

Lesson	Introducing . . . Empathy!
Unit	Understanding Empathy
Learning Intention	Students will be introduced to the concept of empathy.
Lesson Duration	20 minutes
Materials Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book: <i>When I Care About Others</i> by Cornelia Maude • Whiteboard or chart paper and markers • Feelings template • Container for students to draw paper strips from (e.g., basket) • Props, such as a blanket, cozy toy, tissue or other items around your room that help students self-regulate (optional) • Chart paper or poster board for listing students' ideas

Lesson Structure

This lesson introduces young learners to the concept of empathy and how they can use empathy to learn about and help others.

To prepare for the lesson, print multiple copies of the Feelings template, cut them into strips, and put the strips in a container for student to draw from. Also, gather any props you'd like to use.

Introduce the lesson by explaining to the children that you are going to learn about something called empathy. Write empathy on the whiteboard or chart paper. Explain that empathy is something you show to others. Showing empathy has two steps:

1. First, you notice how someone else is feeling.
2. Then, you act in a kind and caring way to let that person know that you understand.

Read the book, *When I Care About Others*. Then, guide a discussion about it around these questions:

- What are some of the ways you saw the friends in the story being kind and caring to others?
- Can you think of a time you had an upset feeling and someone showed kindness toward you?

Move to the activity, which is designed to help students practice expressing emotions, recognize emotions in others, and respond in kind and caring ways. Explain to students that they are going to practice being kind toward others.

- Ask a student to select a feelings slip and act out the feeling (with or without props).
- Ask the remaining students to guess the name of the feeling.
- Ask for a volunteer to come and act out a kindness for the upset friend.
- Repeat until all students have had a chance to act out a feeling.

Assessment

Ask students to respond to the question, “What is one way you can show empathy to others in our classroom?” As students share ideas, jot them down on the whiteboard or chart paper. Later, you can copy the list to poster paper so you can hang the list in the classroom as a reminder. Give your list a title, such as “We Show Empathy By . . .” or “When someone feels _____, I can _____.”

Extensions

- **Calm Space:** Work with students to create a calm corner/space in the classroom where they can go if they are feeling upset, scared, etc. If possible, include students in choosing where and how to set up the space. Encourage children to think about what comforting items should be available. Talk about the rules for using the space together and post the rules in the space.
- **Photo Feelings Chart:** Have students act out emotional expression faces and take their pictures. Print the photos and use them to create a personalized classroom feelings chart.
- **Reflecting Emotions:** Make hand mirrors available or hang small mirrors around the room for children to practice emotional expressions.



ANGRY



SICK



SAD



SCARED



SLEEPY



WORRIED