

Empathy Mirrors

GIVING

To help students practice recognising and reflecting emotions by mimicking facial expressions, strengthening their ability to empathise with others.



Learning Intentions

I can recognise and reflect emotions in others:

This encourages students to practice observing and identifying emotions in their peers, fostering empathy and emotional intelligence.

I can respond to emotions with understanding and care:

This helps students develop the skill of reflecting emotions to show that they understand how others are feeling, supporting emotional connections.

I can use non-verbal cues to communicate empathy:

This emphasises the importance of body language and facial expressions in understanding and connecting with others' emotions.



Success Criteria

Mimicking Emotions Accurately:

Students can mimic a facial expression or emotion in a way that accurately reflects the original, ensuring active engagement in recognising and responding to emotions.

Reflecting on Emotional Responses:

Students can reflect on how it felt to demonstrate or mirror emotions, encouraging deeper understanding of their own emotional responses and those of others.

Practising Empathy through Mirroring:

Students can practice empathy by mirroring another person's emotional expression, helping to build empathy and understanding.



Empathy Mirrors

GIVING

Objective: To help students practice recognising and reflecting emotions by mimicking facial expressions, strengthening their ability to empathise with others.

Players: Ideal for pairs of students.

Materials: None (just students and space)

Time Required: 10-20 minutes

Setup: Pair students together. They will take turns demonstrating an emotion and mimicking each other. Make sure there is enough space for students to see each other's facial expressions clearly.

Gameplay:

1. **Introduce the Game:** Explain to students that they will be practising empathy by acting as "mirrors." One student will demonstrate an emotion, and the other will mimic it like a reflection in a mirror.
2. **Choose an Emotion:** Start by asking one student to express a simple emotion using only their face and body (e.g., happy, sad, angry, surprised, excited). Encourage them to exaggerate the emotion to make it easier to mimic.
3. **Mirror the Emotion:** The other student will observe the first student's expression and mimic it as accurately as possible. This helps the second student recognise the emotional cues and respond accordingly.
4. **Switch Roles:** After a set time (30 seconds to 1 minute), students switch roles. Now, the second student demonstrates an emotion for the first student to mirror.
5. **Variation:** You can encourage students to act out emotions related to different situations (e.g., "How would you look if you were nervous about a test?" or "How do you think someone feels when they receive a gift?"). This broadens the range of emotions and helps students recognise them in various contexts.
6. **Reflection Time:** After each round, have students briefly discuss how it felt to express or mirror the emotion. Ask questions like, "What did you notice about the emotion you mirrored?" and "How did it feel to express that emotion?"

Empathy Mirrors

GIVING

Winning the Game: There is no winner in this activity. The goal is to practice empathy and emotional recognition, so everyone is a winner in terms of emotional development.

Additional Notes: Empathy Mirrors is a simple, effective activity for helping young students understand and reflect on the emotions of others. By practising this activity, students not only build their emotional vocabulary but also improve their ability to respond empathetically in social situations. This helps foster stronger emotional intelligence and better peer relationships.