

Standard Six – Lessons One, Two and Three: Three Steps of Empathy

Time: Three 45-minute class periods

Materials:

Three Skills of Empathy worksheet

Paper with “F” on it

Face/Vase picture

Two Sides of the Story scenario

The Blind Men and the Elephant poem

Scripture Resource guide

Objectives:

Students will be able to define sympathy and empathy and explain the difference.

Students will be able to label the three steps of empathy

Students will describe what it means to detect the feelings of another person, understand another person’s point of view and, value others and their differences

Introductory Activity

Write the definition of sympathy (feeling sorry for someone) and empathy (understanding the thoughts or feelings of another person) on the board. Have students give examples of times when sympathy is appropriate (when someone dies or gets very ill) and when empathy is appropriate (helping a friend or understanding someone with whom they have conflicts)

Activities:

Give students the Three Skills of Empathy worksheet. Review the definitions of sympathy and empathy and have students fill in the blanks.

Read the Three Skills of Empathy

Have students draw a picture or write out a conversation that demonstrates empathy on their Three Skills of Empathy worksheet.

Angrily walk around the room with a paper that has a bad mark on it. Stomp, yell, wad up the paper and throw it, blame the bad mark on the teacher. When you are finished, ask the students if they could detect your feeling. Let them know that there are physical, verbal and situation clues to detecting feelings. Have them raise their hands and share what your physical, verbal and situational clues were. (Situational clues are the hardest. A bad mark on a paper in the classroom and a comment about a teacher would help reveal the situation). As ideas are shared, have the students record them on their Three Skills of Empathy worksheet.

Review with students the information from their Feelings lesson (Standard One – Lesson Two), especially how feelings are a way God gave us to know we are alive and that there are no bad feelings but we need to choose carefully how we choose to act when we are having feelings such as anger or sadness.

Cut out Face/Vase picture. Fold it into thirds so that one panel shows the vase more clearly and a second panel shows the picture of the faces more clearly. Show picture of faces and vase and ask students to tell you what they see. (Focusing on the white space reveals a vase.) Two faces looking at one another are revealed by focusing on the dark spaces on either side of the white

Ask students to share with a partner about a recent situation where they had a very different perception of something than another person did.

Review the story of Joseph in Genesis chapters 37-45. Stop as you are reading the story to ask about each person's perspective. Think about Israel (Jacob), Joseph's brothers, Pharaoh, and Joseph. Ask whether perceptions changed anywhere in the story for any of the characters. Have students take one of the perspectives and write the story from their perspective. This could also be acted out as a role play and have those watching share what each character is feeling as the story unfolds.

Ask, "How might the story have ended differently if Joseph did not recognize God's hand in the evil his brothers had done to him?" Have students share ideas with the class.

As a student volunteer to act out the "Two Sides to the Story" skit with you. Have the students fill out the Debrief section of the Three Skills of Empathy worksheet when you are finished, writing down the experiences, feelings, beliefs and needs of both Jonathan and Mark.

As an extra activity, read the poem, *The Blind Man and the Elephant*, and ask the students to relate what the poem has to do with understanding another person's point of view.

Split the class into groups and have them research the twelve disciples and write what they can discover in their Three Skills of Empathy worksheet. Have the groups then share with the entire class, so that everyone can fill in their worksheet for all twelve disciples.

Have students memorize the Scripture memory verse for this lesson: **Ephesians 4:32** *Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.*

Have each student turn their worksheet over to the blank side and put their name at the top. Leaving their sheet where it is, have all students stand and rotate around the classroom and write some positive thing that they value about each other student. Each student needs to write something positive on every student's paper. Brainstorm some examples. Explain that the best positive is something about that person's character.

The Three Skills of Empathy

Sympathy: To feel _____ for someone

Empathy: To understand the thoughts or _____ of another person

3 Skills of Empathy:

Detect the feelings of another person

See the other person's point of view

Value people and their differences

Write/Draw an example of empathy below. . .

Skill #1 of Empathy:

Detect the feelings of another person

FEELINGS

DETECTIVES !!

DETECTIVES . . .

Look for clues

1). Physical

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

2). Verbal

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

3). Situational

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

Ephesians 4:26 – Be angry and yet do not sin;

What does this verse mean? _____

Why is empathy important? *It helps make our school and village a safer, place where people help and not hurt each other.*

Skill #2 of Empathy: *See the other person's point of view*

“What's their side of the story?”

Point of View: *how one sees, _____, or thinks about a situation*

***Many Sides to the story of
Joseph and his brothers***

My character _____
How my story might go:

Skill #2 of Empathy: *See the other person's point of view*

We do this by looking at four areas:

Experiences - *what has happened to us in our life*

Feelings - *what emotions have felt in similar situations*

Beliefs – *what we know or think to be true about the world*

Needs – *what we want to have happen to take care of us*

Role Play Debrief

What **EXPERIENCES** have caused them to see things differently?

What were their different **FEELINGS** about fighting?

What did they **BELIEVE** to be true about fighting and friends and life? (not necessarily religious beliefs).

What did each **NEED** themselves? From their friend?

Skill #3 of Empathy: *Value others and their differences*

Jesus chose 12 disciples. Each one was different. Describe what

you know about each one, what they did for a living and what they were like. The Scriptures will help you discover something about each one.

Simon (Peter) – Matthew 17:1-5, Mark 1:16-18, Mark 8:29-33, Mark 14:27-33, 66-72, John 20:1-9, John 21:1-19

Andrew, Peter's brother – Mark 1:16-18, Mark 13:1-4, John 6:1-9

James, the son of Zebedee – Matthew 17:1-4, Mark 1:19, 20, Mark 3:17, Mark 10:35-45, Mark 14:32-33

John, James' brother, also the son of Zebedee – Matthew 17:1-4, Mark 1:19, 20, Mark 3:17, , Mark 10:35-45, Mark 14:32-33, John 19:25-27, John 20:1-9 (John, in his gospel, refers to himself as “the other disciple)

Philip – John 1:43-46, John 6:4-7, John 14:8-10, Acts 8:4-8, 26-40

Bartholomew (Nathaniel) – John 1:43-51, John 21:1-3

Thomas – John 14:5-7 John 20:24-29, John 21:1-2

Matthew (also called Levi) – Luke 5:27-32

James, the son of Alpheus – Matthew 10:1-3, Acts 1:12-14

Thaddaeus – Mark 3:13-18

Simon the Zealot – Luke 6:13-16, Acts 1:12-14

Judas Iscariot – Matthew 26:14-16, 45 – 50, Matthew 27:3-5,
John 6:70, 71, John 12:1-6, John 13:2, 21-30

On the other side of this paper, write your name. Then rotate around the classroom and write a positive statement to each other person in the room.

Ephesians 4:32 *Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.*

Fold into thirds

Two Sides to the Story

Jonathan's point of view:

I am having trouble with some of the other students at school. They are tripping me and calling me names every day. I am tired of it. My family always said that I should stand up for myself and so I believe I need to fight them. I would like a friend with me. After all, there are so many of them and only one of me. So I will ask my friend, Mark, to come with me. If I can fight them, they will leave me along.

Mark's point of view:

I am Jonathan's friend and I don't want to lose that friendship. He wants me to go with him while he fights some students who have been bothering him. I have an older cousin who was seriously hurt when he got into a fight and I do not believe that fighting helps. I am trying to get Jonathan to talk it out with the other students or go tell an adult what is happening. I don't want to see either of us hurt in this situation.

The Blind Men and the Elephant

by John Godfrey Saxe

It was six men of Indostan
To learning much inclined,
Who went to see the Elephant
(Though all of them were blind),
That each by observation
Might satisfy his mind

The First approached the Elephant,
And happening to fall
Against his broad and sturdy side,
At once began to bawl:
"God bless me! but the Elephant
Is very like a wall!"

The Second, feeling of the tusk,
Cried, "Ho! what have we here
So very round and smooth and sharp?
To me 'tis mighty clear
This wonder of an Elephant
Is very like a spear!"

The Third approached the animal,
And happening to take
The squirming trunk within his hands,
Thus boldly up and spake:
"I see," quoth he, "the Elephant
Is very like a snake!"

The Fourth reached out an eager hand,
And felt about the knee.
"What most this wondrous beast is like
Is mighty plain," quoth he;
" 'Tis clear enough the Elephant
Is very like a tree!"

The Fifth, who chanced to touch the ear,
Said: "E'en the blindest man
Can tell what this resembles most;
Deny the fact who can
This marvel of an Elephant
Is very like a fan!"

The Sixth no sooner had begun
About the beast to grope,
Than, seizing on the swinging tail
That fell within his scope,
"I see," quoth he, "the Elephant
Is very like a rope!"

And so these men of Indostan
Disputed loud and long,
Each in his own opinion
Exceeding stiff and strong,
Though each was partly in the right,
And all were in the wrong!

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