

Title

Teaching Empathy Through Mentoring: Using New Kid by Jerry Craft as a guide for high school to elementary level mentoring

By

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Project Summary

This project is a collaboration between high school students and elementary students. This summary outlines the high school student's role, the elementary student's role and the educator roles.

To start, high School students will select a scene from Jerry Craft's *New Kid* that addresses empathy. They will choose one significant lesson about empathy to teach to a younger audience. The high school students will self-select the lesson under the guidance of their teacher. They will construct a mini-lesson using the text to demonstrate empathetic opportunities. Their lesson will be reviewed and guided by their teacher prior to implementation.

The high school students will read and teach the lesson to younger student(s) via WebEx or another virtual meeting space. The high school student(s) will lead the lesson, discussion, and reflection of the text with the younger student.

The elementary students will identify empathetic situations in the book that relate to their own life and write a comparison paragraph about how their situation was similar and different to that of the character's.

After the lesson, the high school students will write a feature story about the importance of mentoring younger students and setting a good

example. The feature story will be published on the high school Journalism website for a wider and authentic audience.

Lesson Goal(s) and Objective(s)

SWBAT analyze how stories offer real-life lessons that anyone can apply to their lives. They will reflect on the value of empathy (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.3 Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed)).

SWBAT identify emotions of characters and empathetic situations in a literary text (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.7 Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot).

SWBAT produce a compare and contrast paragraph, drawing parallels within their own lives (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.3 Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges).

Audience

While any grade level could complete this activity, it is designed for a partnership between primary and secondary students.

Materials Needed

- *The New Kid* by Jerry Craft
- Pencil
- Paper

- Electronic devices (iPad, Chromebook, etc.) that can access video conferencing and word processing applications.

Description of the Teaching and Learning Process

High school students will welcome the second graders to their lesson on empathy. The high schoolers prepared the lesson with the guidance of their high school teacher prior to this meeting.

Lesson: The high schoolers will introduce themselves and then begin the lesson on empathy. They will introduce the idea of being empathetic using video clips from the movie *Wonder*. They will ask the second graders, “Who was more empathetic in this clip?” or “What could _____ (character) have done to be more empathetic?”

After discussing the clips, the students will read Jerry Craft’s *New Kid*. Throughout the reading, the high schoolers will ask the second graders about empathetic opportunities. They have prepared questions ahead of time. Some of their questions will include: *Have you ever felt like Jordan ? Or How could _____ character be more empathetic here?* They will wonder how the characters could have, should have, or did act and how those actions portray empathy.

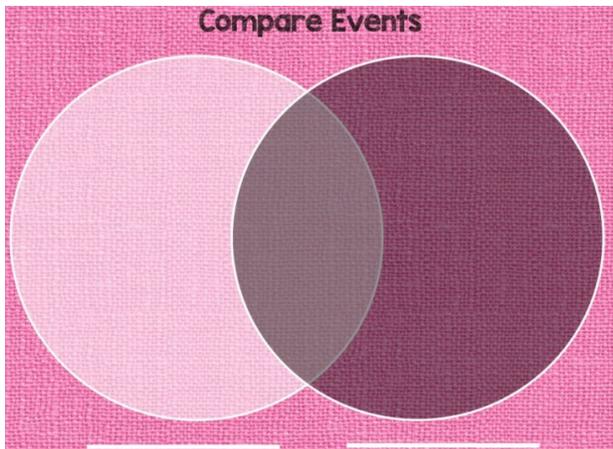
After the reading, the high schoolers will open a reflective discussion about empathy and how the second graders can connect empathy to their own lives. They will ask, *How are you similar to Jordan?, Have you ever felt alone like Jordan?, When?, What do you wish someone did? What should we do when people feel like Jordan?*

To conclude the lesson, the second graders will complete compare and contrast charts. The high schoolers will conclude the lesson by reflecting on their lesson implementation, the value of mentoring younger students, and the value of teaching empathy as they prepare to write a feature story for the High School Journalism course. They will work as a pair in the

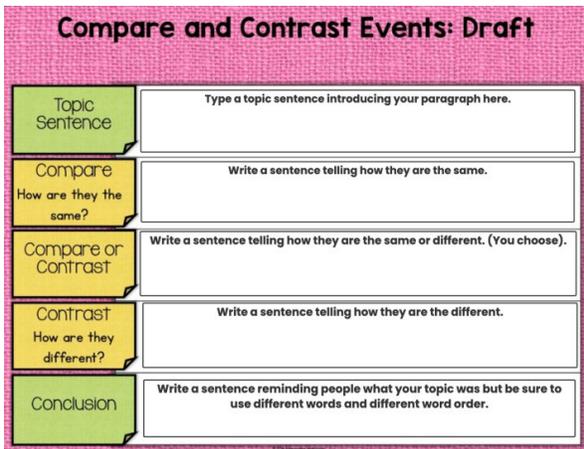
coming days to write this feature story to be published on the Journalism website.

Prior to the lesson, the elementary students should be familiar with creating Venn diagrams and the SEL trait of empathy. They will begin their portion of the project during the initial meeting with their high school mentors. They will discuss the empathetic situations in the presented pages, looking for areas of opportunity to aid the character and relating these situations to their own lives through open discussion.

After the meeting with their high school mentors, students will create a Venn diagram comparing the situation in the book to an event in their own life. They will then write a 5 sentence comparison paragraph using the draft template below.



Compare Events



Compare and Contrast Events: Draft

Topic Sentence	Type a topic sentence introducing your paragraph here.
Compare How are they the same?	Write a sentence telling how they are the same.
Compare or Contrast	Write a sentence telling how they are the same or different. (You choose).
Contrast How are they different?	Write a sentence telling how they are the different.
Conclusion	Write a sentence reminding people what your topic was but be sure to use different words and different word order.

Finally, students will type their final paragraph. Students who finish early or need additional challenges will be asked to include an illustration of their life event, showing through facial expressions and dialogue how their event is similar to the character in the book.

Elementary Student Sample Work

Topic Sentence	Me and Jordan are a little bit the same and a little bit different.
Compare How are they the same?	One thing that is the same is we where both lonley and felt left out.
Compare or Contrast	One big difference is that Jordan was the new kid but I have not been a new kid befor.
Contrast How are they different?	Another way we are different is that Jordan has lots of teachers and I just have one.
Conclusion	As you can see, Jordan and me are a little different but we both need impathy.

Additional Information and Links to Resources Used (Optional):

- [Compare and contrast presentation](#): Reviewed with the high school students prior to the lesson
- [High School student prepared Lesson slideshow](#)

About Me/Us

- Stephanie Drake is a High School English teacher at Silver Creek High School. She teaches 11th grade College Preparatory English and advises the Journalism course and digital paper publication. She is earning her Master's in Curriculum and Instruction with a focus in Humanities at the University of Colorado at Boulder.
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