

Stepping into Someone Else's Shoes

(Year 2 - Ages 7-8):

Lesson 1 of 9

Name: _____ Class: _____

Teacher Preparation

Introduction for Teachers

This lesson introduces the core theme for the Year 2 unit: empathy, the fundamental motivation for kindness and altruism. We adapt the complex theme of "Motivation to Give" into a tangible and interactive concept for this age group: "Stepping into Someone Else's Shoes." The goal is to move students beyond simply identifying kind acts to understanding why people choose to be kind.

The lesson is anchored in a physical metaphor—exploring different shoes and imagining the lives of their owners. This makes the abstract concept of perspective-taking concrete and memorable. This foundational understanding of empathy is crucial for later lessons, as it provides the emotional "why" behind the compassionate choice a family makes to consent to organ and tissue donation.



Key Concepts & Language for Teachers

- **The "Stepping into Their Shoes" Metaphor:** This is the central, physical anchor for the lesson. Your enthusiasm for this imaginative activity is key.
 - **Say:** "Today we're going to learn a kindness superpower called empathy. It's a big word that means trying to understand how someone else is feeling. The best way to do that is to imagine you are 'stepping into their shoes' and walking around as them for a moment."
 - **Use the shoe props to spark imagination. Ask open-ended questions:** "What adventures might these shoes have been on? What feelings might the person have at the end of their day?"
- **Defining Empathy:** Translate the concept into simple, actionable terms.
 - **Empathy is "imagining feelings."** It's a skill we can practice.
 - **Say:** "Empathy is like being a feeling detective. You look at someone, and you use clues to guess what they might be feeling inside. When you do that, you know exactly how to be a kind friend."
- **From Feeling to Action:** Explicitly connect the understanding of a feeling to a kind response.
 - **Ask:** "Once you've stepped into your friend's shoes and imagined they feel lonely, what kind choice does that help you make?" This reinforces that empathy is the motivation for action.
- **Connecting to the Bigger Idea:** Frame the choice to donate as the ultimate act of empathy.
 - **Say with a caring and thoughtful tone:** "The biggest and kindest choices are made by people who are experts at stepping into someone else's shoes. When a family is feeling very sad because their loved one is sick, another family can use their empathy superpower. They can imagine how worried that family must be. They step into their shoes. And because they understand those feelings, they make the most compassionate and kind choice to share the gift of life. It all starts with empathy."



Safety and Sensitivity Considerations

- **Keep the Shoe Activity Respectful:** Ensure the shoe activity remains a respectful exploration. Avoid any comments about shoe size, style, or cleanliness to prevent teasing. The focus is purely on imagination.
- **Acknowledge All Feelings:** When discussing feelings and perspectives, create a safe space where all emotions are valid. If a child shares a story involving difficult feelings, listen with empathy and validate their experience before gently guiding the conversation back to the lesson's theme. Say: "Thank you for sharing that. It sounds like that was a really tough time, and it's brave of you to tell us. It helps us understand how important it is to be kind when people are feeling that way."
- **Focus on Compassion:** When linking to donation, the focus must remain on the compassionate motivation behind the choice. Frame it as a beautiful act that comes from understanding and caring about another family's struggle.

Teacher Resources

- A collection of different pairs of shoes (e.g., work boots, party shoes, baby shoes, sneakers).
- A picture book about empathy (e.g., I Am Human: A Book of Empathy by Susan Verde).
- A worksheet for each student with a picture of a person and a large, empty "thought bubble."
- Pencils, crayons, and markers.



Magical Body Facts for Year 2 (Ages 7-8)

- Your amazing heart beats over 100,000 times every single day! ❤️
- If you could spread your lungs out flat, they would be big enough to cover a tennis court! 🏐
- Your brain is more powerful and has more connections than all the computers and phones in the world put together! 🤖
- Your small intestine is so long that if you stretched it out, it would be longer than your family's car! 🚗
- It takes more muscles to frown than it does to smile – so smiling is easier! 😊
- A sneeze can travel faster than a car on the highway – over 160 km/h! Achoo! 🤧
- Your body is always making new skin. You get a whole new outer layer about every month!
- You get new taste buds every couple of weeks, which is why you might suddenly love a food you used to dislike! 🥬🍕
- Ounce for ounce, your bones are stronger than steel. 💪
- Every cell in your body contains a super-long secret code called DNA that has all the instructions to make you, YOU! 🧬

