

# LESSON 4

## Communicating with Empathy Unit Grade 3 • Ages 8-9

### TIME FRAME

Preparation: 10 minutes  
Instruction: 30 minutes

### MATERIALS

RAK journals

Paper and pencil

Shining Your Light sheet, one for each student

Scissors

Short video clip called "Sesame Street: Mark Ruffalo- Empathy": [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9\\_1Rt1R4xbM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_1Rt1R4xbM)

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

### LEARNING STANDARDS

Common Core: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.3.1, 3.2; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.3 Colorado: Comprehensive Health S.3, GLE.2, EO.b; Reading, Writing, Communicating S.3, GLE.2, EO.d

[Learning standards key](#)

## Empathy Across the Genres

Students will write a story or descriptive poem that focuses on caring and empathy.

### Lesson Background for Teachers

This lesson builds on previous lessons in this unit.

After the students have discussed empathy as part of the first three lessons in this unit, you can focus a writing unit on empathy.

### 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:

- Using a graphic organizer to help them structure their writing.
- Seeing a list of actions that relate to caring and empathy (perhaps from the Expressing Empathy lesson) to provide ideas for the writing activity.
- Being encouraged to write about how they can show caring for animals if that is their area of interest.

#### Kindness in Action Activity

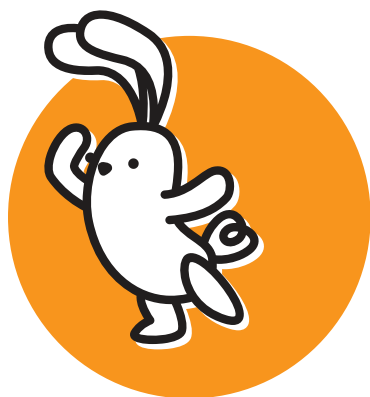
- Working with a partner if they need help thinking out loud before writing their cards.
- Support in writing their cards. For example, they could write the person's name and dictate the statement to the teacher or another classmate.

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.



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



## Resources

Five Poetry Teaching Tips for New Teachers <http://www.edutopia.org/blog/poetry-teaching-tips-new-teachers-lisa-dabbs>

Best Stories of Kindness in Children's Books <http://www.the-best-childrens-books.org/stories-of-kindness.html>

15 Songs about Promoting Kindness <http://www.kimlehman.net/2013/03/05/promote-kindness-15-songs-to-inspire-you/>

## Share (3 mins)

Ask students to share with a partner the scenarios they wrote for the Home Extension activity. Students should ask their partner how they could respond in a **caring** way and then read their response for how they would show kindness. Both students should have a chance to share their scenarios.

## Inspire

### Video Clip (5 mins)

Before beginning the writing activity, post these definitions:

**CARING** Feeling and showing concern for others.

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

You may also consider writing a few of these quotes on the board and sharing them with the students:

- "**Empathy** is seeing with the eyes of another, listening with the ears of another and feeling with the heart of another." – Alfred Adler
- "If you judge people, you have no time to love them." – Mother Teresa
- "If you see someone without a smile, give them one of yours." – Dolly Parton

Show students the short video clip on YouTube called "Sesame Street: Mark Ruffalo- **Empathy**"  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9\\_1Rt1R4xbM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_1Rt1R4xbM)

## Empower

### Writing Activity (15 mins)

Let students know that today they will be focusing on a writing activity to creatively express what they have been learning about **empathy**, **compassion** and **caring** over the last few lessons.

One possibility for a writing activity is to have students use their journal responses and ideas from the writing prompts suggested with Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters to write a story or a descriptive poem that focuses on **caring**, **compassion** and **empathy**.

Students could present their poetry or writing sample to the class if time is available.

### 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 is **empathy**?
- What was one thing you remember from someone else's poem?
- What have we learned in the past few lessons that helped you with this writing activity?

#### Reflection Questions

- Do you feel this writing activity helped you better understand what it means to show **empathy**? Why or why not?
- How do you think writing helps people explore their feelings?
- Were you able to use words or ideas about **caring** and **empathy** in a new way?

#### Summary

*Creative writing can help us express ourselves and convey important messages.*

**Empathy** is an important quality for us to have to better understand and show consideration for how someone else is feeling. Acting with **empathy** shows kindness.



### Act (2 mins)

#### Kindness Minute

*It is important for us to remember to take care of ourselves, in addition to showing **empathy** and **caring** for others. It isn't always easy to show **empathy** and be kind, but it's important we do our best. Let's say together, "Each day offers me a new start to do my best!"*

#### Kindness in Action

Ask students, *What are some ways that you can "shine your light" on someone else? When someone says something kind to you, how do you feel? Ask for volunteers to respond. Sometimes you feel like someone is shining their light on you.* Hand out the "Shining Your Light" sheet.

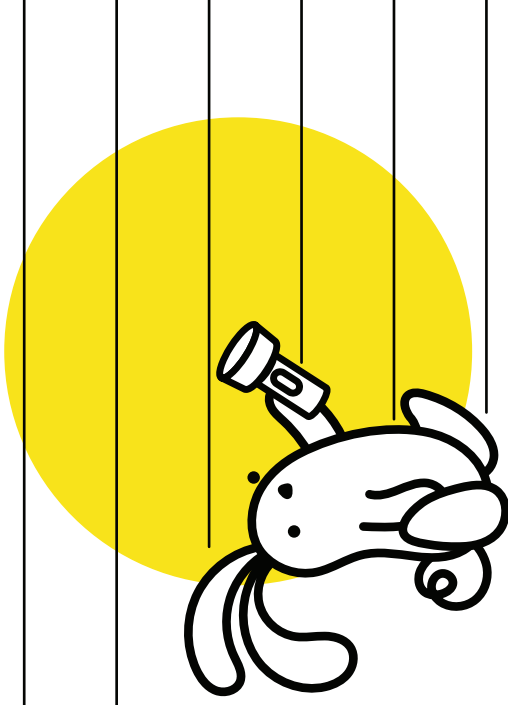
Note: "Shining Your Light" means to acknowledge or recognize another person.

Think of at least two people (and up to four if you can think of that many) you think may be feeling sad, anxious, upset, or sick. It could be a friend or another student or someone in your family. Write that person's name on the card and what you would like to say to them. An example might be: "I noticed that you were sad because you didn't make the soccer team. Is there some way I can help?"

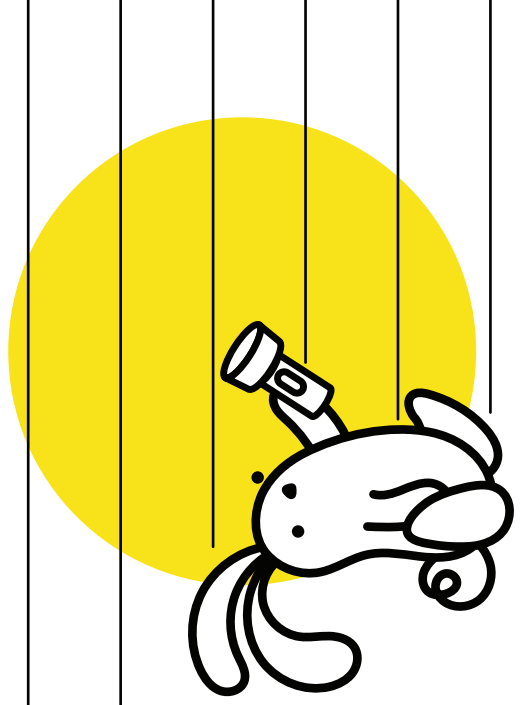


# Shining Your Light

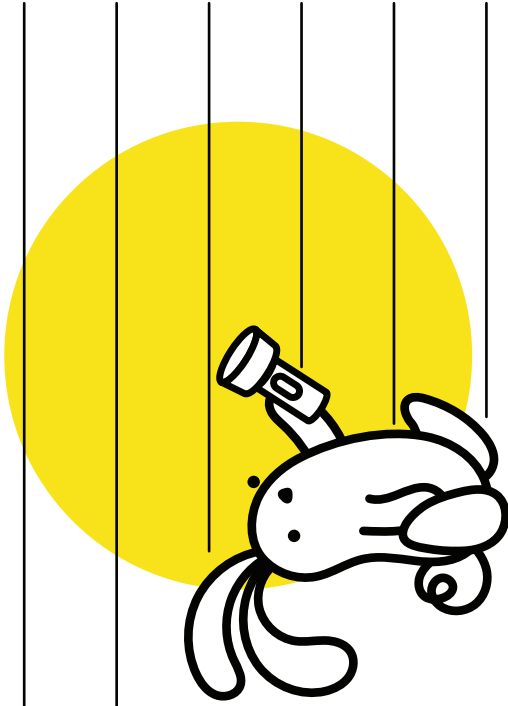
THIS WEEK I WILL SHINE MY LIGHT ON...



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