



LESSON 4.8 What is Empathy?

Module #4: Who Am I?

It is important for ninth grade students to develop an understanding of themselves, what they believe in, and how they relate with everyone else in the school building. Understanding oneself is an important bridge to understanding others. Being able to answer the question, "Who Am I?" makes appreciating others' similarities and differences easier to accept.

Enduring Understandings

- I. Truly knowing oneself means knowing one's values, culture, communication style, beliefs, and mission and how they influence everyday life and relationships.
- II. **Identity is not just defined by how a person looks; rather identity is a complex web that includes values, behaviors, traditions, and beliefs.**

Essential Questions

- I. What is my communication style and why is it important that I know it? (I)
- II. **How do I define my identity? (II)**
- III. **What beliefs and values define my personal mission in life? (II)**

Lesson Objective(s)

Students will develop an understanding of the personal asset, empathy and complete a personal inventory to determine their empathy levels.

Lesson 4.6

Lesson 4.7

Lesson 4.8

Lesson 4.9

Lesson 4.10

Directions:

1. Prior to students entering the room, display the Daniel Pink definition of "Empathy." (**See Page 2**) To begin this lesson, lead students in a brief discussion of "empathy" and its meaning. Ask students who thinks they possess a lot of empathy? Little empathy? Why do they believe this about themselves?
2. Conclude this discussion with the following question: Why is empathy an important part of who we are?
3. Have students complete an "empathy" assessment. There are a variety of free assessments available via the internet. Here are two to consider:
<http://www.noanxiety.com/tests/empathy-test.html>
or <http://personality-testing.info/tests/EQSQ.php>.
4. Upon completion, students should record their score for further discussion in later lessons.

Note: Always review free online assessments prior to having students complete them to ensure appropriateness. Links change frequently and should be reviewed on a regular basis.

Materials & Supplies

- Each student will need access to a computer with internet

FOCUS
POINT

As we continue this journey of self-discovery, how empathetic we are is important – as 'empathy' not only says a lot about us, but it also plays a significant role in our relationships and interactions with others.

- For more information about empathy and its importance, read: *A Whole New Mind: Why Right Brainers Will Rule The Future* Daniel H. Pink, 2006

resources
&
extension

WHAT IS EMPATHY?

"Empathy is the ability to imagine yourself in someone else's position and to intuit what that person is feeling. It is the ability to stand in others' shoes, to see with their eyes, and to feel with their hearts. It is something we do pretty much spontaneously, an act of instinct rather than the product of deliberation. But Empathy isn't sympathy – that is, feeling bad *for* someone else. It is feeling *with* someone else, sensing what it would be like to be that person. Empathy is a stunning act of imaginative derring-do, the ultimate virtual reality – climbing into another's mind to experience the world from that person's perspective."

-A Whole New Mind: Why Right Brainers Will Rule The Future
Daniel H. Pink, 2006