

# Caring

This is the 4th week in the caring unit. Students will focus on compassion as the natural progression of caring once empathy is identified.

Begin the unit with the whole class lesson and then aim to complete at least two of the mini lessons with your students throughout the week. Each mini lesson is designed to present elements of the main lesson in new and engaging ways.

## Main Lesson

**Whole Class Lesson**  
30 minutes



### Compassion Challenge

Students will tour the school, identify areas that are not particularly accommodating, and create an action plan for at least one area identified. (See page 2 for lesson details.)

## Mini Lessons

**For Small Groups**  
15 minutes



### Compassion in Action

Divide class into small groups. Have each group create a scenario that demonstrates a common struggle they experience in school or in the community (bullying, gossip, etc.). Trade with another group and create a role-play to illustrate how you could overcome that struggle.

**For Partners**  
15 minutes



### Continuing Compassion

With your partner, discuss a time when you have received unexpected compassion from a stranger. For example, someone paid for your drink, helped you carry something heavy, etc. How did this change your attitude? How can you pass it on/pay it forward?

**For Individuals**  
15 minutes



### Sharing Compassion

Pick one person in your household that you don't normally hang out with. Do 3 compassionate things for them today. This includes kind words, small gestures, and helping out beyond your regular chores/expectations.

**Technology-Focused**  
15 minutes



### Compassion Apps

With a partner, explore different apps that focus on compassion for others. Select your favorite and present it to the class. If possible, download it and try it out this week!

# Compassion Challenge

Students will tour the school, identify areas that are not particularly accommodating, and create an action plan for at least one area identified.

## Lesson Timeframe

30 minutes

## Required Materials

- No materials are required for this lesson

## Standards Map

This lesson aligns with CASEL Competencies, National Health Education Standards, International Society for Technology in Education Standards, when applicable, and Common Core State Standards. Please refer to the [Standards Map](#) for more information.

## Lesson Objective

Students will:

- Utilize empathy as a motivational tool to increase compassion within your everyday life.
- Practice compassion on both a local and national scale.

## Teacher Connection/Self-Care

In our Caring Unit the capstone emotion is compassion, which is the desire to help those in need. How do your students need you today? How do your colleagues need you? In what ways can you show compassion while still maintaining professional and personal boundaries? Remember that being compassionate does not mean you are responsible for solving everyone's problems. You cannot change a student's home life. You cannot magically improve another teacher's classroom management skills. What can you do to show compassion, then, when you see others struggling? You can provide a stable, healthy classroom environment for students to thrive while they are in your care. You can offer strategies, if asked, to help your colleague make small, positive changes in their classroom management. Compassion is about helping where you can and being supportive while recognizing that not every problem is yours to solve. Being present, listening, empathizing, and acting when able are good steps toward showing compassion toward your students and coworkers.



## Share

4-6 minutes

How would you define compassion? (Allow for answers from several volunteers.)

Yes, all of these answers point to a common ground of kindness. Compassion is defined as feeling empathy for and wanting to help another in need.



## Inspire

4-6 minutes

We have arrived at our final week in our caring unit. We have explored self-care, gratitude, and empathy. The last component is compassion. At this point in our lives, we have heard this term before. However, our definition may vary based on our personal experiences.

Think back to our game last week. We had to decide which situation we could empathize more closely with: being bullied or being left out. Just because you could empathize with the person that was bullied doesn't necessarily mean you automatically feel inspired to help them. Compassion is the next step after empathy. It is the action that follows the emotional connection.

Now, think of a time where you were able to both show empathy and demonstrate compassion. Share your answer with a neighbor. (Allow several volunteers to share their examples with the whole class if time allows.)



## Empower

15 minutes

Explain that the class will now take their ability to empathize to the next level by using compassion to make small but impactful changes within their school. The class will go on a "compassion challenge walk" throughout the school.

- Look for any areas that might not be accommodating to everyone in the school. This could include physical struggles (stairs and no ramp, etc.) or privacy options (locker rooms, bathrooms etc.).
- After the walk, reconvene and create a list of areas noted and brainstorm solutions where possible.
- Discuss who has the power to make these changes (students, teachers, administration) and follow through on sharing your observations with those people.



## Reflect

5-7 minutes

As a class, discuss the challenges of truly expressing the feeling of empathy with the action of compassion.

- Why is it hard to respond with action at times?
- How have you showed compassion for others in the past?
- How did it feel to help someone in a situation that you can empathize with?

When you truly empathize with someone, it takes courage to follow through and help them through their situation. Your compassion just might be the positive turning point to a really difficult situation!