



In small groups, students read non-compassionate responses to situations, and rewrite them to show more compassion.



Copies of the COMPASSIONATE REWRITE Handout for each student group, with sections cut out; Pencils.

Total Prep Time: 50 mins.



As this is the third Monday of the month, please consider sharing or re-sharing the Monthly Kick-Off activity, and if appropriate, video at www.everymondaymatters.org. Additionally, a three-minute recap of the previous weeks may add extra context to this week and help connect the dots around the monthly theme.

Special Note: Consider starting class with the “Picture Book Discussion” activity from the “Extension” section of this lesson.

| 4 C's | | SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL LEARNING | | SERVICE LEARNING | |
|-------|-------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| • | Critical thinking | • | Self-awareness | | Integrated learning |
| • | Communication | • | Self-management | | High quality service |
| • | Collaboration | • | Social-awareness | • | Collaboration |
| • | Creativity | • | Relationship skills | • | Student voice |
| | | • | Responsible decision-making | • | Civic responsibility |
| | | | | | Reflection |
| | | | | | Evaluation |

GOALS FOR THE WEEK

- **DISCOVER** what it means to be truly COMPASSIONATE toward others in order to alleviate suffering.
- **ENGAGE** with others in meaningful, unselfish, and LOVING ways.
- **UNDERSTAND** how CURATE COMPASSION is an important part of this month’s theme, MONDAY GETS LOVING.



STUDENT ACTIVITY: **COMPASSIONATE REWRITE**

- 1) SHARE THE NAME OF THIS ACTIVITY WITH STUDENTS: COMPASSIONATE REWRITE**
- 2) CONSIDER ASKING 1-3 QUESTIONS FROM THE LIST BELOW TO WARM STUDENTS UP ON THE ACTIVITY'S FOCUS:**

***NOTE:** *Choose questions appropriate to your students' ages, grades, ability levels, and classroom goals. Students may share their answers in pairs, small groups, or as a large group.*

- **What does COMPASSION mean to you?**
 - Reminder: COMPASSION means having an awareness of the suffering or struggles of others, coupled with a desire to ease that suffering. You may want to write this down somewhere students can refer to it throughout the activity.
- **What are some specific ways we can show COMPASSION to those around us?**
 - Possible answers: Listening without judgment or interruption, expressing empathy and LOVE, asking what we can do to help lift their burden, encouraging them/helping empower them to make the first step, noticing when someone is struggling, sticking up for others, etc.
- **Is there an event that stands out to you where someone was particularly COMPASSIONATE?**
 - What was the circumstance?
 - Why do you think they chose to be COMPASSIONATE?
 - How did it impact those involved?
- **How does understanding what COMPASSION is--and isn't-- help us to be more LOVING toward others?**
- **How could becoming more COMPASSIONATE help you know; I MATTER and can help others feel LOVED?**

- 3) SET UP THE "COMPASSIONATE REWRITE" ACTIVITY:**

- **Explain:**
 - Let's face it: We all need to give a little COMPASSION sometimes.
 - COMPASSION can literally change a person's life.
 - When we are aware of what is going on around us--how people are struggling, worried, or suffering-- our hearts open and COMPASSION can flood in.
 - But sometimes it can be tough to know what to say or how to react when someone else struggles.
 - Not only is it important to understand what COMPASSION is, but also to recognize what it is not.
 - For example, COMPASSION is not comparison. "Well, at least you're not truly starving as people in other countries..." makes a comparison. While this statement may be true, it isn't truly compassionate, because it downplays the feelings and struggle of the individual.
 - True COMPASSION listens and responds with affirming statements like, "This is hard for you. And anything that's hard for you matters to me. All of your feelings matter to me."
- **Ask:**
 - How might you feel if someone said the "At least..." statement to you?
 - How might you feel if someone said the "All your feelings matter to me" statement to you?

- 4) START THE "COMPASSIONATE REWRITE" ACTIVITY:**

- **Explain:**
 - Today, we are going to do an activity where you will determine how a person responded to a problem.
 - Sometimes when you tell someone about a problem, the listener wants to fix it, tell you a story that happened to them, try to "one-up" your story, decrease the importance of your story, or ignore your story.
 - What you really needed was some COMPASSION and support.
 - After we determine the type of support on the card, we will work on creating responses that are COMPASSIONATE.

PART A of COMPASSIONATE REWRITE:

- **Break students into groups of 3-4.**
- **Give each team copies of the “Scenario Cards” (With A: and B: on them) and the “Don’t Cards” (with FIXING, etc on them).**
- **Let students read the “Scenario Cards” and match each one with a “Don’t Card”.**
- **Answer Key:**
 - 1: G
 - 2: A
 - 3: F
 - 4: D
 - 5: C
 - 6: B
 - 7: E

PART B OF COMPASSIONATE REWRITE:

- **Give each team a copy of the “Student Response Cards”.**
- **Explain:**
 - Now that you know some of the ways people might not be COMPASSIONATE, do your best to REWRITE the responses (part B) in a COMPASSIONATE way.
 - You can work as a group.
 - Try to put yourself in their shoes and see how that situation might feel and validate those feelings. Then write your responses on the blank papers.
- **Let students work together, giving encouragement and feedback as they work.**
- **Ask students to volunteer their scenarios and new COMPASSIONATE responses.**
- **Get ready for the activity’s reflection.**

5) AFTER THE ACTIVITY, CONSIDER ASKING 1-3 OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS TO HELP STUDENTS REFLECT ON WHAT THEY’VE ACCOMPLISHED AND HOW THEY CAN TAKE THIS FORWARD:

***NOTE:** *Choose questions appropriate to your students’ ages, grades, ability levels, and classroom goals. Students may share their answers in pairs, small groups, or as a large group.*

- **Have you ever heard someone use one of these responses before?**
 - How did it affect the situation?
- **How might you feel differently about a situation if someone responded in a COMPASSIONATE WAY?**
- **How did your team work together to create more LOVING responses?**
- **What were your personal contributions to this activity?**
- **How has understanding COMPASSIONATE responses reminded you, I MATTER?**

6) THANK STUDENTS FOR LEARNING AND PRACTICING WAYS TO RESPOND IN “COMPASSIONATE” WAYS TO DIFFICULT SITUATIONS. REMIND THEM THAT WHEN THEY DO THEIR BEST TO RESPOND “COMPASSIONATELY”, THEY ARE BECOMING EVEN MORE OF A “LOVING” PERSON.

7) CHALLENGE STUDENTS TO REMEMBER THESE SCENARIOS, TO LISTEN TO OTHERS ATTENTIVELY WITHOUT JUDGMENT OR INTERRUPTING, AND TO RESPOND IN WAYS THAT ARE SUPPORTIVE OF OTHERS’ STRUGGLES.

8) CONSIDER CONTINUING TO EXPLORE “CURATE COMPASSION” BY LEADING AN EXTENSION ACTIVITIES.



EXTENSION IDEAS:

DO ONE OR MORE OF THESE EXTENSION IDEAS TO BRING THE LESSON FROM 15 MINUTES TO 30 MINUTES OR MORE.

- 1) Picture Book Connection:** Read aloud or listen to: *The Rabbit Listened* by Cori Doerrfeld at <https://bit.ly/2sHOQdp> and discuss what the book teaches them.
- 2) ELA Connection: Compassion Experts:** Let students come up with responses that they have heard throughout their lives, including COMPASSIONATE and non-COMPASSIONATE responses, and then brainstorm as a group what a better response would be that would be COMPASSIONATE.
- 3) Compassionate Thank You Notes:** Let students think of someone who has been COMPASSIONATE to them in the past and write them a thank you note.

“ LOVE AND COMPASSION ARE NECESSITIES, NOT LUXURIES. WITHOUT THEM, HUMANITY CANNOT SURVIVE. ”

**- DALAI LAMA,
TIBETAN BUDDHIST MONK/LEADER**



Scenario Cards:

A: "I'm not sure I can pay for groceries this month."

B: "Don't worry, I'll loan you the money."

(1)

A: "Someone was really rude to me at school today."

B: "It's not a big deal. That happens to a lot of people. Let's have dinner."

(2)

A: "I cut my arm when I was outside yesterday."

B: "That's nothing. I broke my arm when I was 3 and it was in a cast for 2 months."

(3)

A: "We've struggled to make ends meet for a while."

B: "Well at least you're not starving like families in developing countries."

(4)



A: "I feel like I can't concentrate at school."

B: "That's because you aren't paying enough attention."

(5)

A: "My grandma just passed away and it's been really hard for me."

B: "Oh, you poor thing."

(6)

A: "I got my tonsils out last week. It's hurting a lot still."

B: "That reminds me of the time..."

(7)



Student Response Cards:

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Don't Cards:

FIXING IT: Trying to make it better immediately instead of listening to concerns. (G)

ONE-UPPING: Telling a story that compares their struggles to yours, and makes it seem like you have been through more. (F)

STORYTELLING: Instead of listening, telling a story of something similar that happened to you. (E)

COMPARISON: Saying that their struggle isn't so bad because someone has it worse. (D)

JUDGMENTAL RESPONSE: Criticizing their situation instead of listening. (C)

PITYING: Talks down to the person and makes them feel helpless. (B)



SHUTTING DOWN: Not acknowledging the other person's problem.

(A)