

TEACHERS NOTES

EMPATHY

FINDING OUT

Empathy is a highly desirable trait that can be taught to children through modelling, discussion and opportunities for practice. Start by creating space for an 'Empathy Wall' in the classroom. Here you can provide resources to build students' emotional vocabulary and explore opportunities for connecting with and supporting others. Have students brainstorm words that describe feelings. Add these to the wall, separated into positive and negative categories.

Before viewing the video (rsleducation.com.au/themes-health-and-wellbeing/years3-6empathy), find out what students know about RSL Queensland. Ask if any students have family members who have served or are serving in the Australian Defence Force. You might like to review the services on RSL Queensland's website (rslqld.org), which provides information about of the practical ways that RSL Queensland provides support. Older students may independently investigate each link, in pairs or small groups, and report back to the class with a summary of what they found out.

SORTING OUT

Ask students to listen for specific information when they view the video. For example:

- How is empathy defined?
- What does 'active listening' involve?
- What are the three steps towards demonstrating empathy outlined by the subject, RSL Queensland Advocate Brad Skinner?

For younger students, you may prepare a retrieval chart. For older students, model a note-taking process or ask them to record their notes independently and share them with a partner after the video.

Have students brainstorm challenging situations that may cause negative emotions. Ask students to recall a recent time when they experienced a negative emotion. Some students may not feel comfortable sharing this memory with the group. If not, prepare a sample scenario

Years 3 and 4

ACPPS037 – Describe how respect, empathy and valuing diversity can positively influence relationships

Years 5 and 6

ACPPS055 – Practise skills to establish and manage relationships

ACPPS056 – Examine the influence of emotional responses on behaviour and relationships

Related content:

- Video
rsleducation.com.au/themes-health-and-wellbeing/years3-6empathy
- Empathy playing cards
rsleducation.com.au/themes-health-and-wellbeing/years3-6empathy



to describe or share a picture book that depicts a character experiencing grief, hurt, sadness or loneliness.

Discuss the scenario using questions such as:

- Who or what provided support in this scenario?
- How was empathy shown?
- How did this experience strengthen the relationship between the characters?
- Who benefited as a result?

Select students to act out the scenario or have students devise a 'freeze frame' retelling in teams.

Talk about the reasons someone may not want to ask for help when they experience negative emotions. Help students to differentiate between situations that can help them practise resilience, such as losing a favourite pencil, and those that require support, such as suffering from bullying. Have students suggest some ways to get help when the situation is sufficiently challenging.

TAKING ACTION

Encourage students to continue to add to the 'Empathy Wall' in your classroom. Provide sticky notes so students can add ideas for supporting others or share challenging situations for which they should seek support. Use the space to display news articles, cartoons, memes or quotes which demonstrate empathy or encourage caring and compassion.

Devise some scenarios for role play, using the ANZAC Day scenario featured on the Empathy Cards resource (rsleducation.com.au/themes-health-and-wellbeing/years3-6empathy) as an example. Make several Empathy Dice from the template (one for each group of three to four students). Students can sit in small groups to work through the challenge scenario. Taking turns to roll the Empathy Die, players use the questions on the Empathy Cards to discuss strategies and demonstrate their understanding of the concepts.

