



## **Lesson: Empathy and Active Listening for Global Citizens**

In this interactive lesson, students will work in small groups to develop a clear understanding of empathy, community building, and the importance of compassionate listening. They will have the opportunity to reflect on their own lives, interests, and values to develop empathy for their classmates and practice active listening skills.

All CWB-USA lessons are designed to empower youth to be changemakers and develop their sense of agency.

All CWB-USA lessons connect to the [The Ten Core Rights of the United Nations' Declaration on the Rights of a Child](#).

**Age: 9-17**

**Time Allowance:** 40 minutes

**Materials:** Timer

**Broad Goals:** Learners will be able to:

- Develop public speaking skills and practice articulating their own personal history
- Understand the Rights of a Child, specifically the right to a name and nationality
- Understand how one's personal narrative is often a shared human experience, not unique

**Specific Goals:** to enable students to develop

- Cognitive processing skills to understand and express values, attitudes, and feelings
- Communication strategies to engage in conversations about complex issues and diversity
  - Vocabulary skills to understand the distinctions between empathy/sympathy; charity/solidarity, and a more nuanced understanding of psychosocial engagement through these lenses.





**Objectives for these goals are that students will be able to:**

- Identify and model the behaviors of an active listener
- Discuss their own identity story and share in a clear way
- Discuss how the Rights of the Child are impacted in times of crisis, specifically:
  1. The Right to affection, love and understanding
  4. The Right to full opportunity for play and recreation
  5. The Right to a name and nationality
  9. The Right to be brought up in a spirit of peace and universal brotherhood
- To reflect on the differences (or similarities) between students own lived experiences and build community/shared understanding in the classroom

**Glossary:**

- **Empathy** - the psychological identification with or vicarious experiencing of the feelings, thoughts, or attitudes of another.
- **Compassion** - sympathetic [consciousness](#) of others' distress together with a desire to alleviate it.
- **Sympathy** - the fact or power of sharing the feelings of another, especially in sorrow or trouble; fellow feeling, compassion, or commiseration.
- **Charity** - generous actions or donations to aid the poor, ill, or helpless.
- **Solidarity** - union or fellowship arising from common responsibilities and interests, as between members of a group or between classes, peoples, etc.
- **Active Listening** - Active listening is an intent to "listen for meaning", in which the listener checks with the speaker to see that a statement has been correctly heard and understood. The goal of active listening is to improve mutual understanding.
- **Identity** - the sense of self, providing sameness and continuity in personality over time
- **Narrative** - the art, technique, or process of [narrating](#), or of telling a story:





#### Class Discussion:

1. Learners to attempt to define empathy, sympathy, charity, solidarity. Discuss the differences between the pairs, and how you can identify one or another. Student led examples.
2. Learners read through glossary in pairs, class comes together to discuss any questions or confusion.
3. Learners discuss communication skills: active listening, compassion, empathy. How do we develop communication skills? What are the most important skills for productive communication?

#### Small Group Activity: Interviewer and Journalists (10-15 min)

1. Ask students to raise hands if anyone has ever moved. Each of these students will be the "interviewee" in their small group.
2. Divide class into small groups (2-4 students per group depending on class size). Make sure that there is one "interviewee" in each group.
3. As an icebreaker, have students do a quick round where each student gets 45 seconds to tell their group something they like about their home.
4. Each small group will ask their interviewee the following questions, and practice active listening skills while listening to their responses. The journalists are attempting to understand and connect to the interviewee's story as clearly as possible, so they can complete their assignment of writing an article about their interview which is very **empathetic** and relatable for their readers.
  - a. What was it like to move? What do you remember?
  - b. What did you leave behind? What was new?
  - c. How did it feel to be in a new place? Did you know anyone? Can you remember if you were nervous?
  - d. Do you ever miss the place you used to live? Do you stay in contact with the people who used to be your friends?
  - e. How did your family make the choice to leave?





**Optional Overnight Assignment:** Write an article about the interview. As a journalist your angle is to be compassionate and to make your readers relate to the story you heard in your interview. Interviewee may write reflection on the experience of being interviewed.

Group Discussion Extension (any student may answer):

Can you think of an example when you could tell someone was actively listening to you? How could you tell? What was different about it? Can you think of a time when someone expressed empathy towards you? Can you think of a time when someone expressed sympathy towards you? What are the differences between charity and solidarity?

Rights of the Child Questions:

Were you surprised that any of these rights are “rights”? Why do you think that these need to be defined as “rights”? Why might a child not have access to these rights? Which one is the most important one for you?

**Optional Additional/Extra Credit Vocab Words- emotional vocabulary**

Excited	Nervous
Anxious	Happy
Friendly	Isolated
Lonely	Hopeful
Brave	Afraid
Dread	Overwhelmed
Pilgrimage	Journey

