

Empathy Relay

Grade Three & Four



To build empathy and social awareness through a relay race where students express different emotions through actions and facial expressions while learning to understand and share the feelings of others.



Learning Intentions

I can identify and express a range of emotions through facial expressions and body language:

This intention helps students become more aware of their own emotions and how to express them clearly.

I can recognise and understand emotions in others:

By guessing emotions, students practice empathy and learn how others may feel in different situations.

I can reflect on how to respond empathetically when someone else is feeling a certain emotion:

This teaches students the value of empathy in real-life interactions and how to be supportive to others.



Success Criteria

I can act out different emotions clearly, so others can guess them:

Students are encouraged to practice clear emotional expression, helping them understand the connection between feelings and body language.

I can recognise emotions in others based on their facial expressions and actions:

This criterion shows whether students are able to use observation and emotional intelligence to interpret how others are feeling.

I can share a personal experience or a way I can be empathetic when someone else is feeling that emotion:

Encouraging students to reflect on empathy and apply it in real-life situations helps them internalise the importance of being understanding and supportive.



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Objective:

To build empathy and social awareness through a relay race where students express different emotions through actions and facial expressions while learning to understand and share the feelings of others.

Players:

Ideal for small teams or classroom groups.

Materials:

- Index cards with different emotions written on them (e.g., happy, sad, excited, scared, frustrated, surprised, etc.), you can brainstorm this list as a class if you like, we have also created a list below for you (found in resource PDF).
- Cones or markers for a relay course.
- A timer or stopwatch.

Setup:

- Divide the group into teams and set up a relay course with cones or markers. Only one cone is needed if in tight spaces, having teams at the back of the classroom and moving to the front of the classroom to act out their emotion works fine.
- Place a set of emotion cards at different points in the course or in a pile at the starting line.
- Ensure there's enough space for each child to act out their emotion and for the team to interact.

Gameplay:

1. Draw an Emotion Card:

- The first player on each team draws an emotion card and then must run to the designated point in the course.
- At that point, they must act out the emotion they've drawn without speaking, using only their facial expressions and body language.

2. Guess the Emotion:

- The rest of the team must guess what emotion the player is acting out.
- If the team guesses correctly, the player runs back to the starting point and tags the next person to go.
- If the team guesses incorrectly, the player must try again until they get it right.
- The relay continues until all team members have drawn an emotion card, ran to the designated cone and acted out their emotion.

3. Reflection After Each Round:

- After each round, take a moment to discuss how the emotions felt to express and to guess. Ask the students what kinds of situations might make someone feel that way and how they might respond with empathy in those situations.



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Here are 20 emotion card topics that can be used in the *Empathy Relay* game:

1. Happy
2. Sad
3. Excited
4. Angry
5. Scared
6. Surprised
7. Confused
8. Proud
9. Bored
10. Shy
11. Nervous
12. Embarrassed
13. Grateful
14. Relieved
15. Jealous
16. Hopeful
17. Lonely
18. Frustrated
19. Content
20. Curious

Winning the Game:

There is no true "winner" in this game. The goal is for the entire team to finish the relay while practising empathy and understanding emotions. Teams that finish the relay first are recognised, but every team is encouraged to reflect on how they felt and learned from the experience.

Family or Modified Variation:

In a family or classroom setting, the activity can be extended by encouraging students to share personal experiences where they felt the emotion they acted out. This promotes emotional connection and conversation within the group.

Additional Notes:

The Empathy Relay helps students practice emotional awareness and understanding, making it a powerful tool for fostering empathy in group settings. Through fun physical activity and emotional expression, students learn important skills that enhance their social interactions and mental well-being.