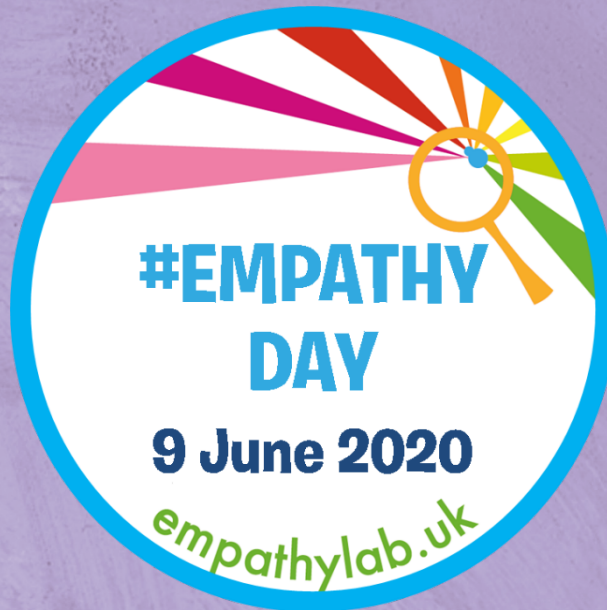
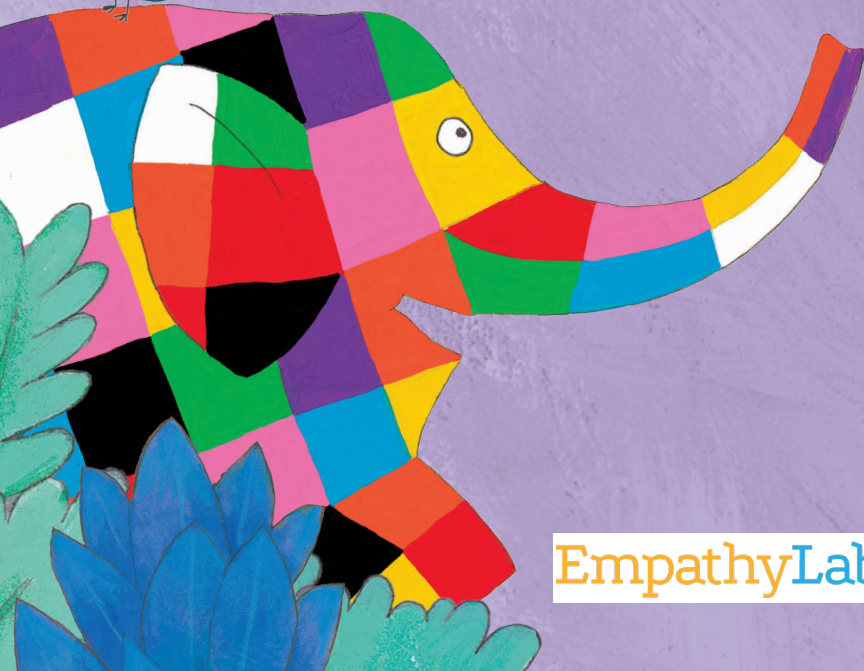




EARLY YEARS TOOLKIT FOR



IN ASSOCIATION WITH **ELMER**



EmpathyLab





Empathy Day - 9 June 2020

EMPATHY

A beacon of hope
in our divided world

Why we need a new empathy movement

- Hate crimes are at their highest level since records began
- Our public discourse is increasingly divisive
- Our online lives can limit our experience of face to face human warmth
- Social media's algorithms drive us into silos, talking only to people like us

- EmpathyLab founded Empathy Day in 2017 to help the rising generation drive a new empathy movement. It focuses on using books to build understanding and connections between us all.
- Increased empathy is good for society and vital for children's life chances - with strong empathy skills they will become great parents, workmates, and citizens.

Using stories to build empathy

- EmpathyLab builds children's, literacy and social activism through a more systematic use of high quality literature. See www.empathylab.uk for details of our training and resources.
- Empathy is a skill we can all get better at - we're not born with a fixed quantity. EmpathyLab's strategy builds on exciting scientific evidence showing the power of reading to build real-life empathy skills.
- In identifying with book characters, we learn to see things from other points of view.

What happens on Empathy Day?

Empathy Day is all about helping us understand each other better, the day to help children take some new steps on their empathy journey. On 9 June we want everyone to ...

READ

It builds real-life empathy

Find and start empathy-boosting books.

For great ideas use our #ReadForEmpathy and our Guides.
www.empathylab.uk/read-for-empathy-guide

Check out your library's empathy books and activities.

CONNECT

Join the Empathy Conversation

Practice listening 100%, especially to someone you don't know well. Use our Empathy Switch exercise.

Link up – share your favourite empathy reads using #ReadForEmpathy

Watch *The Empathy Conversation* with Children's Laureate, Cressida Cowell – happening on 9 June.

ACT

Put empathy into action

Put empathy into action. Make an Empathy Resolution – special cards available in March.

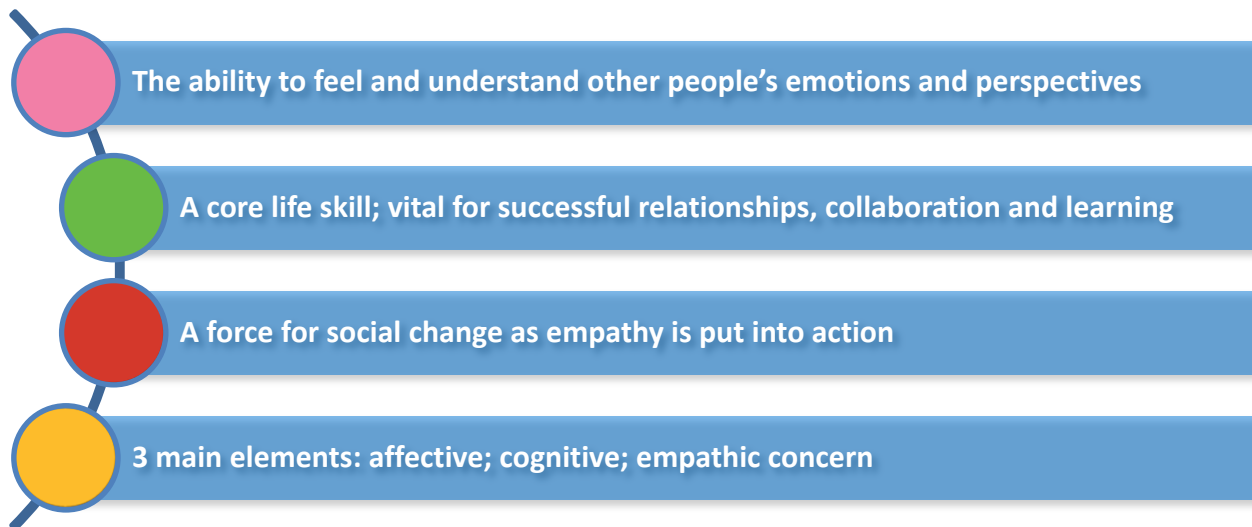
Teachers, librarians, community leaders – be empathy evangelists!
Come on our training; use our Empathy Day toolkits.

Talk to everyone about the importance of empathy.
Sign up for updates at www.empathylab.uk



All about empathy

What is Empathy?

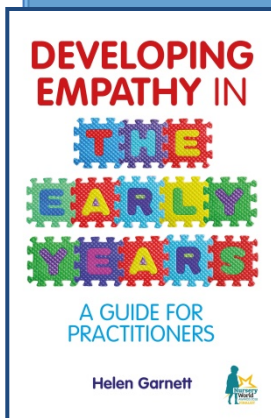


How does empathy work?



Empathy is vital in the early years

“Let’s grow emotional health in our young children. Let’s dedicate ourselves to developing empathy and, in doing so, buy us hope for future generations”.



Helen Garnett
Developing Empathy in the Early Years, A Guide for Practitioners, JKP, 2018



Empathy and the early years

Why is empathy important in the early years?

“Planting empathy in the early years is crucial. The development of empathy allows very young children to ‘get’ other people, other points of view, and other cultures. It means that children can begin to understand how other people feel, think and act. At a time when the windows of learning are wide open, there is no better time to start the development of such a vital and life-enhancing skill.”

Helen Garnett, author of *Developing Empathy in the Early Years*, Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2018

How it develops

Young children’s empathy starts off as ‘feelings-based’ behaviour, where the child has an urge to ‘help’ based on a feeling, but can’t yet empathise fully because they have not yet developed ‘theory of mind’. This is when a child realises that what she thinks and feels is not the same as everyone else. At roughly 18 months a toddler will recognise himself as a separate person. Around age three theory of mind starts to develop with some more fundamental changes happening at the age of four.

“The child begins to interpret what someone else might be thinking. There is some understanding of why other people behave in such a way. It is a complex and sensitive time for young learners. With adult support, children at this stage of their development can learn to recognise and manage their feelings. In direct parallel children learn to recognise and accept other people’s feelings as well. And here we have the roots of empathy”.

Jackie Harland, writing in *Developing Empathy in the Early Years*, Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2018, Chapter 3

Early Years Foundation Stage

The [Early Years Foundation Stage](#) (EYFS) sets standards for the learning, development and support of children from birth to 5 years old. There are seven areas of learning and development that shape educational programmes in early years settings. Empathy Day activities supports five of these areas.

- Communication and language development
- Personal, social and emotional development
- Literacy
- Understanding of the world
- Expressive arts and design



Empathy and the early years... continued

EYFS Learning and development area	Explanation	Empathy Day Activities
Communication and language development	Giving children opportunities to speak and listen in a range of situations; developing their confidence and skills in expressing themselves.	Share books and talk about characters and feelings. Provide empathy-focused rhymes and stories for children to listen to and join in. Model using emotion language, encouraging the use of new emotion words
Personal, social and emotional development	Helping children develop a positive sense of themselves and others; forming positive relationships and developing respect for others; developing social skills and learning how to manage their feelings; understanding appropriate behaviour in groups; having confidence in their own abilities.	Share rhymes face-to-face with a caring adult (research states that such practice lays the foundations for empathy). Explore together the feelings of characters in books. Provide immersive activities which will help children see the world through the characters' eyes.
Literacy	Encouraging children to love books and print, and when ready, to enjoy reading and mark-making. Children must be given access to a wide range of books and print, and exciting mark-making resources to ignite their interest.	Introduce children to highly appealing new books, stories and rhymes as part of their Empathy Day activities. Encourage children to share these books with favourite adults.
Understanding of the world	Guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places. Providing opportunities to discover similarities and differences between themselves and others, and among families, communities and traditions.	Share stories, in order to explore new and unfamiliar characters in books, plus unusual situations and emotions. Talk about the similarities and differences the children discover, keeping this light-hearted and interactive.
Expressive arts and design	Supporting children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials...providing children with opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role play, and design and technology	Provide imaginative activities such as role-play, to explore and reflect on characters' motivations and behaviour. E.g. create an Elmer role-play using bright coloured, patchwork and grey fabric. Model trying on fabric, let children have fun doing the same.

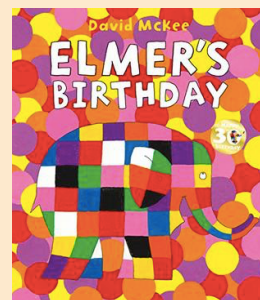


Empathy Activity Sessions for Rising 5s and Reception Classes

A 30 minute story and activity session for 4 year olds and reception classes exploring the empathy skill of perspective-taking. It also helps build vocabulary for feelings . You will need the Elmer cake template in this pack and coloured pens, pencils or crayons.

Elmer's Birthday by David McKee, Andersen Press

In the story the elephants decide to play a trick on Elmer and pretend they don't know it's his birthday. The other animals feel uneasy about this. But Elmer has the last laugh because it isn't actually Elmer's birthday! (Don't reveal this to the children)



Read the story to the children but stop before the final page when Elmer says
it's not my birthday

- Ask the children to think about birthdays. They could tell you some nice things about birthdays – cake, presents, parties, people singing and wishing Happy Birthday. Ask if any of them have had a birthday recently or will have a birthday soon? You could all sing Happy Birthday
- Ask the children to imagine they are Elmer. If you have time in the session and resources, they could make Elmer masks to help them see through Elmer's eyes <https://www.andersenpress.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Make-an-Elmer-Paper-Plate-Mask.pdf>
- Now talk to the children about how Elmer might be feeling: *"I wonder what Elmer might feel if no one said Happy Birthday to him?"* . Reinforce the words the children suggest – sad, angry, unhappy, puzzled etc. Ask them to make the face Elmer might make if no-one said Happy Birthday to him
- Ask the children to think about why the elephants decided to play the trick. *"Do you think they were being unkind or did they just want to give Elmer a surprise?"* . Children could choose to put their hands up either for being unkind or for a surprise. Then say: *"sometimes when people play tricks, they don't mean to be unkind but they can upset the person being tricked"* . Children might share times when people have played tricks on them
- Finally read the last page where the elephants bring out the big cake and Elmer tells them it is not his birthday – the elephants made a mistake! But everyone enjoys the cake anyway. Complete the story by getting every child to help make an Elmer cake – use the template in this pack and blow it up to A3 and invite every child to colour in a square.



Empathy Activity Sessions for Rising 5s and Reception Classes

A 30-minute activity session exploring the emotion of anger through a gorgeous picture book. You will need A4 paper and coloured pens, pencils or crayons

Ravi's Roar by Tom Percival, Bloomsbury

- First, ask the children to practice roaring like a tiger – we need to hear their LOUDEST ROAR
- Read the story and when you get to the page where Ravi turns into a tiger and roars, tell all the children to give their LOUDEST ROAR. Then when the tiger goes wild – get the children to jump up and down in a wild way.
- Once you have read the story, ask the children why they think Ravi became a tiger
 - Praise them for using words like angry, or cross – write them on a board or flip chart.
 - Ask children to show what how it felt to be cross like Ravi using their body or facial expressions.
- Then ask children to think about all the things that made Ravi angry –go through the story again if they don't recall all the reasons
 - Being too small
 - Being too slow/last
 - Being left out
- Ask the children what they thought about the rest of the family's reactions. Could they suggest things that Kiran, Jaya and Anil (his siblings) could have done differently to help Ravi?
- Show the children the page where the tiger went wild. Ask them to tell you what the main colour on the page is.
 - Explain that people often think red is an angry colour – ask if they agree.
 - Look at the pages at the end of the book where Ravi is calm – does the colour on the pages feel calmer?
 - Give the children a big pile of coloured pens, pencils or crayons. Ask them to sort them into colours for an angry picture and those they could use for a calm picture.
 - Give them paper and show them how to fold it paper in half lengthways. Ask them to draw Ravi's angry feelings on one half and his calm feelings on the other half of the page.
 - Share the pictures and congratulate children on thinking so hard about Ravi's feelings.





EmpathyDay Rhyme Times

Rhyme Times are a key activity in many early years settings and can play an important role in the early development of empathy skills. Here are three things you can do to create an empathy-building rhyme time:

- Include 'face-to-face' rhymes
- Use rhymes which help children explore emotions
- Encourage families to reflect on how they think it feels for the child to share rhymes, and how it feels for the adult/sibling who shares the rhyme with the child

1. Use face-to-face rhymes

This allows parents and children to look into each other's eyes. This direct gaze is critical to developing early empathy.

Dan Siegal, a psychologist specialising in early parental bonding, says that every child yearns for (and must have) this eye contact for healthy emotional development to occur. Siegal founded a new field of research known as interpersonal neurobiology (IPNB) and has proved that the primary care-giver's gaze plays a critical role in how we develop empathy.

Great face-to-face rhymes include:

- Row, row your boat
- Horsey, horsey
- Five little men in a flying saucer

2. Use rhymes which help children explore emotions

To create a rhyme time that focuses on emotions, use our resource to make emotion words cards. Put them in a bag. Ask children in turn to pick a word. Hold the card up, read it out and make the appropriate face/ body gestures.

Ask children about the meaning of the word - can they make the face of the emotion? You could give them an example to set the emotion in context – for example for *excited* you could say "*excited is how someone might feel on the day before their birthday or a special treat*".

Share a rhyme linked to the chosen emotion – see the list on the next page.

Introduce the rhyme by talking about how it reflects the emotion. For example – Miss Polly is a rhyme about a girl whose dolly is poorly. She is worried but luckily the doctor can make her better.

3. Parents sharing feelings about sharing rhymes

Sharing feelings helps build self awareness and understanding of other people. Encourage families to use the book-shaped downloadable card to reflect on how sharing rhymes together makes them and their child feel. These cards can be displayed in the library.



4. Help children think about the emotions of others and how they can help

In this rhyme time children are encouraged to think about other people's emotions and how they can help.

For this session you will need a bag or basket of five or six soft toys. On each soft toy, pin a description of their emotion. Then pass the bag/basket around and invite children to select a toy. Read out the emotion and ask children to choose a rhyme for the character (any rhyme can be chosen so you can use your usual rhyme-time ones). The idea is that we are making a "gift" of the rhymes to respond to the feelings of the soft toys .

For example

- Teddy is feeling sad because his best friend can't come to play with him – what rhyme could we sing to cheer up sad Teddy?
- Rabbit is feeling very excited because she has received a present – what rhyme could we sing to celebrate with Rabbit?
- Dog is feeling a bit nervous because he is staying away from home for the first time – can we sing a rhyme to help Dog feel brave?
- Cat is feeling cross because she doesn't want to tidy her room – can we sing a rhyme to help Cat feel calm?
- Panda is feeling happy because she is going to the park – what rhyme could we sing to show Panda how happy we are for her?
- Mouse is feeling proud because he has won a prize – what rhyme could we sing to congratulate Mouse?





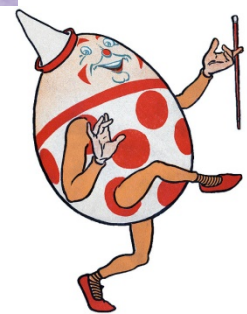
EmpathyDay

Rhyme Times... continued

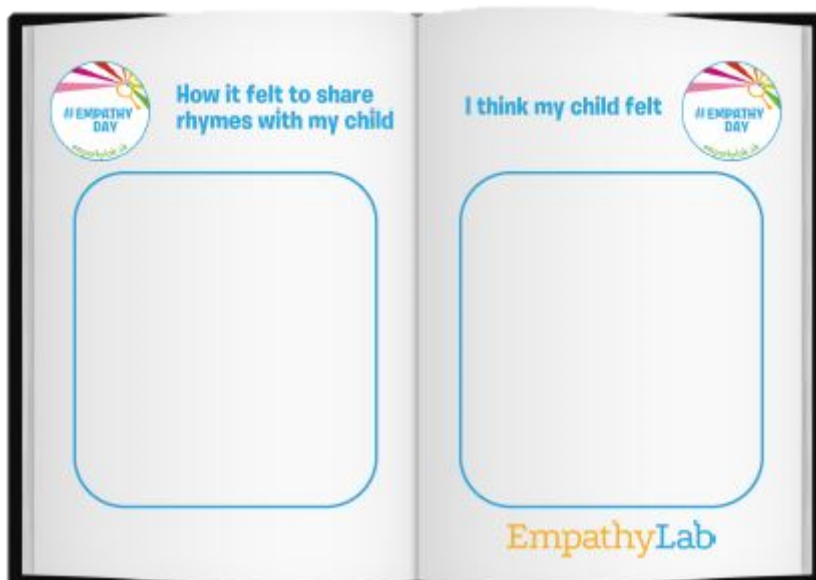
Emotion cards



Cards with emotion words/images	Suggested rhyme
Happy	If you're happy and you know it
Worried	Miss Polly had a dolly
Scared	Row, Row Row your boat
Sad	Humpty Dumpty My Bonnie lies over the ocean
Calm	Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star
Excited	The wheels on the bus Zoom Zoom Zoom Big Red Bus
Silly	Shake your sillies out
Loving	Rock a bye baby When the boat comes in Bobby Shaftoe
Brave	Incy Wincy Spider
Mischievous	Little Rabbit Foo Foo



Rhyme Time cards





Join in the national campaign

Share your #ReadforEmpathy ideas

Empathy Day celebrates and shares the power of stories to build real-life empathy.

On 9 June we want everyone to:

- share their #ReadforEmpathy recommendations on social media. There is a downloadable card you can use for selfies.
- use our materials to create Empathy Day displays. We've provided Empathy Day logos and Empathy Wall banners

**#Readfor
Empathy**



Watch

Learn more about empathy



This Sesame Street video is a great way of explaining empathy to families goo.gl/biX8qY

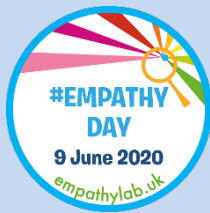


For practitioners, this Brene Brown video neatly highlights the difference between empathy and sympathy goo.gl/285Gk9



Resources

♥ Available free to subscribers to download from www.empathylab.uk/shop



Empathy Day Logos



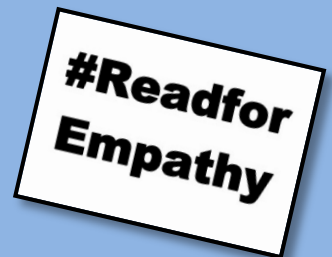
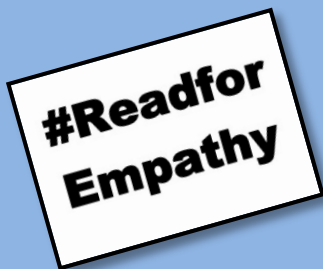
Empathy Wall Banners (3 x A4 sheets)



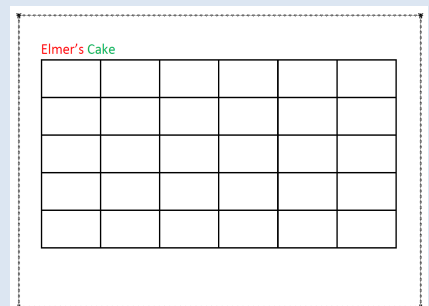
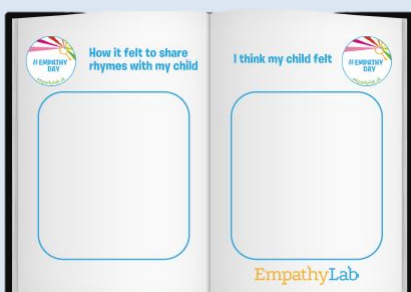
Emotions cards



#ReadforEmpathy cards



Rhyme Time cards and Elmer cake template



#ReadforEmpathy - Read stories. Build empathy. Make a better world.