



High School

National FFA Organization

Lesson HS.58

DEMONSTRATING COMPASSION FOR OTHERS

Unit. Stage Two of Development—WE

Problem Area. How Do I Build Relationships with Others?

Precepts. **B1:** Practice human relations skills including compassion, empathy, unselfishness, trustworthiness, reliability and listening. **K1:** Cope with life's trials. **K2:** Live a compassionate and selfless life.

National Standards. NL-ENG.K-12.12—Applying Language Skills—Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes.



Student Learning Objectives. As a result of this lesson, the student will ...

- 1 Describe a compassionate person.
- 2 Recognize the difference between appropriate and inappropriate actions of compassion.



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 **Time.** Instruction time for this lesson: 50 minutes.

Resources

Kushner, Harold S., “When Bad Things Happen to Good People,” New York, NY.
Harper Collins Publishers, 1981.

Tools, Equipment, and Supplies

- ✓ Tear Sheet—one sheet per group and one tear sheet with word compassion written vertically down left hand side
- ✓ Assortment of markers
- ✓ Tape or thumb tacks to display flipchart pages on the wall
- ✓ Dictionary
- ✓ Thesaurus
- ✓ HS.58.TM.A
- ✓ HS.58.TM.B
- ✓ HS.58.TM.C
- ✓ HS.58.AS.A, two different scenarios for every three to five students in a group.
- ✓ Index Cards—one per student
- ✓ HS.58.AS.B—one copy per student
- ✓ Pen/pencil
- ✓ Notebook

Key Terms. The following terms are presented in this lesson and appear in bold italics:

Compassion



Interest Approach

Display HS.58.TM.A.



As reflective citizens, let's take a few moments to reflect on what this picture represents.

Pause 20 seconds.



Think of how compassion may be reflected through this picture.

Pause 20 seconds.



Now that we've taken a few moments to reflect, who will share their thoughts with the class?

Allow students to quickly share their reflective thoughts on the picture.



This picture is symbolic of the September 11th terrorist attack on New York. We saw our country pull together, caring for each other, and doing everything possible to help others. Often, in school we focus on concrete information and sometimes forget to learn about acts of kindness that keeps our lives and our relationships strong. Today the focus is all about compassion. There are times when each of us needs to be sincere and thoughtful around others. I encourage you to be sensitive learners as we look at compassion. It is one of the strongest acts of kindness and has helped thousands of citizens cope with the September 11 terrorist attack.



TEACHING STRATEGIES

Objective 1. Describe a compassionate person.

Give the following directions before the groups are formed.



Let's take a few minutes to see what life experiences have taught us about compassion, and the many ways we can describe someone who is compassionate.

When I say, "Begin," using a piece of tear sheet paper, you will write the word, "COMPASSION" vertically on the left-hand side like this.

Show an example.



For each letter, write a word or phrase that describes compassion or an action that relates to the word compassion that also contains that letter. You may use a dictionary or thesaurus to assist you in this activity. Please write your ideas neatly, because your final work will be displayed in the classroom. Questions?

This is a group activity.



Please write your ideas neatly, because your final work will be displayed in the classroom. What are your questions?

If there are no questions, divide the class into groups. Have students number off so that you have three to five students in each group.



Please number off so that you have three to five students in each group.

You have five minutes to complete your word puzzle. Begin.

Begin time after all groups have their supplies and are ready to start. Give them a two minute warning to be sure they are on pace.

After five minutes, have one person from each group post their word puzzle somewhere in the classroom. If it is convenient, leave the students sitting in their groups. If not, have them return to their seats.

Bring them together and have several groups share their puzzle.



Ok, display your compassion poster and clean up. Please stay in your seat with your group. It sounds like a lot of thought went into these descriptions, so let's hear some of them. Who will share their puzzle first?

Share for several minutes.



Wow! It looks like we all have very good ideas of how to describe compassion. Let's look at another word puzzle, and see how many of our ideas are similar!

Post HS.58.TM.B and discuss its content. Some of these are more outside the box, and you will need to take a few moments to discuss how they relate to compassion. You may call on students to have them defend why the words are on this list.

I. How can a person who has compassion be described?

- A. Caring
- B. Organize help



Compassionate people think of ways to organize help, like taking food to families who have lost a loved one.

C. Mentoring



Compassionate people want to set good examples for others and help guide them through life's challenges.

- D. Priest/Pastor
- E. Always thinking of others

F. Sensitive



Sensitive means you are easily affected by feelings of others—**compassionate** people are more aware of others feelings and tune into their needs quickly.

G. Sympathize

H. Interested in the well-being of others

I. Open-minded

J. Nurse



As we have demonstrated, there are many ways compassion can be demonstrated. In some people's eyes, the characteristics include being sensitive, sincere, nice, or helpful. Other people may describe compassion by a job or action. I think all of our examples helped us get a good feel for what compassionate people are really like, and I bet we could think of a lengthy list of compassionate people we know in our own surroundings.

Use a Dickens Moment to clarify the actions of compassionate people.



To make sure we understand how compassionate people respond to others, let's write a story about someone (real or fictional character) who exhibits or has exhibited the actions of a compassionate person. When I say begin, you have 5 minutes to write a one-paragraph story about a compassionate person. Be prepared to share your story with someone at the end of five minutes.

After 5 minutes encourage students to get in pairs and share their stories with each other. You may also ask for volunteers to share with the entire class.



Great job writers. It sounds like we all know compassionate people or at least we know what it means to be a compassionate person, but let's look deeper at becoming a compassionate person ourselves.

Objective 2. Recognize the difference between appropriate and inappropriate actions of compassion.



Many of you included actions in your word puzzle. Let's take a closer look at these actions and distinguish what is appropriate and inappropriate.

Think about this question: When is it necessary to show compassion?

You have one minute to collect your thoughts and be ready to share. Go!

Pause and wait one minute. Allow several to share.



Let's share our thoughts with one another.

Allow several to share. Possible answers: when someone is sad, scared, depressed, or other examples of times related to distress in people's lives.



It appears compassion is most often needed during challenging times in life. All people go through times of distress. As moral citizens, it's our obligation to show compassion through caring ways at these times. There really are appropriate and inappropriate ways to demonstrate compassion, and today we are going to recognize which is which.

Post HS.58.TM.C--only reveal to the blank lines, and record their thoughts.



Let's look at this situation for example: Your best friends are late coming back from lunch. They tell you they were just in a minor car accident—someone ran into their new car.

What would be appropriate ways to show compassion in this situation?

Record student responses, then reveal and read the examples of appropriate actions.

II. Identifying examples of appropriate ways to show compassion



Appropriate acts of compassion would sound something like this:

- A. Don't worry; this happens to everyone during their life.
- B. You know, if you were obeying all the traffic laws, you really didn't have any control over the situation.
- C. Your parents will just be glad you are OK.

D. Let me give you a ride home from school and I can pick you up in the mornings until you get your car fixed.



Now think of things you can do or say that are inappropriate actions. What are some inappropriate actions for this situation?



Record student responses then reveal and read examples.

III. Identifying examples of inappropriate ways to show compassion



Inappropriate actions that would not be considered compassionate might sound something like this:

- A. OH! My gosh, your parents are going to kill you!
- B. Wow! It's going to take a lot of paychecks to cover the damage.
- C. I suppose you were talking on the cell phone and not paying attention again.



How would your friends feel if they received these comments? It's important to remember to treat others as you want them to treat you. Compassion is meant to make people feel better, not worse.

Students will receive scenario cards to list appropriate actions of compassion. They will also list possible inappropriate actions that would not be compassionate. Use HS.58.AS.A, and give two cards to each group. Some scenarios will be duplicated.



Let's test our ability to recognize acts of compassion. Here are two specific scenarios on separate index cards for your group. On the back of each card, record at least three ways to show compassion for the given situation. Remember, they could be spoken words or actual gestures that show compassion. You may use the word puzzles for ideas.



On a separate sheet of paper, list three inappropriate actions for each scenario. You will complete this task in the same group you worked in earlier. Please move back to your group and wait for your instructions.

As students get back into their groups, one person will come forward and choose two cards you have made from HS.58.AS.A. Be sure they get two different scenarios.



Please send one person forward to choose your scenarios. Be sure they are two different scenarios before you begin. You have five minutes to complete this activity. What questions do you have? Please come forward and choose your cards.

Give them five minutes to complete this activity. When all groups are finished, they will share one scenario, their three appropriate acts of compassion, and one inappropriate action. At the end of the lesson, collect the index cards and have students symbolically dispose of the list of inappropriate actions.



Stop. As a group, select one scenario to share with the class. You will also share your three acts of compassion and one inappropriate action for that scenario. You have 20 seconds to choose your scenario.

Wait.



6



Stop. Who will share first?



Now that we know what compassion is, what it looks like, and the many ways it can be demonstrated, we have no need for inappropriate responses to these types of situations in life. As you move back to your seats, choose one person from each group to destroy your sheet of paper with

inappropriate actions, and please put it in the garbage can.



Review/Summary

As they return to their seats, pass out the HS.58.AS.B, to be completed individually and put into notebook.



Compassion is so important to people in times of need. We have learned a lot about compassion, and now we need to take some time to reflect on how compassion relates to our own lives. While you complete HS.58.AS.B, I want you to sort through the information gathered today and sculpt it to fit your own style and personality. Complete the Activity Sheet. I will collect it when you are finished.

Pass out HS.58.AS.B. Have students complete and add to their notebooks.



I'm sure we can all think of a time when we needed compassion from others. Keep that experience in mind as you go through day-to-day life and have the opportunity to be compassionate toward others. Do not pass up a chance to make a positive difference in someone's life by helping them through one of life's challenges.



Application

►Extended Classroom Activity:

Create a list of compassionate actions seen after September 11.

►FFA Activity:

Develop a standby list of compassionate things your chapter could do for a member or community member who is going through a difficult time.

►SAE Activity:

List scenarios that require compassion in different SAE projects.



Evaluation

HS.58.Assess.A



Answers to Assessment:

Possible answers

1. Give them some of your family's extra clothes
Invite them to stay at your house
2. Cook dinner for the week
Buy her a favorite book to read
Clean the house without being asked
3. Carry her books to school
Meet her for lunch to help her with her tray
Offer to do her normal chores
4. Buy a new hamster
Take a movie over and have a slumber party
5. Give your friend a ride home from practices until the car is repaired
Send them an encouragement card



DEMONSTRATING COMPASSION FOR OTHERS

►Directions

Write one act of compassion for each of the following situations:

1. Your best friend's house burns down.
2. Your mother has surgery and is supposed to stay in bed for one week.
3. Your sister broke her leg and will be on crutches for one month.
4. Your four year old cousin's hamster died.

5. Your best friend and neighbor wrecked the car.



HS.58.TM.A



HOW CAN A PERSON WHO HAS COMPASSION BE DESCRIBED?

- ◆ **Caring**
- ◆ **Organize help**
- ◆ **Mentoring**
- ◆ **Priest/Pastor**
- ◆ **Always thinking of others**
- ◆ **Sensitive**
- ◆ **Sympathize**
- ◆ **Interested in the well-being of others**
- ◆ **Open-minded**
- ◆ **Nurse**



SCENARIO:

Your best friends are late coming back from lunch. They tell you they were just in a minor car accident—someone ran into their new car.

◆ Appropriate actions: What do you think?

- ➔ **Don't worry; this happens to everyone during their life.**
- ➔ **You know, if you were obeying all the traffic laws, you really didn't have any control over the situation.**
- ➔ **Your parents will just be glad you are OK.**
- ➔ **Let me give you a ride home from school and I can pick you up in the mornings until you get your car fixed.**

◆ Inappropriate actions: What do you think?

- ➔ **My gosh, your parents are going to kill you!**
- ➔ **Wow! It's going to take a lot of paychecks to cover the damage.**
- ➔ **I suppose you were talking on the cell phone instead of paying attention.**



HS.58.AS.A

Make one copy of this sheet, and cut and paste each scenario on an index card prior to teaching the lesson. Each group of three to five students will get two different scenarios, so some scenarios might be duplicated. Be sure each group receives two different scenarios.

A fellow student loses a parent.

Your best friend breaks up with a boyfriend/girlfriend.

A friend is not accepted into the college of choice.

A friend is diagnosed with cancer.

A favorite teacher's contract is not picked up for the next school year.

A classmate is not selected for a specific sports team.

Your friend has to move to a new school.

A fellow classmate's parents are getting divorced.

A friend's sibling is in the military, and cannot have contact with family.

Your friend loses a favorite family pet.

A fellow student loses a parent.

Your best friend breaks up with a boyfriend/girlfriend.

A friend is not accepted into the college of choice.

A friend is diagnosed with cancer.

A favorite teacher's contract is not picked up for the next school year.

A classmate is not selected for a specific sports team.

Your friend has to move to a new school.

A fellow classmate's parents are getting divorced.

A friend's sibling is in the military, and cannot have contact with family.

Your friend loses a favorite family pet.



HS.58.AS.B Name: _____

COMPASSION REVIEW

►Part I

Directions: Compile your own word puzzle for describing compassion. You may gather ideas from the posters around the classroom.

C

O

M

P

A

S

S

I

O

N



►Part II

**Write one example of a situation in which you would show compassion to a family member.
List three specific examples of actions you could take, or words you could say, to demon-**

strate compassion. This is confidential; no one will see it but you and the teacher.

Situation:

Examples of compassion:

1.

2.

3.

