

Caring for each other and having compassion for all living things

Lesson 2 - Caring

Time: 45 minutes

REQUIRED MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT:

Barnyard animal puppets, Circle of Compassion Paper, Compassion Pictures and Scenarios, Coloring/drawing utensils

OBJECTIVES AND GOALS:

The students will be able to define caring and compassion are, and to feel compassion for all types of people and animals.

ENGAGE (3 MINUTES):

Introduce, repeat, write on board, and define caring. Introduce compassion as a synonym for caring about someone or something. Compassion can also be in respect to caring about others' feelings.

ACTIVATE (20 MINUTES):

Puppet Show! Introduce the characters in the puppet show.

- Violet the Chicken
- Gus the Goat
- Huey, Duey, and Louie the Baby Birds
- Ronaldo the Sheep
- Priscilla the Pig

The setting is a farm sanctuary (discuss the difference between a sanctuary & a shelter). The main characters are Violet, Ronaldo, and Priscilla. Introduce the chicken and the sheep as best friends who each like to walk around, eat some grass, and sleep. Sometimes they swing by and say hello to Gus and the Baby birds. One day a big truck pulls up and all the animals are so excited about what it could be inside of there. The next day they find out it is a pig. They have heard horrible things about pigs and talk about these stereotypes so loudly the pig can hear.

PAUSE: Ask the students how the pig feels. Talk about stereotypes. Ask what they should say instead.

RESUME: The pig is very mad at what they are saying about her so she threatens to beat them up.

PAUSE: What do you think should happen next?

Have students brainstorm what should happen next and then have volunteers act the scenarios with the puppets (Educator plays one of the main parts to direct positive appropriate endings). Ask how did the characters feel? Did the others feel compassion?



REFLECT (15 MINUTES):

Pass out the circle of compassion paper, and explain that in the circle students are to write (or draw) things and people they care about. Give them 3 minutes, and have some students share. Then show them the Compassion photos; the homeless person, the homeless dog, and the deforestation (one at a time). For each one, pause and ask: Who feels compassion (cares for) this person/animal(s)? Why might this person/animal be in this situation? What could you do to help this person/animal?

After they have seen all the photos, they should add anyone or thing else to their circle of compassion they can think of.

Introduce the animal and call students over during this time to meet and greet.

While they're working, invite table groups to come up and practice the steps to meeting a dog and spend time with the dog.

CLOSURE (7 MINUTES):

Talk about how the circle of compassion on their papers can be made into real life and they can wear it like a hula hoop. The circle of compassion can grow and grow and grow to be as big as imaginable, when things and people are added. Ask them what the world would be like if everyone always wore their circle of compassion and everyone cared about everyone and everything. Ask them to wear their circle of compassion always and include as many people and things in it as they can. Ask for volunteers to share how they will show compassion to someone that day that they normally wouldn't have.

MODIFICATIONS:

If there is no animal for the presentation, teachers can contact local Animal Welfare organizations to see if they would be willing to bring in an animal for students to meet. Stuffed, plush animals will also work well to showcase pet care & interaction.

Possible extension activity; read book *A Home for Dakota* or *Maggie's Second Chance*. As the story goes along, ask open ended questions about who is showing compassion.

Puppet show can be about any animal stereotypes, not just barn/farm animals. If there are no animal puppets available, students can make animal puppets out of brown paper bags or stuffed animals can be used as alternatives.

Photos of any stereotypes can be shown to the class during circle of compassion activity (i.e. a black cat on the street, pigs in mud, etc.).

Circle of Compassion created by the Institute of Humane Education

