Graphing with Empathy

This lesson focuses on caring through empathy. This is the first grade in which this vocabulary is introduced. Students will explore emotions and then use a graph to highlight empathy for others that are both similar and different from themselves.

Caring Sub-Concept(s)
Compassion, Empathy, Kindness

Lesson Timeframe
45 minutes

Required Materials
❏ One set of emotion cards for each student
❏ Blank emotions graph (see template)
❏ *Note- this lesson has prep work. You will need to make a set of emotion sticks for each child before playing the game.

Standards Map
This lesson aligns with CASEL Competencies, National Health Education Standards, and Common Core State Standards. Please refer to the Standards Map for more information.

DESIGNATED BY CASEL AS A RECOMMENDED PROGRAM FOR SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING.
See last page for details.

Lesson Objective

Students will:

- Demonstrate an understanding of basic emotion words.
- Interpret emotions others may be feeling and analyze their potential role in creating those emotions.

Teacher Connection/Self-Care

Compassion and Empathy go hand in hand. When you experience that tug of compassion, you are often able to express empathy simultaneously. Last week we focused on paying closer attention to the frequently forgotten in your community. This week, the challenge goes even deeper. Pick one person in your community to empathize with and place yourself in their shoes for one day.

What is his/her day like? What struggles might he/she encounter? What might be the highlight of the day? If possible, try and live one day the way that person would. If this isn't possible, try visualizing the day or journaling about it. Compassion leads us to feel emotions. However, true empathy allows us to place ourselves squarely in the place of the other person, with all of the highs and lows, struggles, and celebrations. This simple exercise can help you practice empathy more readily with all different people both locally and internationally.

Tips for Diverse Learners

- Use Emotion Faces below to help students identify feelings during the game.
- Use the scenario cards at the end of this lesson to help with comprehension.
- Add a "Create Your Own" difficult scenario card for advanced learners to extend the lesson.

Share

5-10 minutes

Divide students up into groups of 3-4. Read the following scenarios aloud and have each group act out how they could show compassion for the person:

- You broke your leg.
- You forgot your lunch.
- You are sad about your dog.

Inspire

What is Empathy?

7-10 minutes

Explain that empathy is the ability to share and understand other people's feelings.

This might sound confusing, but you actually do it almost every day in class. Have you ever seen a friend fall down and get hurt? How might she feel? Can you imagine her pain? Yes, of course we can! Everyone in our class has hurt themselves at least once. We know that pain. We can share and understand their pain because we know what it feels like from our own experience. This is empathy.

Sometimes something happens to others that we have never experienced. We can still show empathy, but we have to try very hard to "put ourselves in their shoes". Trying to imagine what they are feeling can help us understand their feelings so we can show kindness and empathy towards them.

Our Emotions

10 minutes

We cannot talk about empathy without talking about our emotions. To help us with this lesson, we need to learn the following 6 emotions (hold up each face as you explain the emotion):

- Happy: This child is smiling. He is pleased with what is going on.
- Sad: This child is frowning. She might even be crying. She is not pleased with what is going on.
- Mad/Angry: This child has a mean face. His face is scrunched up and he has a scowl. He does not like what is happening.
- Scared: This child is afraid. She does not feel safe and needs help.
- Surprised: This child was caught off guard. She was not expecting what happened. This can be both good or bad.
- Nervous: This child doesn't know what to expect. She does not like not knowing what is happening or what she is supposed to do.

Empower

20 minutes

Pass out a set of 6 Emotion Face cards to each student. Make sure they are either sitting at their own desks or have enough space to lay out their cards in front of them for the game. It is also helpful to glue the cards onto popsicle sticks for ease of use.

Using the following scenarios, read aloud each situation and have the class "Vote" on which emotion they think the person might be feeling. Emphasize that the ability to share and understand others' feelings is empathy. After each "vote" graph the number of each emotion chosen on your graph. Then reveal the correct answers (many will have more than one emotion). Make sure to explain WHY the child might experience all of these different emotions. The students that were able to correctly identify one of those emotions showed empathy! Repeat this until one of your emotions is completely full on the graph OR until you have exhausted all of the following scenarios.

- Alice lost her coat on the bus. Her mother just bought it for her today. (Sad, Angry, Nervous, Scared)
- Hector fell in a mud puddle. He was not watching where he was walking. (Sad, Angry, Surprised)
- Lisa walks into her surprise birthday party. She is confused about what is going on. (Happy, Surprised, Nervous)
- E.J.'s dad is taking him to a baseball game. He is leaving right after school. (Happy)
- Jamal is the student of the week. He is going to share his family pictures in front of the class. (Happy, Nervous)
- Add your own examples to include students in your class.

Reflect

5-7 minutes

Using the completed graph, have the students identify the most common emotion(s) experienced. Ask them for examples in their own lives when they have felt this emotion. Continue this process until all six emotions have been explored.

Extension Ideas

- Keep these emotion cards as a way to discuss empathy when others are upset or extremely excited.
- Take pictures of each student showing every emotion and create personalized emotion cards for their own personal use. This is especially helpful for children on the autism spectrum.
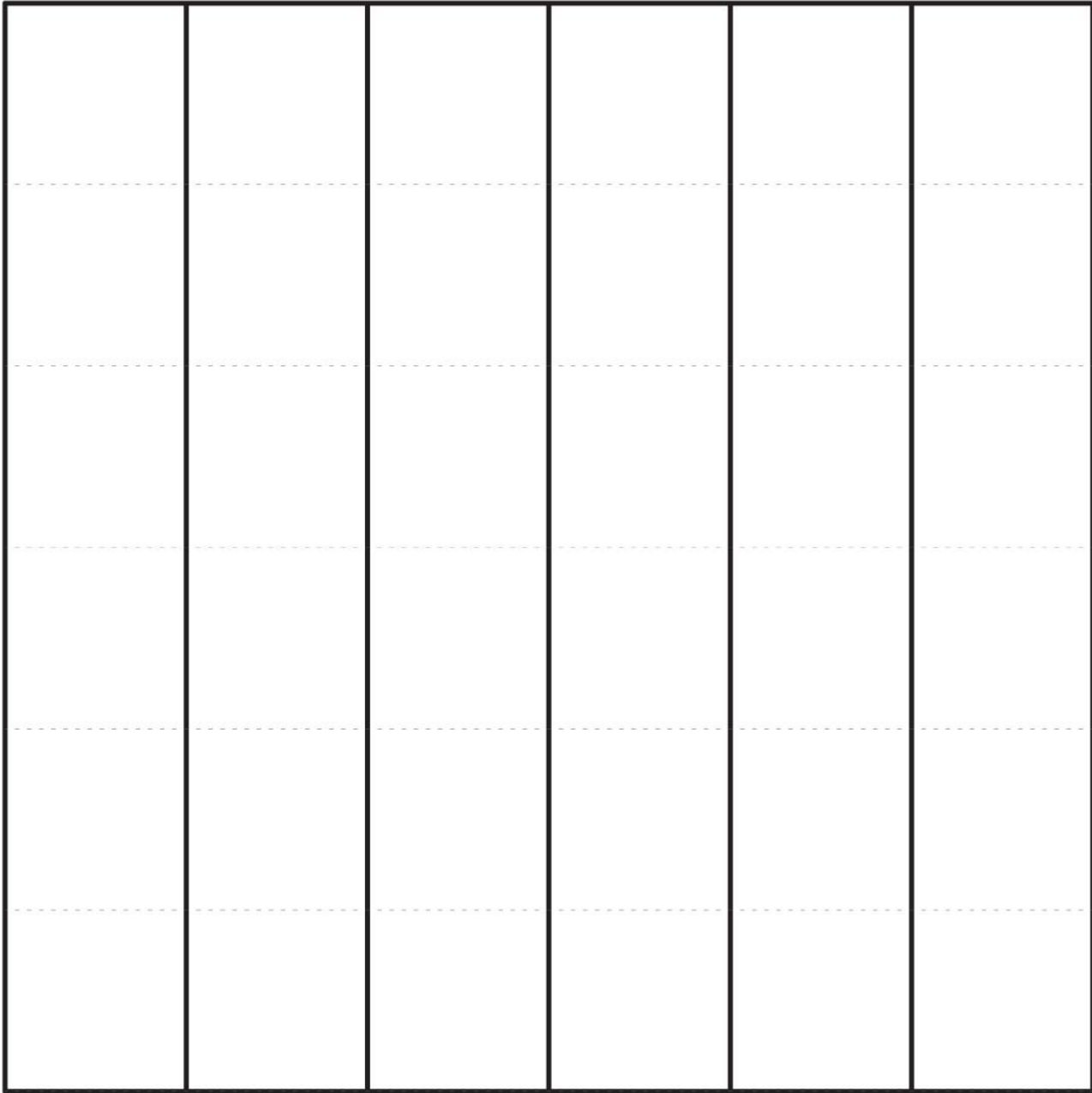
The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) has been reviewing evidence-based SEL programs since 2003. Kindness in the Classroom® meets CASEL's SELect Program and is included in the CASEL Guide to Effective Social and Emotional Learning Programs.

Kindness in the Classroom® met or exceeded all of CASEL's criteria for high-quality SEL programming. Kindness in the Classroom® received CASEL's highest designation for high-quality SEL programming.

https://casel.org/guide/kindness-in-the-classroom/

Emotions Graph

Happy   Sad   Mad / Angry   Scared   Surprised   Nervous

RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS
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Emotions Graph

Happy   Sad   Mad / Angry   Scared   Surprised   Nervous

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