a buddy class.



Altruism

Helping others, or showing altruism, can be linked to serotonin AND oxytocin production. Serotonin is linked to happiness and oxytocin reduces stress and helps us show empathy to others.

Daily Actions for Empathy and Compassion

Daily actions are designed to promote transferable learning by inviting students to explore the module topics across four life domains: Self, School, Community and Home.

After implementing the empathy and compassion lessons, students can be provided time to explore each of the following related daily actions. When introducing these actions, you could explain the science behind them and perhaps provide examples to get students going. For example, studies have shown

that compassionate empathy helps us to connect and better understand one another, which can improve our relationships and overall well-being. Empathy and compassion are like two peas in a pod. The next time you have a sense of someone else's feelings, notice if it makes you feel like taking action and doing something to help/support them.

Following the exploration of daily actions, students are invited to write a personal reflection of their experience applying the daily actions.

Self: "Be kind whenever possible. It is always possible." — Dalai Lama

Taking care of the world includes being kind to yourself. What is one nice thing you can do for yourself this week? For example, going for a walk in nature, spending time with friends or cheering for your favourite sports team.

Classroom/School: Discover a new perspective

The next time you see someone in your classroom/school faced with a challenge, try to imagine what they might be going through. Remember to ask yourself this question: How would I feel if...?

Community: Compassion for the planet

What is an act of kindness you can do to help the planet? For example, water a plant, compost, turn off the lights or plant a seed/tree. Write it down, including what day you will try it this week.

Home: Pick a family member

What is one small thing you can do this week to brighten a family member's day?

Compassion Scenarios

Either use the suggested examples, or invite students to generate their own ideas to promote empathy and compassion for self, school, community and home and to share these ideas with the rest of the class.

Someone in your class has just returned from a camping trip and is excited to share their photos in a presentation to the class. They overhear another classmate saying that camping is stupid and now they are not sure if they want to do the presentation anymore.

At lunchtime, one of your classmates takes out a snack that is traditional to the country their family is from. Other classmates begin commenting on the way the food smells and say it looks disgusting.

Your teacher usually greets the class in the morning with lot of energy and enthusiasm. Today, you notice that the teacher is quiet, distracted and looks tired and sad.

Your friend has recently become really interested in basketball. They have been practising really hard to try out for the school team. Today, they found out that they didn't make the team.

One of your friends wears a winter jacket that is too small and has holes in it. Someone in the class teases them about their jacket, but they have told you that their parents couldn't afford to buy new winter coats for them and their siblings this year.

A classmate of yours loves to read independently and always seems to do well on tests and assignments. But when it comes to reading aloud or presenting in front of the class, they tend to get nervous and stumble on their words.

A student in your class moved to your school from another country a few years ago. The community they were born in is sometimes unsafe; they still have family members living there and sometimes worry about their well-being. Even though they worry sometimes, they are happy at their new school and have made lots of friends.

Your friend likes to sing but has never sung in front of an audience. They were nervous to sign up for the school talent show but, with some encouragement from you and other friends, decided to do it. They received lots of compliments about their performance and are glad they did it, even though they were nervous.

Someone in your class seems quiet and sad when they arrive to school in the morning. You know their family dog has been sick and you later learn that they had to put their dog down earlier this week.

Your friend has been unable to play after school for the past few weeks. You find out that their parent has been sick, and that they have been spending most of their free time caring for them and helping around the home.

A boy in your class spends most of his time with female classmates. Some of the boys in the class call him names and exclude him from their activities.

Your friend has a favourite necklace that they received as a gift from their grandmother. It's their most valued possession and they wear it every day. After recess, they notice that the necklace has fallen off and they can't find it.

Compassion Book List

A Sick Day for Amos McGee, Phillip S

(supports empathy for ages 2-6)

[Access read aloud video](#)

Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Patridge, Mem Fox

(this picture book supports compassion for ages 3-8)

[Access read aloud video](#)

The Rabbit Listened, Cori Doerfeld

(supports empathy for ages 3-5)

[Access read aloud video](#)

The Story of Ferdinand, Munro Leaf

(supports empathy for ages 3-5)

[Access read aloud video](#)

You Hold Me UP, Monique Gray Smith

(supports well-being and resilience for ages 3-5)

[Access read aloud video](#)

The Teddy Bear, David McPhail

(supports empathy for ages 3-6)

[Access read aloud video](#)

Hey Little Ant, Phillip and Hannah Hoose

(supports empathy for ages 3-7)

[Access read aloud video](#)

Bear Feels Sick, Karma Wilson

(supports empathy for ages 3-7)

[Access read aloud video](#)

One, Kathryn Otoshi

(supports empathy for ages 4-6)

[Access read aloud video](#)

We're All Wonders, R.J. Palacio

(supports empathy for ages 4-8)

[Access read aloud video](#)

Chair for My Mother, Vera B. Williams

(supports empathy for ages 4-8)

[Access read aloud video](#)

Under the Lemon Moon, Edith Hope Fine

(supports empathy, compassion, social awareness and generosity for ages 5-8)

[Access read aloud video](#)

The Orange Shirt Story, Phyllis Webstad

(also supports resilience, fighting racism and bullying for ages 6-8)

[Access read aloud video](#)

Listening to My Heart, Gabi Garcia

(supports empathy and self-compassion for ages 6-10)

[Access read aloud video](#)

Wonder, R.J. Palacio

(also supports empathy and compassion for ages 8-12)

[Access read aloud video](#)

Charlotte's Web, E.B. White

(also supports resilience and empathy for ages 8-12)

[Access read aloud video](#)

The One and Only Ivan, Katherine Applegate

(also supports empathy and animal rights for ages 8-12)

[Access read aloud video](#)

Moo, Sharon Creech

(also supports empathy, volunteering and friendship for ages 8-12)

Loser, Jerry Spinelli

(also supports empathy, self-acceptance and kindness for ages 8-12)

[Access read aloud video](#)

Front Desk, Kelly Yang

(also supports empathy, resilience and self-confidence for ages 8-12)

[Access read aloud video](#)

Because of Mr. Terupt, Rob Buyea
(also supports empathy and taking personal responsibility for ages 8-12)

Access read aloud video

Crenshaw, Katherine Applegate
(also supports resilience and empathy and compassion for ages 8-12)

Access read aloud video

Blubber, Judy Blume
(also supports empathy and compassion for ages 8-12)

Access read aloud video

I Am Malala (Young Reader's Edition), Malala Yousafzai
(also supports altruism, resilience and compassion/ empathy for ages 10+)

Access read aloud video

Number the Stars, Lois Lowry
(also supports empathy and compassion for ages 10-12)

Access read aloud video

Lost in the Sun, Lisa Graff
(also supports empathy, resiliency and self-compassion for ages 10-13)

Access read aloud video

Speaking Our Truth, Monique Gray Smith
(also supports resiliency and empathy for ages 9-11)

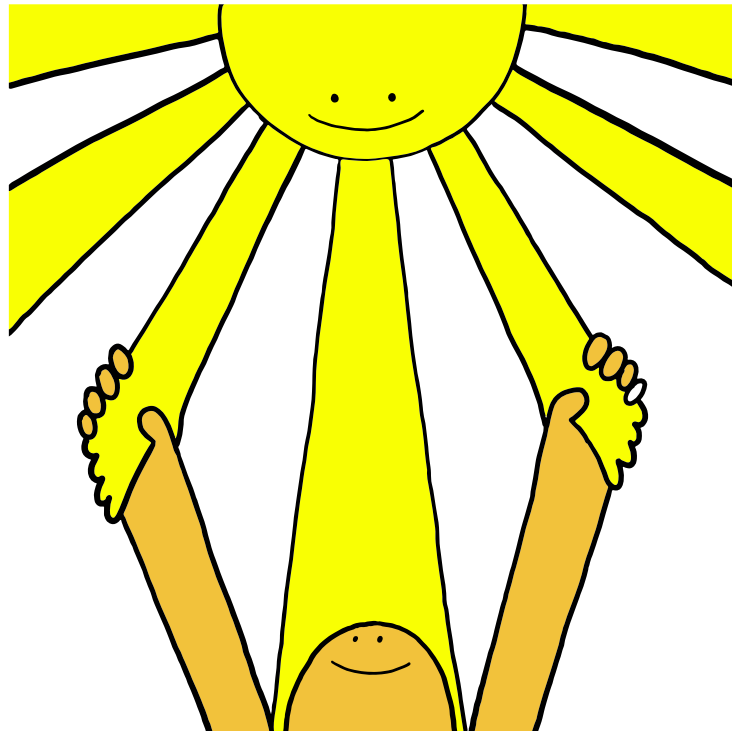
Rain Reign, Ann M. Martin
(also supports empathy and compassion for ages 9-12)

Access read aloud video

Same Sun Here, Silas House and Neela Vaswani
(also supports empathy, friendship and compassion for ages 9-12)

Fatty Legs, Christy Jordon-Fenton
(also supports resiliency for ages 9-12)

Access read aloud video



Word Bank

Active Listening – To carefully listen and focus on what someone says and also pay attention to things like their body movement, facial expressions and tone of voice.

Adversity – Difficulties, challenges or hardships. In other words, a very hard, stressful or sad situation, that often lasts some time. For example, living through a global pandemic, living in poverty, experiencing discrimination or experiencing challenges at home.

Altruism – Wanting to help or helping others because you care about them or are worried for their well-being, without needing to get something in return (a reward).

Angry – A strong feeling of being upset or annoyed.

Attention – The act of carefully listening, watching and/or doing something.

Attitude – A feeling or way of thinking that affects a person's behaviour. For example, having a positive attitude means to expect good, be open to challenges, and to take care of your happiness and health.

Bystander – A person who is present at an event or incident but does not take part in it. For example, someone who watches a bully pick on or tease another child but does not get involved.

Calm – Feelings of peacefulness, quietness and lack of stress.

Collaborate/Collaboration – To work together with others to make or produce something.

Community – A group of people that are connected through liking the same things or having similar identities, values or cultures.

Compassion – Having concern for the well-being of someone in distress, and includes a need or desire to alleviate that person's suffering. In other words, a feeling of understanding or recognizing the suffering of a person and wanting to help them.

Critical Thinking – To analyze or think about something using logic, facts, reasoning and intellect.

Disappointed – To feel as if your expectations, wishes or hopes of something or someone were not met.

Discouraged – To lose confidence or enthusiasm about something. Feeling less willing to do something.

Empathy – The ability to understand and share the feelings of another person.

Excited – Feeling very happy and enthusiastic about something.

Frightened – To feel afraid, fearful or scared.

Frustrated – To feel annoyed and discouraged.

Goal – Something that you are trying to do or achieve, usually with a final achievement or destination in mind.

Gratitude – Feeling thankful for someone or something.

Happy – The emotion of feeling pleasure, enjoyment or joy for something or someone.

Hope – The feeling of expecting something positive to happen.

Intention – A determination to act in a certain way. In other words, setting your mind towards and committing to an aim or purpose that you plan to do or achieve. It is something you plan to do regardless of the outcome; it's more about the type of attitude to bring to an activity.

Judgment – An opinion or decision that something is good or bad.

Kindness – The quality of being generous, helpful and caring about other people, or an act showing this quality.

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