

## Grades 2-5

### Lesson 3 COMMUNITY OF FRIENDS

# Empathy Hearts



Learn how to connect with others through empathy. | FOCUS: EMPATHY & KIND ACTIONS

#### Objective

Students will increase empathy skills as they identify and choose an emotional response to a friend. Learning to show empathetic caring is a key friendship skill and important to building relationship skills.

#### Time

45 minutes

#### Materials

Empathy Hearts handout  
Crayons or colored pencils

#### Teacher Resources

Empathy articles  
[6sec.org/t/empathy](https://6sec.org/t/empathy)

Intro to the neuroscience of empathy  
[6sec.org/a/mirror](https://6sec.org/a/mirror)



#### VIRTUAL CLASSROOM

Teaching virtually:

- Use whiteboard software for whole group brainstorm.
- Use breakout rooms for small group discussion to answer reflection questions. Alternatively, ask students to write or draw reflection question responses as journal entries.

#### ENGAGE

We know we should care for our friends, but how do we show care for others? What is an appropriate response? Can you come up with multiple options and choose? Feeling **empathy** for our friends takes practice. Together we can create more ideas and increase **empathy**.

To start this activity, ask the students to imagine a classmate named Zee who is sitting alone on the playground because their best friend just moved away.

*How does Zee look? What is Zee's energy level? Why do you think Zee is feeling this way?*

Take notes on board as students share their thoughts. (e.g., Zee misses the friend, Zee doesn't want to be alone, Zee needs the friend's help, Zee wants to play).

*Can you feel for a moment with Zee? What are some feelings that you can imagine Zee is feeling?*

Take notes on board as students share their feelings. (e.g., lonely, mad, scared, worried, sad).

*What are some things you might do to help Zee feel cared about?*

Take notes on board as students share their action ideas (e.g., invite Zee to join the game, go over and sit with Zee, share snack with Zee, talk with Zee about their missing friend).

#### ACTIVATE

Direct students to think about their own experience accepting empathy from friends. What kinds of things do they prefer when they want to feel cared for? Showing empathy and care for our friends is important, but it can be hard to help in the right way that feels best.

Discuss 5 different categories for ways friends can show kindness, defined as the **5 Empathy Hearts**.

What are the **5 Empathy Hearts**?:



**Kind Words**- kind or reassuring words from your friends



**Time Together**- spending time together doing something you like



**Thoughtful Giving**- getting a small gift that is meaningful to your friendship



**Comforting Presence**- holding hands or sitting nearby someone to give comfort



**Helpful Acts**-- performing small acts of kindness for your friend

*What kind of **Empathy Heart** do you have? Using the **Empathy Hearts** sheet, ask students to create their own **Empathy Hearts** by drawing and writing the ways they prefer their friends to show empathy. If time allows, the students can meet in small groups or as a class to share their **Empathy Hearts**.*

Display student **Empathy Hearts** in the hallway or classroom so students can see themselves representing empathy in their learning community.



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### Extension:

Role Play Scenario:  
Ask for student volunteer to play Zee and another student volunteer to approach Zee.  
Have them practice showing empathy. Ask class to identify what kind of Empathy Heart was expressed. Repeat with more students.

### Family Learning

#### Extension:

Send the Empathy Hearts Family Activity lesson home to take this learning further. Be sure to send extra Empathy Hearts sheets and Family Letter home with students.

### REFLECT

After all the students have finished the activity, ask reflection questions in whole group or have them write a reflection in their journal.

- *What did you discover about yourself in this activity?*
- *What did you discover about friends?*
- *How can this activity help you take action to show empathy?*
- *Who is a character or real person that could be an empathy role model for you?*

### Did you know?

Researchers have learned there's more to empathy than we first understood. Here's a quick review of the three kinds of empathy:

#### **Cognitive Empathy:**

Thinking or imagining another person's point of view or experience. Example: "putting yourself in another person shoes."

#### **Emotional Empathy:**

Sharing feelings or emotions with others. Example: when we are moved to tears in a book or movie because we are connected to that character.

#### **Behavioral Empathy:**

Moving into action to respond to help someone. Example: sitting with a friend who is alone.

For more information:  
[6sec.org/empathy](http://6sec.org/empathy)

## EVEN MORE LEARNING

Now that your students have a greater understanding of empathy and are developing these skills, you can deepen their engagement through Red Nose Day in School's Everyday Heroes program.

Red Nose Day's goal is to help children living in poverty. The **Everyday Heroes** lesson plans will help your students understand the impacts of poverty on children in the US and around the world, help them develop empathy for others, and inspire them to take action to help - all while building important literacy skills.

Better yet, these supplemental lessons are tied to key learning moments on the calendar including the 100th Day of School, Reading Month and April Fool's Day. Visit [RedNoseDayinSchool.org](http://RedNoseDayinSchool.org) to download this **free** program today!



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Circle your Empathy Heart

-  **Kind Words**
-  **Time Together**
-  **Thoughtful Giving**
-  **Comforting Presence**
-  **Helpful Acts**

## INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Think about a time when you were lonely and sad like Zee.
2. What are some ways a friend could help show kindness and empathy for you?
3. Circle the Empathy Heart that shows the way you prefer to receive comfort and acts of kindness.
4. Draw or write acts of kindness and empathy in the heart picture that you would like friends to try.

# “What’s your Empathy Heart?”



# 5 Empathy Hearts

**KIND  
WORDS**



**TIME  
TOGETHER**



**THOUGHTFUL  
GIVING**



**COMFORTING  
PRESENCE**



**HELPFUL  
ACTS**



IN SCHOOL

# Dear Families,

I am writing to let you know about the program **FriendSkills** to teach friendship and Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) skills like empathy. We have been talking about emotions and learning friendship skills.

Recently we learned tips for practicing empathy and kindness with our friends. We did an activity called **Empathy Hearts** that I would like to invite you to try with your child. This activity may open up a conversation with your child about how each of you likes to show empathy and how you prefer to receive comfort and acts of kindness. I encourage you to let your child lead you through the experience so that you can learn more about each other and have a new shared conversation about emotions. Remember, you are a vital part of their social and emotional learning and development.

Sincerely,

## Empathy Hearts Family Activity

Think about a time when you felt a little sad or lonely. What kinds of things did others do to help you to feel cared for?

Here are different ways friends can show kindness, which we are calling “Empathy Hearts” in this activity.

### 5 Empathy Hearts:

- **Kind Words**- kind or reassuring words from your friends
- **Time Together**- spending time together doing something you like
- **Thoughtful Giving**- getting a small gift that is meaningful to your friendship
- **Comforting Presence**- holding hands or sitting nearby someone to give comfort
- **Helpful Acts**- performing small acts of kindness for your friend

### What kind of Empathy Heart do you have?

1. Using the Empathy Hearts sheet, you and your child can create your own Empathy Hearts.
2. Draw and write the ways you prefer friends or family to show empathy.
3. When you are done, take time to share your Empathy Hearts with your child.
4. Display your Empathy Hearts in your home to help remind your family how you can best support each other with empathy.

## All About Empathy

Researchers have learned there’s more to empathy than we first understood. Here’s a quick review of three kinds of empathy:

### **Cognitive Empathy:**

Thinking or imagining another person’s point of view or experience. Example: “putting yourself in another person shoes.”

### **Emotional Empathy:**

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