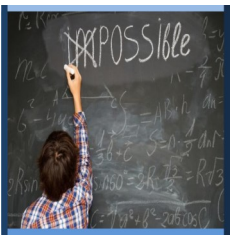
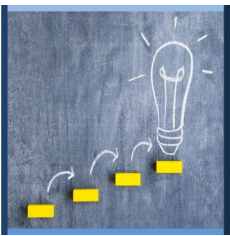


4S Skills for Secondary School Success



Teacher's Manual

2025 Edition



Unit 4: Interacting with Others as We Learn Together



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Connection Circles to Build Community and Deepen Relationships

In this lesson, students learn about connection circles, a practice that builds relationships by honoring students' voices and cultivating agency.

Essential Question

How do we work together to create a classroom community where individual and collective learning is engaging and valued by all?

Guiding Questions

What is a connection circle? How can connection circles help us build our classroom community and grow in our understanding of one another?

Objectives

- Students will understand what community circles are and how they help to deepen relationships.
- Students will participate in a community circle.
- Students will understand how their uniqueness's enrich the classroom community.

Advance preparation

- Fill out your own Who I am
- Select talking piece and Community Wall area
- Display posters
- Select and load video
- Prepare student handouts
- Place “green dot” stickers on student desks
- Ensure classroom has space for a circle of chairs

Materials/Resources

- PowerPoint slideshow 4.1 (adapt as needed)
- Talking piece (an easily held, visible physical object that indicates that the one holding it has the right to speak. This could be a classroom object such as a school mascot or pennant, a natural object such as a feather or stone, or any other appropriately sized item you select.)
- Circle Instructions

Student Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connection Circles Fast Facts handout
Vocabulary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belonging • Community • Compassion • Ethnicity • Nationality

Do Now

5 min.

Students complete their Who I am Chart. This chart draws on the two brainstorming activities from Lesson 1.2, “A Few Fast Facts” and “A Starring Role in Your Life Story.”. As students read the chart, ask them to underline any word whose meaning they don’t recognize as well as those words they would like to know more about.

Introduction (Framing/Overview)

5 min.

1. Slide 3: Student Dedication (30-60 seconds)
2. Introduce the unit by explaining to students that being able to relate to one another is an essential factor in everyone’s success. This unit will focus on how to build those relationships and create a classroom community where each person feels valued and respected. Briefly review the day’s agenda (slide 4).
3. Call students’ attention to posted vocabulary words (slide 5). Ask students to pay special attention to the ways these vocabulary words are used throughout today’s lesson. Give students an opportunity to “green dot” unfamiliar words on the poster. Let students know that they will learn more about these “green light” vocabulary words as they delve into the lesson.

Activity 1: About Community Circles

12 min.

4. Select one of these two video options to show students (slide 6):
Community Building Circles
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BMp6IoLDlvY>
Circle for Change (video is 11 min. long; if using it, stop at min. 4:22)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DzbDJBXjVIU>
5. Invite the class to bring their chairs to arrange in a circle. Introduce the concept of circles by posing a few questions (slide 7): Who is

**Media
Interaction****Whole
Class
Discussion**

visible to you when you sit in rows? Who is visible to you when you sit in a circle? Why do you think we sit in a circle?

After listening to students’ responses, acknowledge and enhance their thinking by adding that through the use of circles, we will learn about and connect with each other. Add that circles may also be used to plan, to learn new academic concepts, and to resolve conflicts.

Direct Instruction

Explain to students (slide 8) that meeting in a circle, with no specific starting and ending point, establishes a level playing field for all participants. The use of circles dates to a time when people would sit around a fire, so that everyone had equal access to heat and light. Members of a school or a community can meet in circle arrangements when there is an issue that is relevant to everyone present.

Circles are powerful symbols of community, connection, inclusion, fairness, equity, and wholeness. We use circles to build community and deepen relationships. Circles by their very structure convey equity, trust, safety, and agency. The handout “Connections Circles Fast Facts” can serve as a reminder of these points.

Connection Circles are the basic building block for developing a restorative community. The circle process fosters relationships among students, school staff, parents, and community members by giving everyone an equal voice and a safe space to be heard. Conflict is reduced and relationships flourish as people know one another better.

- 6. Show students the “talking piece” (a physical object that you have selected to indicate that the person holding it has the right to speak). Explain that the talking piece will move around the circle in “popcorn” style. A student who would like to contribute will ask for the talking piece. Emphasize that the person holding the talking piece is the only one speaking at that time; everyone else tracks the speaker by maintaining eye contact and listening.

Activity 2: Circles, Who I am and Community15 min.

- 7. Refer to the Who I am Chart from the Do Now (slide 9). Show students your Who I am chart filled out with one or two words underlined.
- 8. Highlight the information shared on the Who I am chart: likes, hobbies, interests, ethnicity, language, culture, traditions, favorite and least favorite academic subjects. Affirm that as individuals we contribute to building our community. We shape our community,

Circle-Teacher Modeling

Circle-Direct Instruction

informing how we interact with others and how we learn together. Also, as we learn about ourselves as a community, we learn about the world and expand our global understanding.

9. Invite students to participate in the connection circle (slide 10) by responding to one of following prompts:

- a) Share something people do not know about you **or**
- b) Share a fact on your Who I am Chart that would surprise others

**Circle-
Whole
Class
Discussion**

Ask for a volunteer to whom you will pass the talking piece to begin. After speaking, the volunteer moves the talking piece in the direction of choice (right or left). Circle participants share sequentially until the loop is completed. Students may exercise their right to **pass**, or the right to **come back to me**.

10. Next, direct students' attention to posted vocabulary words. Explain the meaning of "green light" words (those that students have flagged as unfamiliar or not sufficiently understood). Explain that it is important to be aware of Who I am vocabulary as we begin to explore and celebrate who we are to build the foundations of our community. Discuss how fairness within the classroom supports collective compassion and understanding. If you wish, post Vocabulary Recap definitions as a reminder.

**Circle-
Direct
Instruction**

11. Indicate the section of the wall that you have designated as the **community wall** (slide 12). Invite students to begin building the community wall by posting Who I am charts on that space. Encourage students to continue to update their charts throughout the semester.

Closing

8 min.

12. Still in the circle, students respond to the following prompt (slide 13):

Share one new thing you learned from today's lesson.

After the circle is completed, thank students for their participation in today's lesson and for their willingness to try something new.

Notes:

- 1) Costello, B., Watchel, J., and Watchel, T. (2010). *Restorative circles in schools: Building community and enhancing learning*, Bethlehem, PA: International Institute for Restorative Practices.

- 2) Bucci, D., Cannon, A. and Ramkarran, A. (2017). *Community, circles, and collaboration: The first 10 days*. Armadale Public School, Markham, ON, Canada.
- 3) Edutopia Videos from George Lucas Educational Foundation
- 4) Posters from International Institution for Restorative Practices

Who I am Vocabulary

- Belonging
- Community
- Compassion
- Ethnicity
- Nationality

Connection Circles

Instructions

Participants sit in one large group circle. The facilitator holds a talking piece of his/her choosing. The talking piece should have some sort of significance or meaning for the facilitator. The facilitator first establishes the ground rules of the circle.

Ground Rules

1. We **maintain** the shape of the circle.
2. We **listen attentively** to others and refrain from interrupting.
3. Before exercising the right to pass, we challenge ourselves to **participate** and **contribute** in discussion.
4. We offer feedback, suggestions, and opinions in a **respectful** and **inclusive** manner.
5. We use a talking piece **appropriately**.

Adapted from Community, Circles and Collaboration: The First 10 Days, Armadale Public Schools, Markham, ON, Canada

Connection Circles Fast Facts

Developing Positive Relationships

Restorative Practices

are an emerging social science that studies how to strengthen relationships between individuals as well as social connections within communities.

Ground Rules

- Confidentiality
- You can pass, but we will come back to you. You do not have to answer the question at that point.
- The person with the talking piece gets everyone's full attention.



Connection Circles

are the basic building block for developing restorative communities. This process fosters relationships among students, school staff, parents and community members. Conflict is reduced and relationships flourish when people get to know one another better.

School and Classroom Climate

Safe space, trust, and equal voice.

Circles Promote Belonging, Purpose, Hope, and Agency

Circles are powerful symbols of community

Circles convey connection, inclusion, fairness, equality and wholeness. We use circles to build community and deepen relationships.

WHO I AM CHART

Nationality.....

Ethnicity.....

Language.....

Culture.....

Favorite traditions.....

Hobbies.....

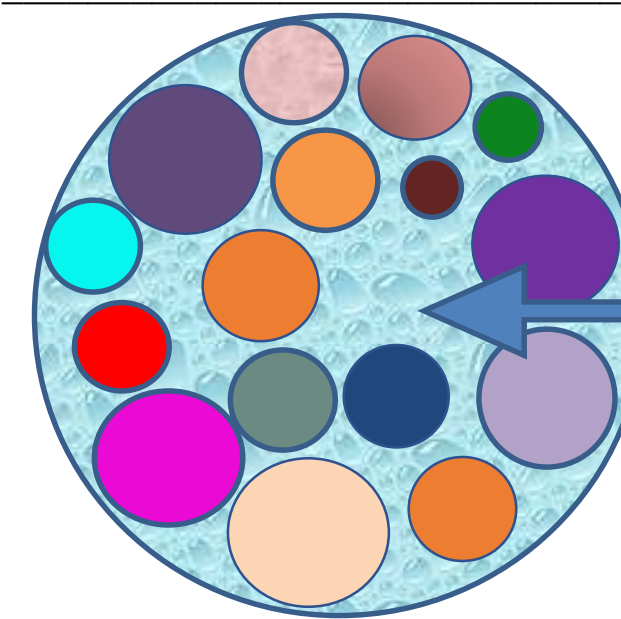
Extra-curricular activities.....

Career interest.....

Favorite subject.....

Least favorite subject.....

My Name



Vocabulary Recap (Poster)

- **Belonging:** feeling appreciated and accepted. People who feel they belong are not distracted and worried about being treated as a stereotype or reduced to just one part of their identity.
- **Community:** a classroom environment where all students are treated fairly and feel included, safe to be themselves, and free to exercise agency while challenging themselves.
- **Compassion:** empathizing with someone who is suffering and feeling compelled to reduce the suffering.
- **Ethnicity:** identity based on ancestry; being a member of a social group that has a common history, culture, and language.
- **Nationality:** belonging to a particular nation by birth or naturalization.



Building Community through Gratitude

This lesson is designed to increase students' understanding of how gratitude improves their own well-being as well as that of those around them.

Essential Question

How do we work together to create a fair and just classroom community where individual and collective learning is engaging, valued, and liberating for all?

Guiding Questions

How can showing gratitude toward others affect you, our class, and our community?
What is the power of gratitude?

Objectives

- Students will understand the power and importance of gratitude.
- Students will work collaboratively to express gratitude in the school community.

Advance Preparation

- Prepare student materials
- Display Do Now and Benefits of Gratitude poster
- Have space in classroom for a connection circle

Materials/Resources

- PowerPoint slideshow 4.2 (adapt as needed)
- Benefits of Gratitude poster
- Journal page

Student Materials

- chart paper/poster board
- markers
- sticky notes

Vocabulary

- Gratitude
- Appreciation

Do Now

3 min.

Slide 1: Students share with a partner one thing they have felt thankful for this week.

Introduction (Framing/Overview)

10 min.

1. Slide 3: Student Dedication (30-60 sec.)
2. Slide 4: Convene a quick connection circle with students, focused on saying “thank you.” After students have gathered in a circle, invite them to reflect on their interactions during the last week and think of a time when another student did them a favor or small kindness that may have gone unnoticed or unacknowledged. It could be something as simple as holding a door open or sitting with them at lunch. Invite volunteers to share something kind that someone did for them this week. This circle heightens our awareness of kindness in a public way.
3. After the circle, tell students that the focus of the day is gratitude and how it can enhance our happiness and overall well-being. Display slide 5 and ask students whether anyone can offer a definition of the word **gratitude**. After students have offered definitions, click through to confirm the definition. Display slide 6 and review the day’s agenda with students.
4. (Slide 7) Watch the two-minute video “The Science of Gratitude” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JMd1CcGZYwU> to introduce the concept of gratitude and the science behind how gratitude changes our brains.
5. After watching the video, ask students to summarize what they learned about scientific findings on the positive effects of gratitude. Then tell them there have been many studies on the effects of gratitude, confirming the following.
 - a) Gratitude is a positive emotion: it feels good to be grateful. As a positive emotion gratitude can also make you feel more open, creative, and energized.
 - b) Gratitude is linked to physical health outcomes including lower blood pressure and a stronger immune system.
 - c) Because gratitude involves recognizing other people’s kindness, feeling and expressing gratitude helps strengthen relationships.
 - d) For all these reasons, people who are grateful tend to feel happier overall.

Now share the Benefits of Gratitude poster.

Activity 1: Creating a Gratitude Poster

22 min.

6. Organize students in teams of three.
7. Slide 8: ask your students to think about people who contribute to making your school a better place. Have them write names of people who have a positive impact on your school community on the sticky

**Individual
Reflection**

notes provided (one name per sticky note: 2 min.). Then each team agrees on one person for whom to design a poster of gratitude.

8. As groups deliberate to choose on one person for whom to design a poster of gratitude, provide each group with a piece of chart paper or posterboard. Gratitude posters should include the following: (13 min.)
 - a) Name of the person
 - b) A quote of something the person says often
 - c) Three words to describe the person
 - d) An image or symbol that represents the person
 - e) Three things you appreciate about this person
 - f) Explain how this person makes others feel special or positively contributes to the school community
9. Have students share their posters (5 min.). Then discuss how/when students will give their posters to the people for whom they created them (2 min.).

Activity 2

13 min.

10. Slide 10: Introduce the idea of a gratitude journal to the students as a place where they can weekly keep a list of things for which they are grateful. Optional: Show the video “Gratitude as a Life Skill”: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XlQKaCl0_xY. (Note: this is a fun video, but it does use the word “butthead.” If you prefer not to use the video, you may want to remove the reference from the slideshow.) **Direct Instruction**
11. Have students create a journal to log things they are grateful for, using a google doc, composition notebook, notes app on their phone, page from their 4S journal, or the “Gratitude Journal” sheet provided. **Personal Reflection/ Practice**
12. Display the Gratitude Prompts (slide 11) to help students get started. (Note: these are only suggestions; students can choose from these prompts or create their own categories of gratefulness.) Suggest students list 3-6 things (big or small) that they are grateful for.
13. Have students gather in the same triads from Activity 1 and share three things they are grateful for and why. **Team Discussion**

Closure

2 min.

Exit Ticket: Have students share how they are planning to incorporate gratitude into their life daily or weekly.

Extensions

If you wish to assign homework, have students write a letter of gratitude to someone in their lives they are thankful for. Or, have them continue to add items to the list in their gratitude journal.

Resources:

https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/four_ways_to_give_thanks

<https://positivepsychology.com/gratitude-exercises/>

<https://www.gettingsmart.com/2018/12/building-school-culture-with-gratitude/>

https://ggsc.berkeley.edu/what_we_do/major_initiatives/expanding_gratitude/youth_gratitude_project

Some Benefits of Gratitude

Being grateful...



**IMPROVES PHYSICAL
HEALTH**



**IMPROVES
SLEEP**



**IMPROVES PSYCHOLOGICAL
HEALTH**



**INCREASES
EMPATHY**



**REDUCES
AGGRESSION**



**INCREASES SOCIAL
CONNECTION**



**ENHANCES
SELF-ESTEEM**



**IMPROVES MENTAL
STRENGTH**

(Based on Mike Oppland, “13 Most Popular Gratitude Exercises,”
<https://positivepsychology.com/gratitude-exercises/>)

Gratitude Journal

Instructions

List 3 THINGS or PEOPLE you are GRATEFUL for today and say WHY. Do this twice a week. *For example, “My grandpa surprised me by giving me a ride home from school so I didn’t have to walk in the rain.”*

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____



Friendship

This lesson is designed to increase students' understanding of friendships.

Essential Question

How do we work together to create a fair and just classroom community where individual and collective learning is engaging, valued, and liberating for all?

Guiding Question

How can identifying the qualities of friendship help us develop healthy relationships with others?

Objectives

- Students will discuss the essential qualities needed in friendships.
- Students will acknowledge their differing perspectives and preferences regarding friendships.

Advance Preparation

- Review Concentric Circles activity to ensure you can facilitate it smoothly. Choose at least four of the proposed sentence starters.
- Clear space in the classroom for students to stand facing each other in concentric circles (see below).
- Assemble student materials.

Materials/Resources

- PowerPoint slideshow 4.3 (adapt as needed)
- Optional: personal devices (e.g., tablets or phones)
- Chart paper, markers, pencils, pens
- Connection circle talking piece

Student Materials

- Paper for Do Now

Vocabulary

- Friendship

Do Now

3 min.

Slide 1: Students list the top five qualities they would look for in a new friend.

Introduction (Framing/Overview)

10 min.

1. Slide 3: Student Dedication (30-60 seconds)
2. Tell students that the focus of today's lesson is friendship. Briefly review the day's agenda (slide 4).
3. Concentric Circles Exercise Directions (slides 5-7): Students form two circles, one inside facing out and the other outer circle facing in, with each student facing one other student. Give students in the **inner** circle one of the stem starters listed below. Each student quietly responds to the sentence to the person facing. Then, direct the outer circle to move clockwise and students in the inner circle complete the same sentence starter for the next person. Repeat one more time (this makes three times in all).

Then, give students in the **outer** circle a different stem starter. Each student completes the sentence to the student facing, then, as the circle moves clockwise, to the next two people (three times in all).

Repeat with two more stem starters (one for the inner circle to answer and one for the outer circle), so that each student has completed two stem starters, spoken to six classmates, and listened to six classmates. (You may do additional rounds if you have time.)

Choose from among the following stem starters:

- A quality I look for in a friend is...
- Something I like to do with my friends is...
- I would trust a friend who...
- If a friend has deceived me, I...
- The way I show friends I'm angry is...
- I laugh with my friends about...
- The way I expect my friends to behave towards me is...
- I feel let down by friends when...
- Friends have made me happy when they...
- I am the kind of friend who...
- I would be a better friend if I...
- I would not help my friends if...
- The hardest thing about making a new friend is...
- When I disagree with my friends, I...
- I think my friends would say that I...

Objective: This circle exercise allows students who prefer one-on-one interaction to express themselves outside of a full group and still be heard by many others in a different level of sharing. As students respond to different sentence stems or issues, they will be able to repeat themselves and improve the way they articulate their ideas. You may want to ask students to process the exercise in a connection circle afterward. Some students may note that their answers changed a great deal over time, as they voiced their responses. Some may find that they became more or less certain of their viewpoints after repeatedly explaining themselves.

Activity 1: "Wanted: a Friend" Advertisement

30 min.

4. Slide 8: Divide students into teams of three or four. Tell students the goal of the next activity is to work with their teams to develop a creative "advertisement for a friend." (Note: The advertisement can take the form of a poster; Twitter post or Facebook page; skit for a TV commercial, YouTube video, or TikTok; or poem or want ad. As the teacher, you may modify the list of acceptable formats if you wish. You may also allow students to select the format they prefer, or you can assign a format to each team.) **Cooperative Learning**
5. Students share with each other the top five qualities they would look for in a new friend (which they listed in the Do Now). Their first job is to agree on five essential qualities for the advertisement (3 min.). Of course, people have different ideas about qualities they value in a friend, so groups may have very different ideas. Encourage teams to look for overlap to come to an agreement, while noting the qualities where there was disagreement.
6. Teams have about 10 minutes to develop the ad creatively, using the format they have chosen or been assigned. Teams should also make sure they have a spokesperson prepared to explain why the team chose the five qualities they did as the five most important qualities of a friend.
7. Each team has two minutes to present its advertisement to the class. Then ask each team's spokesperson to state the five qualities the team selected and explain why they chose those qualities as the most important ones for friendship. Ask students to explain how those particular qualities contribute to the development of healthy relationships. **Student Presentations**
8. Finally, convene a connection circle where students will provide feedback to each team about the qualities they chose and the way **Whole Class Discussion**

they presented those qualities in their advertisement. Remind students that respect for differences of opinions and ideas is part of healthy relationships and make sure that each team provides positive comments to those who have presented.

Closure

2 min.

9. Exit ticket: Still in the connection circle, students each share one quality of friendship that they consider important—maybe one that they hadn't thought much about before today.

Extensions

If you have extra time in class, invite students to post to the Classroom Wall reminders of the friendship qualities they agreed on in their teams.

If you wish to assign homework, have students write a journal entry identifying and describing someone who has been a true friend to them.

“Advertisement for a Friend” activity adapted from the Healthy Relationships Resource Kit Eastern Health, Health Promotion Division (2010)
<https://westernhealth.nl.ca/uploads/Addictions%20Prevention%20and%20Mental%20Health%20Promotion/Healthy%20Relationships%20Resource%20Kit%20-%20Western.pdf>



Effective Communication

This lesson is designed to increase effective communication through the use of active listening and I-Messages.

Essential Question

How do we work together to create a fair and just classroom community where individual and collective learning is engaging, valued, and liberating for all?

Guiding Question

How can being a better listener build relationships, empathy, and trust?

Objectives

- Students will be able to identify the elements of active listening.
- Students will learn and practice active listening skills.
- Students will learn how to use I-Messages to share feelings without escalating conflict.

Advance Preparation

- Prepare a blank “Looks like – Sounds like – Feels like” chart for “Active Listening” on the board or chart paper
- Recruit two students to participate in Role Play (see below)
- Have space in classroom for a connection circle.

Materials/Resources

- PowerPoint slideshow 4.4 (adapt as needed)
- Timer

Student Materials

- Paper for Do Now
- “Steps to Active Listening – Four F’s” handout
- “I-Message Skits” handout

Vocabulary

- Active Listening
- I-Messages

Do Now

3 min.

Slide 1: Students think of someone they enjoy talking to and respond in writing to the question “What qualities about this person make you feel that way?”

Introduction (Framing/Overview)

12 min.

- Slide 3: Student Dedication (30-60 seconds).
- Tell students that good listeners are valued but rare. Today’s lesson will focus on active listening and communicating effectively. Briefly review agenda (slide 4).
- Have students sit in a circle and tell them they will be playing a game that some of them may remember from elementary school called Telephone (slide 5). If any students are familiar with the game, have them explain it to the group.
 - To begin, whisper a sentence about listening into one student’s ear.
(Example: “Today we are going to explore the power of listening to others.”)
 - The first student whispers what he or she heard in the next student’s ear.
This continues all the way around the circle.
 - The last student tells the group what he or she heard.
- Engage in a quick debrief of the circle by asking questions about what happened to the original message. Record the responses on the board, chart paper or a google document, so that the responses are visible to everyone.
- Ask students to share their responses to the Do Now (“What qualities about this person make you enjoy talking with them?”). Note answers on chart paper, the board, or a google document.
- Show slide 7. Call students’ attention to the phrase “Active Listening.” Ask them what they think this phrase means. Click again and ask what active listening looks like, sounds like, and feels like. Record their responses in the chart you have prepared.

Activity 1: Active Listening

15 min.

- Slide 8: For the first activity of the day, you will model active listening with a teacher-student role play. (Note: be sure to select student participants in advance and explain the activity to them.)

**Teacher
Modeling/
Role Play**

Ask the first student you have selected to approach. The student should try to persuade you to change the grade he or she received on an assignment or test. While the first student is talking, demonstrate poor listening skills. Allow yourself to be distracted by grading papers, rearranging supplies, etc. After a short time, stop

the role play and invite the second student to approach. (The second student should make the same request.) This time, you are a good listener and practice active listening. **Important:** *neither the good-listener teacher nor the poor-listener teacher agrees to change the grade.*

**Whole
Class
Discussion**

8. Discuss the role play with students using the following questions:
 - a) How did you feel about the teacher when she/he demonstrated poor listening skills?
 - b) How did you feel about the teacher when she/he demonstrated good listening skills?
 - c) Even though the teacher refused to change the grade both times, which experience was more frustrating and less affirming? (Students will have felt more frustrated and disrespected when the teacher failed to give them her full attention.)
9. Introduce the Four F's (Focus, Feelings, Facts, and Feedback) of good listening skills (slide 9). Have students follow along as you read the information on the handout, or invite student volunteers to read the various sections. Ask if students have any questions.
10. Now engage students in Active Listening team role plays (slide 10):
 - a) Divide students into teams of three. (If the class does not divide evenly, create one or two groups of four, each with an extra observer.) Tell students that participants will take turns being a speaker, listener, and observer. Students will do two role plays with their groups.
 - b) Have students select one of the topics below (slide ##), or assign each team a topic. Suggested topic include:
 - My answer to a school problem
 - One thing I think the president should do
 - My favorite sports team
 - A funny childhood memory
 - A problem I experienced recently
 - The best thing about my family
 - c) During each role play, the speaker will talk for three minutes. (Use a timer.) During the first role play, the listener will use poor listening skills: interrupting, offering unsolicited advice, and not reflecting back or summarizing what the speaker has

**Team Role
Play**

said. When the timer indicates the end of the three minutes, the observer reports for two minutes on what he or she saw.

- d) Students then rotate roles for the second role play; the speaker becomes the listener, the observer becomes the speaker, etc. During the second role play, the listener is to use the Four F's (Focus, Feelings, Facts, and Feedback) to model good listening skills. After three minutes, the observer reports to the team.
- e) If time permits, use numbered popsicle sticks to randomly select a few teams to report on their role play.
- f) Close this activity with a general discussion, using the following questions.
 - Did you find it challenging to be a good listener?
 - How did you feel when the listener practiced active listening?
 - How did you feel when the listener didn't really pay attention to you?
 - As an observer, did you notice other students' listening skills more than you usually do?
 - Can this help you become a better listener?
 - Do you know any really good listeners?

**Whole
Class
Discussion**

Activity 2: I-Messages

10 min.

11. Display slide 11 and the term "I-Messages." Explain that an I-message tells the listener how you feel. Explain that while using active listening is an important social skill, we must also learn to communicate our feelings in a way that is respectful and does not escalate a conflict. Using I-messages lets people know how we feel without assigning blame. Click to display the three parts of an I-message:

- What I feel ("I feel....")
- What happened (the behavior) ("...when you...")
- The reason ("...because....")

For example, "I feel sad when you don't call me back because that makes me think you don't care about me."

12. Click again and have student pairs create three I-messages, using the three steps above, and share them with the class.
13. Direct students to the I-Message Skits (slide 12). Click once to have students partner read the first skit.

**Direct
Instruction**

**Pair &
Share**

**Partner
Reading**

14. After students read the skit, discuss the following as a class.

- a) Did Cory and Sandy use I-messages?
- b) What was the result? (They did not use I-messages and instead accused each other. This frustrated and angered them both, and escalated the conflict.)
- c) Did Cory and Sandy do anything else that escalated the conflict? (using global statements like “you never” or “you always”; getting a third person involved in the conflict; name-calling, e.g., irresponsible, loser).
- d) How did Sandy feel after hearing Cory’s accusation? (angry and defensive)
- e) How did each of them feel at the end of the conversation?
- f) Did they solve their problem? (Both were frustrated and angry. They probably did not solve their problem.)

**Whole
Class
Discussion**

15. Ask students to partner read the second skit, and then discuss it as a class using the following questions.

- a) Did Cory and Sandy use I-messages? What was the result? (Both used I-messages. They shared honestly how they were feeling, the specific behavior that bothered them, and the result. Sandy was less defensive and they were able to solve the conflict.)
- b) Did they do anything else that escalated the conflict? (No)
- c) What did Sandy do that de-escalated the conflict? (He apologized and took responsibility for his part in the conflict.)
- d) How did Sandy feel after hearing Cory? (He understood how his actions had inadvertently hurt his friend.)
- e) How did each of them feel at the end of the conversation?
- f) Did they solve their problem? (They defused the situation and solved their conflict.)

**Partner
Reading

Whole
Class
Discussion**

Closure

2 min.

16. Exit ticket: Have students share the 4 Fs for active listening or the three elements of I-Messages.

Photo credits (next page): Allison Shelley All4Ed <https://images.all4ed.org/girls-talking-in-chemistry-class;>
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/all4ed/35668669474/in/photostream/>

Steps to Active Listening: Four F's

Active listening takes concentration. You may feel tired after a period of active listening! You can remember the steps to active listening with the four F's: **focus**, **feelings**, **facts**, and **feedback**.



1. Focus on the speaker

- Give your full attention.
- Sit up straight and look at the speaker.
- Ignore or remove other distractions (TV, music, other conversations).
- Don't interrupt. Don't jump ahead mentally to plan your response.

2. Feelings

- Listen for the speaker's feelings as well as facts.
- Pay attention to the speaker's body language—what is he or she saying non-verbally?

3. Facts

- Note any facts that you did not know before.

4. Feedback

- Reflect back what you hear. Paraphrase or restate: "What I hear you saying is...." Or "It sounds like you..." This does not mean that you agree with the speaker—just that you heard him or her.
- Communicate your attention by nodding, saying "uh huh" or "yes" if you understand.
- Ask questions to clarify understanding: "Do you mean you thought...?"
- Summarize the speaker's main points. The speaker then affirms or corrects your perception as necessary.



I-Message Skits

Skit 1



Cory: Sandy, what's the matter with you? I called you three times last week to borrow that book you read for English class, and you never even called me back. But I'm always there for you when you need to borrow a basketball or a book or a few dollars. I always call you back. You never even bothered to return my calls, and just ignored me. I told Jamal about it and he thinks you're being a jerk, too. We're both fed up with you. He finally let me borrow his book, so never mind! You are so irresponsible.



Sandy: What are you talking about? You're making a big deal out of nothing. You only called me once, and I was busy and didn't call you back; so what? You always get all worked up about stuff, and I'm tired of it. And what business is it of Jamal's? You shouldn't have dragged him into it, talking about me behind my back like that. What a loser.

Skit 2



Cory: Sandy, I'm feeling pretty upset right now. I called you three times last week to see about borrowing your English book from last year, but you never called me back. I feel like I can't depend on you at all to help me out. But I try hard to be there for you when you need to borrow a book or a few dollars or something. I finally got the book from Jamal. When you don't return my calls I feel really disrespected.



Sandy: Did you really call me three times last week? I guess I wasn't paying enough attention. My mom was sick and had me running errands for her. I'm sorry, I should have called you back. I didn't know it was that important to you. I'm glad you were able to get the book from Jamal.



Working Together

This lesson is designed to increase students' ability to work effectively in teams.

Essential Question

How do we work together to create a fair and just classroom community where individual and collective learning is engaging, valued, and liberating for all?

Guiding Question

How can we work together effectively in teams to improve our learning?

Objectives

- Students will be able to identify attributes of a successful team.
- Students will learn tips for working together well.

Advance Preparation

- Prepare a bag of supplies (listed below) for each student team
- If using, post the signs (“Families,” “Businesses,” etc.) in the corners of the room
- Have white board or chart paper ready for use
- Prepare student handouts. (Note: Please reserve “Expert Tips” reading to distribute to students **after** they have completed the activity sheet.)

Materials/Resources

- PowerPoint slideshow 4.5 (adapt as needed)
- Timer and ruler
- One for each team: Plastic /paper bag of supplies (2 popsicle sticks, 4 paper clips, one rubber band, a three-inch piece of tape and 2 unsharpened pencils)
- White board or chart paper and marker
- (Optional) Signs bearing the words “Families,” “Businesses,” “Sports” and “Governments”

Student Materials

- Post Game Interview and Expert Tips readings
- Our Top 10 Tips for Working Together activity sheet
- Paper for Exit Ticket

Vocabulary

- Team

Do Now

3 min.

Slide 1: Students share with a partner three must-have qualities that they would look for in members of a team to organize a school event.

Introduction (Framing/Overview)

6 min.

- Slide 3: Student Dedication (30-60 sec.)
- Longest object activity (slide 4): Give one bag of supplies to each student team of 3 or 4. Direct student teams to use the supplies provided to create the **longest** object possible. They have three minutes to work; you will let them know when time is up. Set the timer.

When the timer rings, have each group use a ruler to measure their team’s product. Identify the winning team, and if possible, award a small prize. (Did any of the teams use the baggie itself to create a longer product?)

- Ask the winning team what helped them win.
 - How did they work together as a team?
 - Did members get along and listen to each other?
 - Did every member participate? If so, how?
 - Is there anything they would change to work more efficiently next time?
- Ask students what they think was the point of the activity. Tell students that the focus of today’s lesson is teamwork. Briefly review the day’s agenda (slide 5).

Activity 1: What Makes a Successful Team?

14 min.

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">Slide 6: Direct students to the Post-Game Interview handout. Have volunteers read the parts (Reporter #1, Reporter #2, and Coach) aloud as students follow along. | Student Reading |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">Click and ask the class why they think the team won the game. Record responses on the board, chart paper or a google doc. (Students may also draw on their insights from the Do Now.) | Whole Class Discussion |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">Make sure students understand the following points. Successful teams:<ul style="list-style-type: none">work together (cooperate)respect each otherhelp each other | |

- know game rules
 - learn and practice the skills needed for their roles
 - believe in themselves and each other
 - listen to each other
8. Display slide 7. Ask students whether the words **team** and **group** on the board, chart paper or google doc and ask students whether the words mean the same thing, or is there a difference? (Aim for the response that, in addition to the behaviors previously discussed, a team has *common goals*. A group could be individuals acting as separate entities pursuing their own goals.)
9. Four Corners activity, slide 8 (optional): Call students' attention to the signs "Families," "Sports," "Businesses," and "Governments" in the four corners of the room. Ask the students to think about which of these they think is the best example of a team, and to move to the associated corner. Invite several students to explain their choices. (Omit this activity if you expect to be short on time.)

**Kinesthetic
Activity**

Activity 2: Making Group Decisions

20 min.

10. Slide 9: Students teams work with the following scenario: Pretend that your team has been given \$500 to spend. You must discuss and agree together on three ways you will spend the money.
- Brainstorm some ideas
 - Select your top three choices
 - Designate a spokesperson to report your decision to the class.
11. After students have had a few minutes to try to come to an agreement, have one member of each group report.
12. Ask students to reflect on this activity. Discuss the following questions as a class: What worked well in your group? What did your group have problems with? How did your group agree on its final choices?
13. Slide 10: Direct students to the "Our Top 10 Tips for Working Together" activity sheet. Based on their experience today and in the past, ask students to brainstorm with their teammates tips they have learned to successfully work together. (If it helps students to visualize an "audience" for this activity, tell them to pretend they are going to teach a younger class how to work together.) Have students list ideas under "What We Say" and "What We Do" on the activity sheet.

**Cooperative
Learning
Exercise**

**Whole Class
Discussion**

**Cooperative
Learning**

- | | |
|--|--|
| 14. After a few minutes, ask a member of each group to report. Create a class list on the board, chart paper or google doc and direct students to add the ideas to their own lists. | Whole
Class
Discussion |
| 15. Click and distribute the “Expert Tips for Working Together” reading. Students read the selection silently, then with a partner. Click to discuss the selection with the class, using the following questions as a guide. How many of the “expert” tips did we already have on our list? Are there any questions about any of the tips? | Partner
Reading

Whole
Class
Discussion |

Closure

2 min.

16. Exit ticket: Each student writes down one way that he/she would like to become a better team member.

Extensions

Manage time in class by extending or abbreviating whole class discussions.

If you wish to assign homework, have students write a journal entry describing a time that they were part of a team (any kind of team) that worked together effectively.

The Post-Game Interview

Read the following post-game interview. Can you identify the qualities that make for a successful team?



Reporter 1: Great game today, Coach. Can you comment on what worked for you?

Coach: (He laughs.) What worked? The players worked. The coaching staff worked. The hot dog vendors worked. In this organization, everyone plays an important part.

Reporter 2: But your quarterback deserves most of the credit on the field, right?

Coach: He had a really good day passing the ball. Also, the offensive line gave him a lot of time to make good decisions.

Reporter 1: Your defense is on its way to being one of the best ever. Any comment on that?

Coach: Our defensive coaches have studied our opponents each week. They spend hours reviewing game film. The players have bought into it, too. They think about the game more than last year. And right now, they believe in themselves. They know they can do it if they keep working hard.

Reporter 2: Are you thinking about the championship yet?

Coach: We've been thinking about it since training camp. But our focus is on our next game. But I'll tell you, I've never been so happy to coach a team. The players and coaches are motivated and know how to learn and improve every week.



Our Top 10 Tips for Working Together

Working with your teammates, identify ten **top tips** teams can use to help them **work together** to reach their goals.

<p>What We Say</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p>
<p>What We Do</p> <p>6.</p> <p>7.</p> <p>8.</p> <p>9.</p> <p>10.</p>



Expert Tips for Working Together

What We Say

- Say “OK” or answer when someone speaks to you.
- Use a calm, pleasant, indoor (quiet) voice.
- Don’t make fun of anyone’s ideas or tease. Don’t criticize them.
- If you hurt someone else’s feelings or do something wrong, say you are sorry.
- Use “I” statements (“I feel... I think... I don’t understand...”), rather than “you” or “those people” statements (“You don’t know... those people think that...”).
- Don’t be sarcastic or cut down someone else, even as a joke. You can be funny without putting others down!
- Paraphrase what the other person says or repeat back what you hear (“So, you think that....” or “What I hear you saying is that”).
- Ask people to explain something you don’t understand.
- Don’t always try to have the last word.

What We Do

- Pay attention when another group member speaks.
- Look at the person who is speaking. Try not to be distracted by other things, such as TV, cell phones, music, etc. This lets people know you are listening.
- Stay on task.
- Don’t interrupt the speaker.
- If you disagree, say why you feel differently about the idea but don’t criticize the other person.
- Don’t leave the room if you get frustrated or bored.
- Don’t take part in side conversations when a team member is talking.





Strengthening Emotional Health

This lesson is intended to help students nurture their emotional health and that of others by naming their emotions, learning to handle conflict, and planning for self-care.

Essential Question

How do we work together to create a fair and just classroom community where individual and collective learning is engaging, valued, and liberating for all?

Guiding Question

How can understanding and acknowledging our emotions, conflicts, and need for self-care help us to strengthen our own emotional health and that of others?

Objectives

- Students will broaden their vocabulary to be able to describe their emotions more accurately.
- Students will learn to handle conflict constructively.
- Students will select from among nine strategies to develop a self-care plan, and commit to using it in daily life.

Advance Preparation

- Prepare student materials
- Place sticky notes at team tables
- Have space in classroom for a connection circle

Materials/Resources

- PowerPoint slideshow 4.6 (adapt as needed)
- Chart paper (one sheet for each team)
- Chart paper for class, and markers
- Sticky notes (2 packs per team) and pens or pencils

Student Materials

- Paper for Do Now
- “Disagreeing Without Being Disagreeable” T-chart
- “Give 1/ Get 8 Self-Care” handout
- (optional) “My Self-Care Plan” handout

Vocabulary

- Emotions
- Conflict
- Self-care

Do Now

3 min.

Slide 1: Students write down as many words to describe feelings and emotions as they can think of in one minute.

Introduction (Framing/Overview)

4 min.

1. Slide 3: Student Dedication (30-60 sec.)
2. Connection circle (slide 4): Students share one thing they are struggling with right now and one action they have taken or would like to take to overcome the struggle. (3 min.)
3. Review the day's agenda (slide 5), explaining that today's lesson is on how to enhance your own emotional health and that of others by identifying your emotions, handling conflict constructively, and taking care of yourself.

Activity 1: Giving Our Feelings Words

12 min.

4. Explain to students that in relating to other people, it's helpful to be able to identify how you're feeling and communicate your feelings to others accurately. Generic feeling words are all too easy to overuse. One example is the word "good". How was your day? "Good." How was lunch? "Good." How are your friends? "Good." Being able to give words to your own feelings and others' moods is essential to effective communication, especially during conflict. To do this, you need a broad emotional vocabulary—that is, a wide spectrum of words to clearly articulate how you are feeling or to explain the feelings of others. **Direct Instruction**
5. Slide 6: distribute chart paper to teams of 3 or 4. In teams, students share the emotion words that they noted for the Do Now. Each word should be written once on a sticky note (no duplicates) and placed on chart paper. Then students brainstorm to think of additional words, write them on sticky notes, and add them to the chart paper. **Cooperative Learning**

Challenge students to get to 50 words or, if that is too easy, 75 words on their group chart. Students should be open to all ideas and

acknowledge all suggestions. Accept slang and colloquial terms that students use to express themselves with one another.

- 6. Slide 7: students rearrange the sticky notes on the chart paper to create categories for their emotion words/statements.
- 7. Have each group post its chart. Explain that you will compile all the words/statements onto one chart, eliminating any repetitive words. (Several students could also assist you with this process.)

Activity 2: Handling Conflict Constructively15 min.

- 8. Slide 8: Explain to students that conflict is a natural part of human relations and is neither bad nor good. Being able to recognize and express emotions will help them take steps to manage them successfully—especially during a conflict. Because conflict is a normal part of life, it is important to be able to disagree with people respectfully and honestly, including during group work time, without escalating conflict. Click once to ask students whether they can think of any positive results that come from conflict that is handled well. Guide the discussion to help students understand that when conflict is handled constructively, it can:
 - help us learn new and better ways to respond to problems
 - help us build better and more lasting relationships
 - help us learn more about ourselves and others
 - lead to stronger group identity and sense of community
 - lead to better communication

Direct Instruction

Whole Class Discussion

- 9. Click again to direct student teams to complete the Disagreeing Without Being Disagreeable T-Chart.

Cooperative Learning

- 10. Have student teams share their ideas and create a master T-chart on chart paper. Post it for the class. Possible items include:

Looks Like	Sounds Like
Active listening	“You might be right, but...”
Making eye contact	“I don’t think I follow you.”
Body turned toward speaker	“Are you sure about that?”
Leaning in toward speaker	“Let’s look at that again.”

- 11. Ask students the following questions.
 - Why is it important to be able to disagree with people without challenging or disrespecting them and making them feel

Whole Class Discussion

defensive? (Be sure students understand what ‘defensive’ means in this context, and that using this skill minimizes anger, lowers the possibility of fighting, keeps the conversation focused on the topic at hand, and keeps it objective rather than personal.)

- How can we use this skill in school and out of school?
- What are some possible outcomes if the skill is not used?

12. To close, click again and model this skill by role playing with a student, using the class T-chart as a guide (for example, you are a student who thinks the homework assignment is too hard, and the teacher disagrees). Let the student be the one whose ideas are being challenged. Successfully resolve the conflict using this skill. After the role play, briefly discuss it with the class. Did you follow the behaviors listed in the T-chart?

**Teacher-
Student
Role Play**

Activity 3: Self-Care (Give 1/ Get 8)

10 min.

13. Slide 9: Explain to students that “self-care” refers to practices that help us cope with the challenges of life in healthy ways that keep us strong. Distribute the “Give 1/ Get 8” handout; click and give students a few minutes to read the questions and write their favorite self-care activity in one of the boxes in the grid. (If if they don’t currently have a self-care practice they rely on, they can write something they would like to do to practice self-care.)
14. Have students move around the room, sharing their self-care practice with others. Each time they get an idea from a peer, they should write it down on their grid until all or most of the nine boxes are filled.
15. Once participants have several ideas to choose from, ask them to circle the ideas they like the most, and commit to using one or more of these practices this week and report back to their peers on how it goes.

**Direct
Instruction**

**Personal
Reflection/
Pair &
Share**

Closure

2 min.

16. Exit ticket: Student each share with a partner one self-care strategy they are committing to use this week to take care of themselves.

Extensions

If you wish to assign homework, have students take time at home to create a self-care plan (My Self-Care Plan handout). Having such a plan helps students develop ownership and autonomy, and takes the guesswork out of what to do and where to turn in a moment of crisis. Self-care plans can include

- **people** that students can rely on to support and encourage them in daily life (especially caring adults)
- **activities** that help them feel better in times of stress, such as music, exercise, art, coloring, writing poetry, or prayer
- **stressors**—times of day or situations that often challenge their mental well-being.

Creating their plans will help students realize they are in control of how they respond to situations in their lives—increasing confidence and a sense of control in times of stress. Students need safety now more than ever. Putting compassion before content helps students learn and deal with the changes that are happening.

If you have extra time in class, invite student teams to brainstorm, role play, and try to solve one of the following situations using the skill Disagreeing Without Being Disagreeable T-chart as a resource. They should role-play the scenarios with one member designated to behave “Disagreeably,” opposing everyone else’s ideas and opposing them personally. Team members should debrief afterward on how the disagreeable behavior affected their ability to work together. The scenarios are:

- The principal has asked you to suggest a new school policy to deal with tardy students. Your team has to come up with recommendations.
- Your team has to plan an end-of-season party for the basketball team, and must decide on music, food, and activities.
- You are all members of the drama club, and must decide on several ways to raise money needed to put on a successful play this year.

Resources: “Give 1/ Get 8” activity: <https://schoolguide.casel.org/focus-area-2/learn/self-care-and-re-energizing/>

Disagreeing Without Being Disagreeable T-Chart

What does healthy disagreement look like and sound like? Work with your team to write your ideas in the chart below.

Disagreeing Without Being Disagreeable	
Looks Like...	Sounds Like...

Give 1/ Get 8 Self-Care Activities (activity courtesy of Chicago Public Schools)

1. Answer ONE of the questions in the grid below.
2. Mingle with others to share your activity and hear about theirs. Write their ideas in your grid.
3. Look at the ideas you've collected. Circle the ones you like best, and plan to incorporate them into your week!

How do you make time for exercise, and what kind of exercise do you like to do?	What do you do during the week to nurture your spiritual health?	How do you carve out “me time” in your busy day, and what do you do with it?
How do you unwind and recharge after school?	How do you care for yourself when you have had an upsetting or stressful day?	What strategies do you use to eat healthy?
What morning routine helps you prepare emotionally for the day?	What do you do with your friends or family that re-energizes you?	Other—what’s your favorite self-care activity that doesn’t fit into any of these boxes?

My Self-Care Plan

Fill in each of the spaces below. This will help you identify strategies and resources you can rely on to help you stay mentally and emotionally strong when things are tough.

<p>People: Who are the people I rely on to encourage me and support me in daily life? Try to think of one or more caring adult(s) as well as friends and peers.</p>	
<p>Practices: What do I like to do to help me feel better in times of stress? Examples might include exercise, music, art, coloring, writing poetry, journaling, or prayer.</p>	
<p>Stressors: What times, places, or situations stress me out or challenge my well-being?</p>	<p>Strategies: How can I draw on the supports listed above to face the challenges of each of my stressors?</p>



Co-Creating a Caring Community I

This lesson highlights the importance of empathy in co-creating caring communities.

Essential Question

How do we work together to create a fair and just classroom community where individual and collective learning is engaging, valued, and liberating for all?

Guiding Questions

What is empathy? How can empathy help us work together to create a caring community?

Objectives

- Students will gain an understanding of empathy.
- Students will understand and acknowledge their role in community building.
- Students will identify actionable steps toward creating a caring community.

Advance preparation

- Load videos
- Prepare student materials
- Distribute sticky notes
- Have space in classroom for a connection circle.

Materials/Resources

- PowerPoint slideshow 4.7 (adapt as needed)
- Talking piece
- Chart paper to create class Empathy T-Chart

Student Materials

- “Re-ignite the Embers of Empathy” reading
- Empathy T-Chart activity sheet
- “Create a Caring Community: Experience Empathy!” reading
- Optional: WOW activity sheet (homework)

Vocabulary

- Empathy
- Ember
- Ignite
- Sympathy

Do Now

3 min.

Slide 1: Students share with a partner what the word “empathy” means to them.

Introduction (Framing/Overview)

12 min.

1. Slide 3: Student Dedication (30-60 sec; note: if all students have shared a dedication by this time in the course, you may omit this step going forward or allow volunteers to share a second dedication.)
2. Slide 4: Convene students to a Connection Circle. Have students close their eyes for four deep breaths and think quietly about a person in this circle. What are you thankful for about this person? Ask for a volunteer to begin sharing and then move the talking piece sequentially.
3. (Note: You may have students return to their seats or remain in the circle to watch the video.) Distribute the student reading, “Reignite the Embers of Empathy,” an excerpt from former President Barack Obama’s remarks on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the March on Washington (August 29, 2013). Invite students to follow along as they watch the video (slide 5), highlighting or circling unfamiliar words. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2SmIIkQ7rfY>.
4. Tell students that today’s lesson will focus on **empathy**, the idea that President Obama highlighted in his speech, as the foundation for a caring classroom community. Review the day’s agenda (slide 6).
5. Introduce the vocabulary words. Ask students if they would like to add any of their highlighted words to the list. Ask them to write on sticky notes what they think these words mean.
6. Elicit student suggestions on the meaning of **empathy**, based on prior knowledge and on the video they just watched. **Click** to reveal the definition (the ability to identify with and understand someone else’s situation and feelings). Use context clues from President Obama’s speech to craft definitions for “re-ignite” and “embers” (click again). Tell students they will soon learn more about sympathy.

Activity 1: Discovering and Growing Empathy

10 min.

7. To develop understanding of the word “empathy,” encourage students to think about situations where they have seen or experienced empathy in action. Have students to work with a partner to develop an Empathy T-Chart for about 5 minutes. Invite students to help you create a Class Empathy T-Chart using chart paper. The Class Empathy T-Chart will reside on the community wall. Here are some possible items:

**Partner
Exploration****Whole Class
Discussion**

Looks Like	Sounds Like
Making eye contact	“I hear you.”
Nodding in agreement	“I’m so excited for you!”
Patting on the back or arm	“Congratulations!”
Bringing a person into your group	“I see you.”
A hug	“I understand your pain.”
A high-five	“How are you feeling?”
Listening without interrupting	“You have my undivided attention.”

8. Ask students how they think the word “empathy” relates to “sympathy” (slide 9). After students’ suggestions, click to explain that “empathy” refers to understanding and identifying with the way someone feels, while “sympathy” simply means feeling sorry for someone, but not necessarily understanding or identifying with their feelings or experience. Give students time to go back to their vocabulary word definitions and edit them if they want (slide 10).

**Direct
Instruction****Activity 2: Empathy in a Caring Community**

15 min.

9. Invite students to read with a partner *Create a Caring Community: Practice Empathy* (slide 11). Conclude the partner reading with a brief discussion that resurfaces the “big ideas” that emerge in today’s lesson including mindfulness, gratitude, and empathy. Click to reveal the following discussion questions:

**Partner
Reading
And
Discussion****Whole
Class
Discussion**

- Who is responsible for create a caring classroom community?
- Is it the responsibility of just one person or is it a collective effort?
- What kinds of behavior and interactions would we see and hear in a caring community?

10. Let students know that they will be exploring empathy interviews the following day.

Closure

5 min.

11. Invite students to join in a circle and ask students to respond to any of the three **WOW**s of today's learning.

What surprised them?

On it...they already knew it and are actively using that skill/concept/learning

Wondering...Weighing it...not sure about it...

Have students with January birthdays begin sharing, then proceed around the circle.

Extensions

If you wish to assign homework, have students complete the W.O.W. sheet.

President Obama Marks March on Washington's 50th Anniversary (Video Transcript, August 28, 2013)

“Reignite the Embers of Empathy”

The March on Washington teaches us that we are not trapped by the mistakes of history; that we are masters of our fate. But it also teaches us that the promise of this nation will only be kept when we work together. **We'll have to reignite the embers of empathy and fellow feeling**, the coalition of conscience that found expression in this place 50 years ago.

And I believe that spirit is there, that truth force is inside each of us. I see it when a white mother recognizes her own daughter in the face of a poor black child. I see it when the black youth thinks of his own grandfather in the dignified steps of an elderly white man. It's there in the native-born recognizing that striving spirit of the new immigrant; when the interracial couple connects the pain of a gay couple who are discriminated against and understands it as their own.

That's where courage comes from -- when we turn not from each other, or on each other, but towards one another, and we find that we do not walk alone. That's where courage comes from. And with that courage we can stand together.

Empathy T-Chart

Looks Like	Sounds Like



Photo by Allison Shelley All4Ed

Create a Caring Community: Practice Empathy!

Empathy is recognized as an important life skill for building healthy relationships. It's also essential to building a caring classroom community. But what is empathy? Empathy is being able to understand how someone feels because you can imagine what it is like to walk in their shoes. Educator and author Bob Sornson says that empathy is the foundation of all emotional intelligence. When we learn empathy, we can have strong relationships, truly care for others, and set appropriate limits in our own lives without becoming angry.



But how can we develop empathy? Sornson suggests that learning to calm ourselves, manage our emotions, and stay focused on the right things gives us the ability to look beyond ourselves. This creates empathy that makes a caring classroom community possible.

Here are some tips for practicing empathy.

1. Be a friend to yourself first. Be honest about your own feelings and name them: "I feel angry/ frustrated/sad/happy about ____." This helps you understand and relate to others' feelings.
2. Listen deeply without interrupting, judging, or offering advice. Give your full attention.
3. Pay attention to people's body language, facial expressions, and other nonverbal cues. Learn what these clues mean.
4. We sometimes feel uncomfortable and don't know exactly what to say. Saying "I see your pain" or "I am here with you" lets the person know that you care and are present.
5. When someone is happy, share in their joy! Congratulate them and ask about what happened.

As we learn to identify deeply with one another's feelings and experiences—positive, negative, and in between—we can make our classroom a place where each person feels cared for.

Reference: Sornson, B. (2014, June 23). Developing empathy in the classroom. Leadership, Teaching Methods. Corwin Connect. Retrieved from <https://corwin-connect.com/2014/06/developing-empathy-classroom/>

Image <http://clipart-library.com/clipart/116524.htm>

Name: _____

Date: _____

W

What surprised me? -----

O

On it! I already know it. I am using it -----

W

Wondering. Weighing it. Not sure about it-----



Co-Creating a Caring Community II

This lesson is designed to focus on co-creating a caring classroom community.

Essential Question

How do we work together to create a fair and just classroom community where individual and collective learning is engaging, valued, and liberating for all?

Guiding Questions

How can we use tools of empathy to see things with a “fresh set of eyes”?
How can this help us co-create a caring community?

Objectives

- Students will connect with a partner through empathy interviews.
- Students will understand empathy as part of the design thinking cycle.
- Students will discover their own inner agency as they re-imagine their classroom.

Advance preparation

- Prepare student materials
- Prepare chart paper, a whiteboard, or a digital board and blank Collective Empathy Map
- Have space in classroom for a connection circle

Materials/Resources

- PowerPoint slideshow 4.8 (adapt as needed)
- Talking piece
- Timer
- Blank Collective Empathy Map (chart paper, whiteboard, or a digital board)
- Board or chart paper for prototype criteria list

Student Materials

- “Who Is Alberto Biasi?” reading (Do Now)
- Individual Empathy Map Grid
- (Optional) Personal Reflection sheet (homework)

Vocabulary

- Dynamic
- Phenomenon
- Design thinking

Do Now

3 min.

Slide 1: Students read about Alberto Biasi's art and highlight unfamiliar words.

Introduction (Framing/Overview)

8 min.

1. (Optional) Student Dedication: If you wish to include a student dedication, you can insert the slide from a previous lesson here.
2. Slide 3: Invite students to join in a circle. Briefly review the content of the reading and answer any questions about the vocabulary. Invite students to think quietly about the connection between Biasi's art and their creative work as they prepare to re-imagine a more caring classroom community. Ask, "How is Biasi's work similar to ours?" Ask for a volunteer to begin sharing; move the talking piece as needed.
3. Tell students that today's lesson will introduce them to design thinking, a process in which people use empathy, creativity, and collaboration to re-imagine situations and improve things for everyone. They will be using design thinking to re-imagine the classroom community. Briefly review the day's agenda (slide 4).
4. Introduce students to design thinking as a people-centered process to imagine new ways of doing things (slide 5). Tell students that design thinking has been used in industry to develop and improve products for many years. Recently, researchers at the d.school @ Stanford University have updated a version specifically to promote equity in human systems and organizations. Show students the components of the process (slide 6), and click to show the circle around the component "empathy." Tell students that they will be focusing particularly on this component of the process in today's lesson. Empathy (slide 7) comes from observing, interacting, and listening deeply to others. Listening to a variety of perspectives helps us learn to work with peers and adults, and in the process, gain appreciation for each person's unique strengths and contributions. The process will help us re-frame our ideas of the classroom and understand how different people experience it, before jumping to solutions.
5. Explain that empathy interviews help us understand how peoples' choices and behaviors indicate their needs, so we can think of ways to meet those needs. In an empathy interview, it's important to ask "why?" even when we think we know the

reason. We also pay close attention to nonverbal cues, body language and emotions. We listen with curiosity and respect, without judgment, with a beginner's eyes.

6. Show slide 8. Explain that in an empathy interview, we listen and watch for clues about what people THINK and FEEL so we can understand what they NEED. These clues are both verbal and non-verbal, in the things people DO and SAY. Capturing information in all four areas will lead us to deeper insights and innovative solutions. They can use the Individual Empathy Map grid for note-taking.

Activity 1: Conducting Empathy Interviews

14 min.

7. Slide 9: Invite students to think about times when they felt like the person talking with them was really listening with an open mindset. Tell them that as they conduct empathy interviews, they are looking for stories, experiences, and feelings; they will ask “why” over and over. They should have a beginner's mindset—the mindset of those who are open to many possibilities, because they don't think they already know the answers. An empathy interview should feel less like an interview, and more like a conversation with a friend.

**Direct
Instruction**

8. Show slide 10. Interviewers should use question prompts naturally; these questions are not intended as a script, but to help start the conversation. (Remember to take notes on the Empathy Map grid.)

**Partner
Interaction
and
Interviews**

- Tell me about a memorable classroom experience.
- Could you explain what makes that experience remain in your mind?
- Could you tell me why that is important to you?
- As you recall the experience, what feelings/emotions do you have?
- Walk me through something that happened in your classroom that everyone could learn from.
- What were you thinking at that point?

9. Advise students that they have five minutes for each interview. They should decide who will go first and begin.
10. Set the timer and advise students to switch roles after 5 minutes, and advise again when time is up for the second interview.

Activity 2: Building a Collective Empathy Map

14 min.

**Whole
Class
Discussion**

11. Slide 11: Invite students to come back as a whole class. Tell students that they will be using a collective (group) empathy map to reflect on responses from the interviews. This will enable them to synthesize observations, identify needs, and capture important insights.

Like the individual empathy map, the collective empathy map is a 2x2 grid on poster paper, a whiteboard, or a digital board with the quadrants labeled Say, Think, Do, and Feel. Ask students to refer to their notes to provide responses for each of the four quadrants. Collect answers by reviewing each quadrant as follows, noting responses.

Say: What did you hear your partner say? What can you imagine him/her saying? Cite quotes or descriptions given by your interviewee.

Do: What actions and behaviors (for example, gestures, facial expressions) did you observe?

Think: What do you think your partner was thinking? How did your partner express thoughts or beliefs?

Feel: What feelings were expressed, verbally or non-verbally?

Slide 12: Using the results, work with students to identify needs that have surfaced and then co-create a list of criteria for what they agree should be incorporated into the first prototype of their ideal classroom community. Note agreed-upon criteria on the board or chart paper. Help students consider ways to address any needs identified.

12. Slide 13: Explain that during the next few weeks, you as a class will be testing your prototype. You will determine which parts work, and which will need further revision. Creative professionals, like software engineers, test their prototypes to learn which parts might break and then improve the next version.

Tell students that each time you revise and refine your prototype, you are getting closer to the classroom community you envision.

Closure

6 min.

13. Slide 14: Invite students to join in a circle and share one word that captures what they believe was accomplished in today's lesson. Have a volunteer begin sharing.

Extensions

If you wish to assign homework, have students complete the Personal Reflection sheet.

“I am, You are... We are”: Who is Alberto Biasi?

Alberto Biasi (say bee-AH-see) is an Italian artist who creates something he calls an “environmental opera” or a “dynamic meditation.” What does that mean? An “environmental opera” means that the work is happening all around you—the public is immersed in the experience. A “dynamic meditation” calls people to reflect through movement and energy.

What does it feel like to participate in one of Biasi’s art environments? Moving beams of colored light play on a white surface as viewers move within the space. This creates a visual phenomenon of shifting multi-colored shadows of the audience. You see your own image, in different colors and at various angles, moving as you move, so that you yourself become an active, contributing participant in the art work.



<https://www.mutualart.com/Exhibition/Alberto-Biasi--The-Visibility-of-the-Inv/ABAB870434342462>



<https://www.arshake.com/en/the-op-spaces-of-alberto-biasi/>

Individual Empathy Map

In the grid below, take notes during your Empathy Interview on things that your partner says, does, thinks, or feels.

<div>SAY</div>	<div>THINK</div>
<div>DO</div>	<div>FEEL</div>

Date: _____

Personal Reflection on Empathy Mapping and Design Process

Kiran Bir Sethi, a famous educator and a Design for Change founder, asserts, “Sharing the story helps let others know that change is possible—thereby helping more people get infected by the I Can bug.”

Write about what you learned today. Reflect on key takeaways; revisit the goal and results. What did you learn that surprised you? Did the process reach a satisfactory conclusion? What aspects of the classroom community would you continue to refine?

[illegible]