

LESSON 1

Defining Compassion

🕒 45min **Prerequisite:** None

Objectives students will be able to...

- * Describe and give examples of compassion
- * Identify situations and emotions that indicate the need for compassion
- * Describe how to practice/perform acts of compassion

*Digital Lesson: [Compassion Playground](#)

Materials

- * A/V to play video
- * Scenario cards cut out (see activity for notes about how many)
- * Mind maps
- * Pencils
- * Colored pencils/crayons



Teacher Notes

Compassion is when you notice another person or animal is in need, and you have concern for them that you want to show. Compassion can include a number of components: feeling in your heart for others; understanding and caring about the feelings of others; understanding what others need or want; and wanting to do something that might help. To know if someone needs compassion we look for clues, like emotions. We show compassion by saying and doing things that show others we care.

Compassion is when you SEE someone in need, CARE about their feelings, and DO something to show you care.

Opening

🕒 5 min

Format: Direct Instruction/
Intro, Video



Today we are going to learn about compassion - what it means and how you can show it to others. Show me with your thumbs how familiar you are with the word 'compassion'.

Thumbs up means totally know what it is; thumbs down means never heard it before; thumbs in the middle means have heard it before but not exactly sure what it means.

Let's check out a quick video together to learn about the definition of compassion. In this video, everyone is going to perform at a talent show! David and his pet rat have a cool talent, but not everyone feels very excited about the talent show. Let's see why.

Show video (Length: 2:53)
[What am I Good At](#)

Debrief

🕒 5 min

Format: Whole Group Debrief



In this video, we learned that compassion is when you SEE someone in need, CARE about their feelings, and DO something to show you care.

Who in this story needed compassion? Why do you think they needed it?

What did David do when he saw that Tye needed compassion?

Turn and talk to a partner:

If you had a friend that was upset like Tye, what would you do to show them compassion?

Can you think of a time when you helped someone in need? How did you show them compassion?

After students have shared with a partner, allow a few students to share with the whole group.

Activity Part 1

⌚ 15 min

Format: Skits, Small Group Work

1. Let students know that they will now get the chance to practice showing compassion by creating some skits.
2. Break students into 4 equal groups. Alternatively, if that makes the groups too large for your class, make 2 copies of the scenario cards and allow 2 different groups to have the same main theme.
3. Give each group a scenario card. Scenario cards have a main theme and several ideas underneath. Students can choose from one of the ideas. If this is too much choice for your students, you can pre-select their specific scenario on the card by highlighting or circling it for them.
4. Let students know that they will have about 10 minutes to create their skit, with 5 minutes at the end to perform them for the class.
5. Emphasize that the skits should include all the elements of compassion that they just learned about - seeing someone in need, caring about them, and doing something about it.
6. While they rehearse, walk around the room and give hints/help/encouragement when needed.

Activity Part 2

⌚ 5 min

Format: Skit performance, class debrief

After 10 minutes, gather students back in the class gathering space to perform their skits.

After each skit, have a brief class discussion with these questions:

- Who needed compassion in this story?
- How did you know?
- Who showed them compassion?
- What did they do to show it?
- How did that help the person who needed compassion?

Closing

⌚ 2 min

Format: Formalize learning with the whole group, partner share

- * Turn and talk: What is compassion? How do you show it to others?
- * Have a few students share out after the turn and talk
- * Discuss as a class places at school where they could show compassion in the future, starting today!

Evaluation

⌚ 5-10 min

Format: Access individually

At the end of the lesson, give students a blank mind map with the word “compassion” in the center. Allow them to use words or pictures to share their learning about compassion. Encourage them to show that they understand what it is and how you can show it to others. A mind map is a more artistic bubble map that includes drawings and color. Check some out here: <http://www.mindmapart.com/>. If your students are not familiar with them, you may also want to show a few examples to the class.



Extensions

Create a compassion jar or tree to add to all year long.

- a. Set up a jar in class and call it the “compassion jar.” Each time you catch a student showing compassion and/or a student catches another student showing compassion, fill the jar with an object. Suggestions for filling the jar include marbles, pompoms, stones, etc.
- b. Use paper to make a large outline on the wall of a tree and add leaves to the tree that name the compassionate acts that you catch students doing or the students catch one another doing.
- c. Pick an activity to do as a special treat when the jar or tree is full.

Additional read-aloud suggestions:

- Bear Feels Sick by Karma Wilson
- Have You Filled a Bucket Today? by Carol McCloud



Learners needing support:

Learners ready for extensions

Notes for next time

Scenario Card 1

Recess

Ideas:

Someone doesn't have anyone to play with

Someone lost a game and feels very upset

Someone doesn't understand the rules of the game everyone is playing



Scenario Card 2

Ouch!

Ideas:

Someone fell off their bike and hurt themselves

Someone tripped in the classroom and dropped all of their stuff

Someone hit their head really hard



Scenario Card 3

Lunchtime

Ideas:

Someone is sitting by themselves

Someone has a food allergy and can't sit at the table with the rest of the class

Someone dropped their lunch on the ground, and it got stepped on



Scenario Card 4

Feeling Nervous

Ideas:

Someone has a big test coming up at school, and they're feeling scared about it

Someone has to go to the doctor today to get shots, and they're afraid of needles

Someone has stage fright for their upcoming concert

