



LESSON

2

Communicating with Empathy Unit

Grade 3 • Ages 8-9

TIME FRAME

Preparation: 20 minutes

Instruction: 30 minutes

MATERIALS

15 to 20 age appropriate newspaper or magazine pictures or Internet images of people who are in challenging situations and seem poor, injured, sad, disappointed, frustrated, angry, etc. (Make sure to show care as you select images. Also consider using images of animals.)

Write responses on the back of some of the images before class, using suggestions noted under the lesson background for teachers and then allow students to develop their own responses

Large self-adhesive poster sheet

[Kindness Concept Poster](#) for Compassion & Caring

1 paper per student for Kindness Minute activity

LEARNING STANDARDS

Common Core: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.3.1, 1b-d, 2, 3; Colorado: Comprehensive Health S.3, GLE.2, EO.b; S.4, GLE.2, EO.a,b

[Learning standards key](#)

Expressing Empathy

Students will identify the difference between positive/compassionate responses and negative/unkind responses to people who are in challenging situations.

Lesson Background for Teachers

This lesson builds on the previous lesson in this unit.

It is especially important in this lesson to show care in avoiding reinforcing stereotypes about poverty and feelings.

Before class, write responses to the newspaper/magazine pictures or images on the back of some of the pictures. On some, write positive or compassionate responses like:

- I noticed tears in your eyes. Are you feeling sad?
- I have an extra shirt you can have.
- You look hungry. Would you like some of my food?
- I am sad that your baby is sick.
- I want to do something to help you.

On other pictures write negative or unkind responses like:

- I didn't make this happen and I can't help you.
- Why do your clothes have holes in them?
- Stop crying! It's too loud.
- You don't smell very nice.

You may want to add tricky responses such as:

- I'm sorry, although I can't help you right now.
- Did you spend all the money I gave you on that expensive _____? (whatever item is in the picture) .



The RAK paradigm is the framework for teaching and building kindness skills.

RAK lessons teach kindness skills through a step-by-step framework of **Inspire, Empower, Act** and **Share**.

However, each lesson starts with the **Share** step to reinforce learning from previous lessons.



Key Terms for Students

Consider writing key terms on the board before class to introduce vocabulary and increase understanding.

COMPASSION Being aware when others are sick, sad, or hurt and wanting to help.

EMPATHY Understanding and caring about how someone else feels.

CARING Feeling and showing concern for others.

TIPS FOR DIVERSE LEARNERS

Students might benefit from:

- Seeing the images and the phrases on a document camera.
- Discussing the images and phrases in small groups first and then answering as a group.
- Exploring what caring and compassion look like by having students find their own images of someone who is suffering and drawing their caring / compassionate action in response to the situation in the picture.

Resources

For a variety of images online, search for “clipart” on Google Images.

Share (3 mins)

Ask the students to share with a partner what they did as an unexpected chore at home or one thing they did or said to another person this week that showed kindness. Encourage the students to switch so both get a chance to share with one another.

Inspire

Brainstorming (5 mins)

On a large poster sheet, write the phrase “Words and Actions that Show **Caring**, **Empathy**, and **Compassion**”.

*Can anyone tell me what the words **empathy** and **compassion** mean? Allow students to respond. Then summarize by saying, these words mean to understand how someone else is feeling.*

If you read the book Mufaro’s Beautiful Daughters, you can explain that the sister who acted kindly showed **caring** and **empathy**. You can also reference the **compassion** poster.



Empower

Empathy Images and Discussion (5 mins)

For our next activity, we are going to think about what to say and do for someone who is feeling sad, hurt, upset, nervous, embarrassed, frustrated, disappointed, angry, etc. We are going to look at some images and read what someone might say or do for that person.

Walk around the room, showing the first image to the students. Read the response you have written on the back of the pictures.

- *By a show of hands, who thinks what I read would show **empathy** or **compassion** to this person?*
- *Why do you think it is kind? Why do you think it is unkind?*
- *How do you think you might feel if you were that person?*

If the statement or action is empathetic, write it on the poster sheet.

Group Activity (10 mins)

Then, divide the students into groups of three or four and give each group a few images. Tell groups to write a kind phrase or action on the back of their images OR a phrase or action that shows a lack of concern. Then repeat the questions listed above and ask students to write it on the poster sheet if it's an empathetic statement.

Wrap Up (5 mins)

To gauge understanding of the material, choose from the evaluation and reflection questions as discussion, or writing or journal prompts. Consider providing additional time for deeper evaluation and reflection as needed.

Evaluation Questions

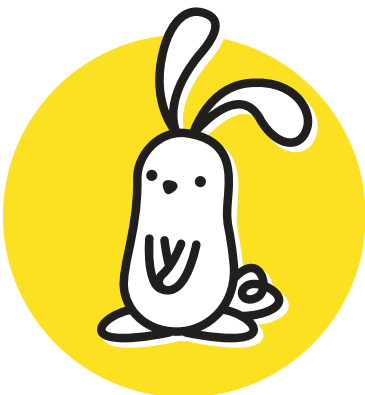
- *What do we mean by **empathy** and **compassion**? Are they the same or different?*
- *What are some ways that you can show **care**, **empathy** and **compassion** to others through your words?*
- *How about with your actions?*

Reflection Questions

- *After reviewing all the pictures, what are some other kind words or actions that could be said or done for people who are feeling sad, hurt, angry, having a difficult time, etc.?*
- *How do YOU feel when you when you show compassion or have empathic thoughts?*
- *How do you think others feel?*

Summary

*Today we talked about what it means to communicate in ways that show **empathy** and concern for others. When you see a friend, family member or classmate who is having a hard time, try to put yourself in their shoes and show empathy and concern for them. Trying to understand how someone else is feeling is an important part of being kind to others.*





Act (2 mins)

Kindness Minute

Trace one of your shoes on a piece of paper and write the word "**empathy**" inside of it. This will help remind you to show **empathy** to your classmates, as well as your family and other friends!

Kindness in Action

Complete the Home Extension Activity "Communicating with Empathy".

This activity could be done at any point during the unit. Write the return date on the sheet before you distribute it. You may want to distribute the sheet with the Friday folders and have it returned on Monday.

Hand out the Home Extension Activity and say: "We have been talking about what it means to communicate in ways that show empathy and concern for others and I want you to talk about these ideas with your parent, guardian or another adult who cares for you. Please put this in your folder and return by _____."

The day the students bring back their sheet, ask the following questions:

- What did you discuss about **care**, **concern**, **compassion**, and **empathy**?
- How do you show **concern** for each other at home?



Home Extension Activity

NAME

PLEASE RETURN BY

Background

As part of the Random Acts of Kindness program, we have been talking about how to communicate with care, concern, compassion, and empathy for others.

Vocabulary Words

CARING Feeling and showing concern for others.

COMPASSION Caring about someone's feelings and offering to help that person.

EMPATHY The ability to understand and share the feelings of another.

Instructions

Review the vocabulary words listed above. Ask your student what he or she has learned about care, concern, compassion, and empathy. Then discuss the following questions and write (or have your student write) responses below or on the back and return to school by the date above:

What does it mean to show care, compassion and empathy?

How do you think we show concern for each other at home?

