**Empathy Lesson Plan**

**Goal of lesson:** Expose students to the empathy process so they understand how to do it on their own for their projects.

The idea of empathy is crucial for the design thinking process but also one that’s met with a lot of skepticism (and rightfully so). Rather than start with a problem and solution in mind, the design thinking process starts with creating a “character map” and identifying the needs of a user, whoever that might be. By centralizing the design process around this character (based on observations and making inferences), one can design a more tailored and relevant “solution” to whatever problem he/she is facing. If students don’t feel a strong connection to this portion of the project, it’s likely the entire process is going to be trivial for them and the idea of thinking bigger picture will not be as effective as it could be. We’d love feedback on what works and doesn’t work, especially since we’re not the ones instructing.

**Class Structure:**

* Go through slides with two activities (at teacher discretion, but would be good)
* Photo activity : (3 minutes individual, 4 minutes share)
  + Goal: Get students in the mindset of making objective observations about the situation, trying to understand the person they’re observing to the best of their ability. Second portion is analysis of what this person needs/wants/values based on objective fact, as well as inferences (tell students not to be afraid to make stretches and judgments based on what they see).
  + Share:
    - Heavier emphasis on the analysis portion:
    - What are some of this man’s needs/wants/values?
    - What are some of his latent needs/wants/values (things that might be applicable outside of the context of this photograph)?
    - How does this photo show that?
* Paired interview activity (4 minutes per person -- 8 total + 4 min sharing)
  + Goal: Get students comfortable with introducing themselves, getting the awkwardness out of the interview process. The idea is that by asking a fellow student what he/she does outside of school, the interviewer can uncover
    - Seek stories, learn who the person is beyond the activities in which he/she engages.
    - Heavier emphasis on the analysis portion:
    - What are some of this student’s needs/wants/values inside the context of this activity? Outside?
  + Share