

What It's Like to Walk in Their Shoes

Summary

This lesson will help students identify personal behaviors that contribute to, or detract from a safe caring community.

Main Core Tie

Health Education I (7-8)

[Strand 3: SAFETY AND DISEASE PREVENTION \(SDP\) Standard HI.SDP.2:](#)

Materials

- [Handout: "Walk In His/Her Shoes"](#)

Drawing paper for each student

Magazine pictures

Worksheets: ["Walking in His/Her Shoes"](#) and ["What You Can See With Empathy"](#)

- [Poster:](#)

You never really know a man until you stand in his shoes and walk around in them.

Intended Learning Outcomes

Identifying personal behaviors that contribute to, or detract from a safe caring community.

Instructional Procedures

Lesson at a Glance

Discuss concepts of sympathy and empathy.

Complete the partner activity, "What It's Like to Walk in Their Shoes."

Complete the "Seeing With Empathy" picture activity.

Complete the "What It's Like to Walk in Their Shoes" worksheet and activity.

New Vocabulary

empathy

sympathy

Introduction (Setting Focus)

Write "sympathy" and "empathy" on the board. Explain that sympathy is when we feel sorry for another and what they are going through, and empathy is trying to understand someone's point of view, their thoughts, and how they feel. Empathy means to understand what it's like to "walk in someone else's shoes." We can become more empathetic by picking up on other people's feelings through physical, verbal, and situational cues. People should make an effort to look at those with whom we come in contact with more empathy.

Body (Strategies/Activities)

Each student traces an outline of his or her own shoes on a piece of paper. Color or designs may be added to individualize footprints.

Students select a partner they may not know very well. Students exchange shoe drawings with their partner. Using the "Walking In His/Her Shoes" worksheet, students interview each other and find out what it's like to walk in the partner's shoes. Students discuss their strengths, likes, dislikes, successes, failures, joys, sorrows, family, school, feelings, life experiences, and so on. A variation of this activity might be for students take turns asking each other "Who are you?"

Each responds in turn saying, "I am someone who _____" (is a brother, likes sports, has a hard time in math). If students repeat this a number of times they can learn a lot about each other. Students take notes on the partner's responses and then record this information to the

partner's footprints using words or drawings.

After the students have completed their drawings and notes, share them with the class, or in a small group.

Discuss the following:

What did you learn about another classmate?

How can you better prepared to understand them?

What can you do to better to enable yourself to show empathy?

Show and discuss the poster "You never really know a man until you stand in his shoes and walk around in them."

Divide the class into small groups. Give each group a thought provoking picture from a newspaper or magazine and have them complete the prompts in the "What You See With Empathy" worksheet.

After each group has had a few minutes to discuss their picture as a group, share some of their ideas with the class. Discuss what the students can do to look at others more empathetically using verbal, physical, and situation or cues.

Closure (Wrap-Up and Extension)

Review the concept of empathy and discuss how understanding others (empathy) can help us get along and improve our relationships. Discuss how our feelings towards others are rarely static. All of us can probably think of a time when our feelings changed towards someone, or towards a particular situation. What caused the change? Did it change because you received new information, or by changing your perception (looking at the situation in a different light.). Discuss the idea that when people have empathy for someone, they are more likely to be more kind.

Students write a journal entry regarding a person with whom they are may have had some problem. Use the "What Is It Like To Walk In Their Shoes" worksheet to record the entry. Emphasize the ideas used in the interview activity including what students think the other person may be feeling and thinking. What are some of the other person's challenges and struggles and how can we affect their actions? Students conclude by describing what they can do to better understand that other person and what they can do to get along better.

Authors

[Utah LessonPlans](#)