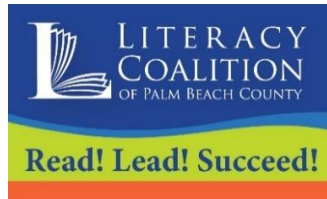


READ and THINK before you ACT.



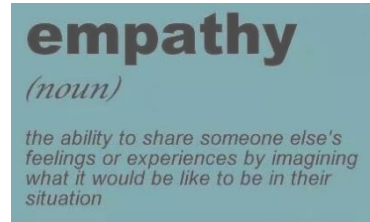
Leading through Reading

Nurture Your Empathy (6-8)

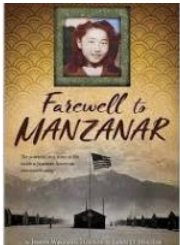
READ

Empathy is a vital life skill. People who are empathetic are better friends, co-workers, and family members. We use empathy skills in our daily lives. It is important to continue to develop those skills by reading, listening, and supporting others.

As you read a novel, you learn about events and characters. As you begin to know and care about the characters, the tales of their lives take on more and more meaning. You start to have empathy for the characters. You share their feelings or experiences and you imagine what it might be like to be in their situation.



For example, with the famous book [Farewell to Manzanar](#) by Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston, you may understand and feel the children's fear when their father is accused of being a spy shortly after the Japanese Navy bombed Pearl Harbor. You may share their confusion when they are rounded up and forced to leave their ordinary, comfortable American life to live in an internment camp which is just like a prison. You may feel the sense of discrimination and sadness as this young family is forced to live without privacy, with cold, illness and a loss of freedom simply because of their Japanese heritage. As you read, you are likely to feel empathy for the young family whose lives were suddenly and drastically changed. You may even become strongly committed to doing your best to make sure such an event can never happen again.



When you understand the thoughts, feelings, and experiences of others, you are a kinder and a more caring person than those who think of only themselves.

Read: [Farewell to Manzanar on Hoopla](#)

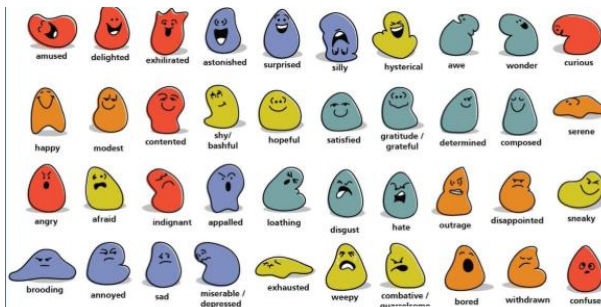
THINK

If you had a choice between being around someone who is kind, considerate, and respectful or someone who shows no care for your thoughts or feelings, who would you choose? Which kind of person do you wish to be?

ACT

As we go through the Coronavirus experience, people are having different thoughts, feeling and experiences. This is a good time to strengthen your empathy skills. Although this may be a difficult time for you, try to think about other people's thoughts, feelings, and experiences. Try to:

- Put yourself in someone else's shoes.
- Realize that you do not have to solve issues, just listen without judgment.
- Recognize and acknowledge emotions.
- Communicate compassion, not sympathy. Feeling sorry for someone is not the best way to be helpful.



References: [Empathy vs. Sympathy](#) and [Active Listening](#)

This at-home educational activity is from the Literacy Coalition of Palm Beach County's literacy-based social emotional learning program.

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Sharing is caring! Send us a picture of you and your Read! Lead! Succeed! projects to nbirardi@literacypbc.org