



REFLECT EMPATHY
2023-2024
CALENDAR

A Year of Growth and Understanding

Our calendar highlights a different empathy related theme each month. It is designed to help you deepen your understanding of others and to cultivate empathy in your everyday life.

From bridging gaps to dealing with adversity, each month's theme aims to promote inclusivity, growth, communication, and mindful reflection. We suggest you use these themes as stepping stones to plan chapter events and to creatively discover the hows and why of empathy. We have also listed target items or suggested activities - do some of them, all of them, or create your own!

Monthly Themes and Ideas

AUGUST

Theme: Getting Situated / Renewing Empathy

Target Items:

- Register your chapter [here](#)
- Recruit members using school club fairs
- Create your own Instagram account - use @reflectempathyproject for inspiration
- Set up a [GoFundMe](#) to collect donations and begin publicizing at your school or in your community - send an email to your school administration, or put information in the school or local newspaper, etc.
- Discuss the following prompt: What is empathy and how can we use it to raise awareness for crises around the world?

Key Dates:

August 12th - International Youth Day



SEPTEMBER

Theme: Mindfulness



Empathy and mindfulness are two powerful practices that, when combined, can enhance your ability to understand and connect with others on a deeper level. Being mindful of your own experiences can also aid in perspective-taking. By understanding your own emotions and reactions, you become better equipped to empathize with others' feelings and reactions.

Target Items:

- To start the year, have each club member take this [survey](#)
- Watch this [video](#) on the crisis in Ukraine and discuss with your club
- Hold a fundraiser to market and sell the Ukraine Anthology
- Download the free UCLA mindfulness app and get started
- Host and write a letter writing session with the goal of sending these letters to help spread empathy for an event or cause. Letter themes can range from spreading empathy to writing supportive and kinds messages to others (even just in your club!)
- Hold a used book sale

Key Dates:

September 8th - International Literacy Day
September 21st - International Day of Peace

Monthly Themes and Ideas

OCTOBER

Theme: Symphony of Perspectives

Highlight richness that emerges when diverse perspectives come together harmoniously. It emphasizes the importance of valuing and integrating viewpoints, experiences, and ideas to create a comprehensive understanding of complex issues.



In a symphony, each instrument contributes a unique sound, and together they create a melody. Similarly, in human interactions, when individuals with different backgrounds, cultures, beliefs, and experiences come together, their diverse perspectives create more profound, nuanced understandings.

Target Items:

- Reflect Empathy Organized Discussion - Host a conversation/debate on how empathy can be spread
- Host a poetry slam at your school. Share your videos with @reflectempathyproject
- Host a Halloween bake sale and donate funds to a cause in your community.

Key Dates:

October 5th - National Poetry Date
October 9th - Indigenous Peoples' Day
October 11th - International Day of the Girl

NOVEMBER

Theme: Empathy in Communications



Empathy plays a crucial role in building strong, connected, and supportive communities. When community members practice empathy, they develop a deeper understanding of each other's experiences, needs, and emotions, which fosters a sense of belonging and togetherness. In empathetic communities, vulnerable individuals feel supported, valued, and less isolated. Empathy fosters a cooperative environment, where community members work together for the common good.

Target Items:

- Create a video sharing what empathy means to you and your club and share it with reflectempathyproject@gmail.com
- Pair students who don't know each other well and have them introduce each other to the club highlighting their similarities and differences
- Run a canned food drive to benefit a local shelter

Key Dates:

November 7th - Election Day
November 20th - World Children's Day

Monthly Themes and Ideas

DECEMBER

Theme: Self Reflection

Personal reflection is a powerful tool for self-discovery and self-improvement. It helps you make better choices, grow as an individual, and lead a more fulfilling life. Taking time for introspection and self-evaluation is an essential aspect of personal development and a key component of emotional intelligence.

Target Items:

- Open Mic Session - It's the end of the year! Have your club chapter share their experiences and reflections on the subject of empathy. When exploring your personal growth in the form of introspection, remember that sharing your story can be a helpful way for others to take in a new perspective.
- Consider hosting a toy drive to benefit children at a local shelter or hospital

Key Dates:

December 10th - Human Rights Day



JANUARY

Theme: Bridging Gaps



Bridge building is both an art and a science. True bridge builders understand the importance of creating a safe and inviting space for all individuals to come together and share their unique perspectives. These builders cultivate relationships and are not afraid of vulnerability.

Building bridges involves meeting people where they are. Listening without judgment can develop a greater understanding of others and bridge gaps forged by preconceived ideas. Recognizing our shared humanity is necessary.

Target Items:

- Reconstruct Resolutions - write down club goals to spread empathy this year:
 - Is there a community or cause that you want to support in the new year and how best can that be accomplished?
- Brainstorming: Think of ideas to carry out in your community and share these ideas with Reflect Empathy:
reflectempathyproject@gmail.com
- Invite a local charity representative to your classroom and ask students what they can do to help

Monthly Themes and Ideas

FEBRUARY

Theme: Deepening Avenues of Empathy

Facilitating connection is a key component of empathy. Use this month to research different humanitarian crises both globally, and in your community. Utilize interpersonal dialogue and social connection to individualize and hone in on underprivileged or marginalized individuals to understand the reality of their lives.



Target Items:

- Schedule conversations with Reflect Empathy "Pen Pals" in different countries to learn from their experiences and deepen your empathy
- Run a paint or sidewalk chalk jam highlighting empathy

Key Dates:

African American Heritage Month
February 1st - Freedom Day
February 20th - World Day of Social Justice

MARCH

Theme: Promoting Outgroup Empathy

Empathy means stepping into the shoes of another person to understand their perspectives. Outgroup empathy occurs when one exhibits empathy toward others who are of a different race, have a different religious affiliation, or identify with different gender orientations. Here are some dos and don'ts to cultivate outgroup empathy:

Do:

- Work on perspective taking to better understand the insights of others
- Educate yourself on the cultural experiences of the outgroup you are trying to empathize with
- Avoid stereotyping and making assumptions when interacting with members of the outgroup
- Make social connections, and identify shared interests to seek common ground and build a foundation for empathy to burgeon

Don't:

- Stereotype based on lack of understanding of an outgroup
- Delve into a serious conversation without adequate knowledge or understanding of an outgroup
- Let personal bias affect your personal understanding of an outgroup. Try to minimize your personal bias and seek to keep an open mind of others' experiences
- Promote only one viewpoint. Focus on the understanding multiple sides to a story and build methods of assistance from there

Target Items:

- Engage in a role playing game with your peers, where you step into the shoes of others, to encourage outgroup empathy

Key Dates:

March 8th - International Women's Day

Monthly Themes and Ideas

APRIL

Theme: Mirroring Empathy

Mirroring empathy involves reflecting and reciprocating emotions and feelings expressed by someone else. By mirroring empathy, you show the other person that you understand and share their emotional experience.

Remember that mirroring empathy is not about imitating or pretending to feel exactly as the other person does. It's about creating a safe and understanding space for them to express their emotions and feel heard and supported. Being authentic and compassionate in your responses will contribute to a more meaningful connection with others.

Target Items:

- Download and play Empathy Cards from the reflectempathy.org website.

Key Dates:

April 22nd - Earth Day



MAY

Theme: Cultivating Growth



Cultivating empathic growth involves actively working to enhance and develop your capacity for empathy. It's a process of continuous self-awareness, understanding, and practice that can lead to more meaningful and compassionate connections with others.

Remember that growth is not a linear process, and there will be ups and downs along the way. Embrace the journey and commit to continual improvement. Cultivating growth is a personal and unique endeavor, so be kind to yourself and focus on becoming the best version of yourself, one step at a time.

Target Items:

- To end the year, have each club member take this [survey](#)
- Reflect on the year's growth
- Host club elections

Key Dates:

Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage month

Monthly Themes and Ideas

JUNE

Theme: Empathetic Intersectionality

Empathetic intersectionality is the practice of understanding and empathizing with individuals and groups by recognizing the interconnectedness of their multiple identities and experiences. It involves considering how various forms of discrimination and privilege intersect and compound to shape a person's unique experiences and challenges.

In the context of empathy, being empathetically intersectional means recognizing and understanding these complex identities and experiences, and responding with compassion and support that is sensitive to these various dimensions of a person's life. It's about acknowledging the diverse and layered aspects of someone's identity and validating the impact it has on their lived experiences.



Target Items:

- Congratulate graduating seniors!
- Make sure positions for next year's club are filled!

Key Dates:

June 12 - World Day Against Child Labor
June 20 - World Refugee Day

JULY

Theme: Encompassing Progress



Responding to progress is an essential aspect of personal and collective growth. When we make progress in our goals, projects, or personal development, it's essential to acknowledge and respond to it in a constructive and positive way. Use your progress as a foundation to set new, challenging goals. Having a clear vision for the future keeps you focused and motivated to continue growing. Continue to seek knowledge and seek opportunities for personal and professional development. Lifelong learning is vital for continuous progress.

Target Items:

- Enjoy your summer!

Key Dates:

July 17 - World Day for International Justice