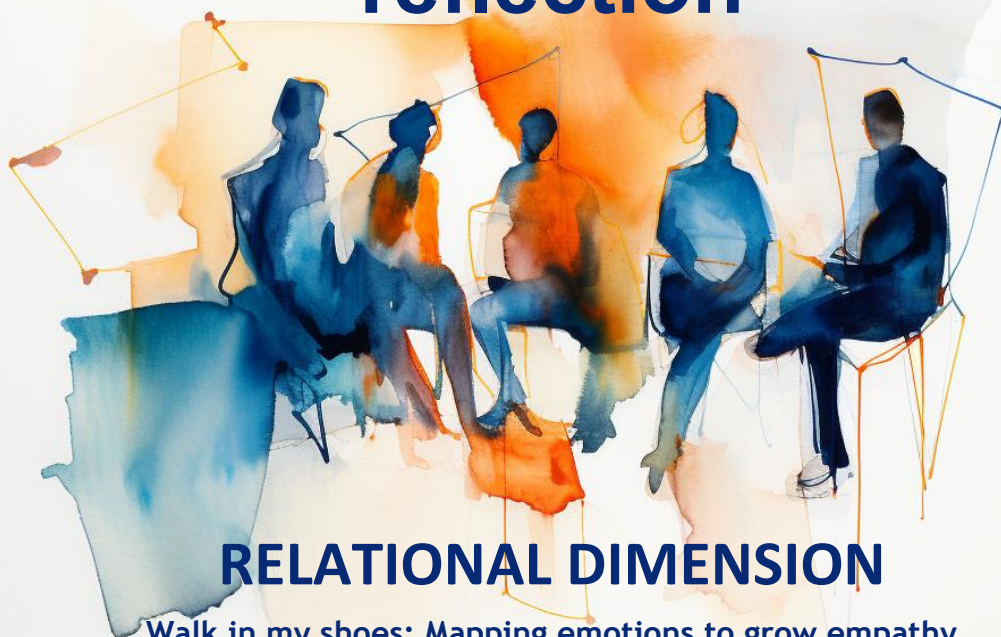# Erasmus+ Project LeaFaP

ACTIVITIES
to set up PLCs and facilitate inquiry & reflection

RELATIONAL DIMENSION

Walk in my shoes: Mapping emotions to grow empathy

LeaFaP

Leading and Facilitating Professional Learning Communities
in Schools towards an Inquiry-based and Reflective Practice
KA220-SCH – Cooperation partnerships in school education

unibz · ARISTOTLE UNIVERSITY OF THESSALONIKI · Desarrollo Educativo y Formación Profesional CEP Marbella - Coín · Desarrollo Educativo y Formación Profesional CEP Málaga · European University Cyprus | SOSCIEATH · UNIVERSIDAD DE MÁLAGA · NTNU Norwegian University of Science and Technology · Pädagogische Hochschule Weingarten University of Education · PH Vorarlberg

Relational Dimension

1.	Focus of the activity	Exploring Empathy Through Emotional Mapping: Building attitude of PLC participants' regarding Empathy
2.	Duration of practice	75 minutes
3.	Prior experience of the PLC	Some participants have been in a PLC before and some participants have no prior experience of a PLC. Participants are at the beginning of the PLC-establishment stage.
4.	Goals of the activity	✓ To encourage understanding of others' perspectives within interactions. ✓ To promote visualization techniques to deepen understanding of others emotional perspectives. ✓ To support the development of reflective awareness on empathy as a skill for professional growth.
5.	Description of the activity	This activity guides participants through analyzing a character's emotional journey in selected video clips. It uses structured prompts, visual mapping, and reflective discussions to develop empathy skills relevant to fostering positive and trusting relationships within Professional Learning Communities (PLCs).

Empathy is the ability to comprehend another person's experiences and emotions without judgment. It's like stepping into someone else's shoes seeing things from their perspective.(Eisenberg & Strayer, 1990; Clark, 2010; Coplan & Goldie, 2011).

Introduction:
The facilitator (F) introduces the concept of empathy (emphasizing empathy as an active, shared understanding of another's perspective)and its relevance to building trusting relationships within PLCs.
F explains that participants will explore empathy by analyzing characters' emotional journeys through video clips, examining the characters' feelings, thoughts, and actions.

Warm-Up: Interpreting Subtle Emotions (5–7 mins)
• Show a photo, short gif, or silent video clip displaying a subtle emotion (e.g., awkwardness, quiet excitement).
• Ask:
o "What emotion might this person be feeling?"
o "What clues do you notice in their face, body, or environment?"
• Facilitate a brief discussion to highlight emotional nuance and cultural variation in emotional expression.

• Phase 1 – Video Observation:
F Selects four video clips from Appendix 1: Suggested Video Clips (Includes list of video clips with descriptions) and provide instructions:

''Watch the clips, focusing on a single character's experience. Pay close attention to verbal and non-verbal cues that reveal one character's emotions''
▫ Participants watch the clips, focusing on a single character's experience.

• Phase 2 – Emotional Mapping:
F dsistribste the Emotional Mapping Prompt Sheet (Appendix 2- Includes a structured prompt sheet for participants to note observations during the reflection phase) to guide individual reflection.
 F provides the instructions:
Please answer individually the following prompts individually to identify one character's perspective on : Emotional Mapping Prompt Sheet –(Appendix 2: Provides structured prompts for noting observations). F Provides a completed example for clarity.
o What is the character feeling? (Observe emotional cues and body language.)

Empathy is essential for PLCs because it promotes trust, inclusivity, and meaningful collaboration. By valuing and understanding each other's perspectives, PLC members can work together more effectively to create an environment that supports professional growth, shared goals, and improved outcomes.

o   What is the character hearing? (Identify sounds or dialogues influencing mood.)

o   What is the character saying? (Record notable phrases or expressions.)

o   What is the character doing? (Describe actions that reflect emotions.

Each participant answers these questions individually, identifying verbal and non-verbal cues that convey the character's perspective and experience.

•   Phase 3 – Visual Mapping:.

F explains how to visually represent the character's emotional journey using templates from Appendix 2- (Provides detailed templates for creating visual maps), allowing flexibility in design based on participants' preferences.

Instructions:

o   Use one of the following formats to map the emotional journey:

▫   Mind Map: Center the main emotion and branch out to related actions, words, and influences.

▫   Flow Chart: Show the progression of the character's emotions over time.

▫   Diagram with Symbols: Use shapes or symbols (e.g., hearts for emotions, arrows for actions) to depict the journey.

Participants transfer their insights into a visual format (e.g., map, diagram, or flowchart) to create a "map" of the character's emotional journey, including key thoughts, feelings, and actions that convey empathy

•   F Provide samples of visuals representation and underlines that the participants could use digital or hand-drawn formats.

•   Phase 4 – Dyad Discussion:

F pairs participants for a dyad discussion to exchange visual maps and insights using Appendix 4: Pair Discussion Questions (Includes prompts to guide meaningful exchanges).

Instructions:

o   Share your visual map with your partner and discuss:

▫   What similarities or differences did you notice in your observations compared to your partner's?

▫   How did the character's emotions influence their actions?

▫   Did you feel empathy towards the character? Why?

▫   What new insights did your partner's observations provide about the character's experience?

Each participant also reads one reflection from their partner, noting any new insight gained from their partner's interpretation.

•   Phase 5 – Whole Group Discussion :

F prompts participants to share key takeaways from both their individual and paired reflections, highlighting the value of empathy .

Leading reflection questions,:

•   What new insight did your partner give you?

•   What surprised you in this process?

•   How does this help you understand empathy in your role as a teacher or professional?

•   What new insights did you gain about empathy through this activity?

•   What can we carry forward from this exercise in understanding and applying empathy in our daily interactions?

•   What practical steps can you take to apply empathy skills in your daily interactions?

•   How can empathy mapping become a tool for professional and personal growth?

•   How can these insights inform your interactions within PLCs?

		Closure: F Ask each participant to share one way they can apply empathy mapping in their future practice and summarizes reflections from the group, emphasizing what the group has developed from the activity and the relational importance of empathy in collaborative work, highlight the importance of applying these skills to foster understanding and collaboration.
6.	PLC dimensions addressed	Relational dimension :Promote empathy, respect, and trust-building among PLC members
7.	Learning outcomes for the participants	Knowledge: o Trust- and empathy-building strategies and their importance in group settings. • Skills: o Demonstrate interpersonal skills, including empathy and respect, through verbal and non-verbal cues. o Respond to emotional cues communicated by group members appropriately. o Conduct activities that foster respect and openness among the PLC members. o Create and maintain a safe space within the community. • Attitudes: o Commitment to fostering positive and trusting relationships.
8.	Activity format	Individual, pair and group activities.
9.	Materials & tools	Tool 1:Reflection questions for emotional mapping Tool 2: Appendices forms Tool 3:Chart paper, markers, or digital tools for visual mapping
10.	Room & preparation	Arrange the room in a U-shape to support both dyad and group discussions. Prepare materials for mapping and ensure the video clip is accessible.
11.	Dimensions of inclusion	F ensures all interpretations are respected, with participants encouraged to listen empathetically and appreciate diverse perspectives. The activity fosters a fully inclusive environment where participants feel respected, valued, and empowered to contribute, regardless of their empathic abilities, confidence levels, or communication styles. 1.Equitable Participation: F ensures all voices are heard by monitoring discussions and inviting quieter participants:"Let's hear from someone who hasn't spoken yet; every perspective adds to our understanding." 2.Adapting to Diverse Empathic Levels: F provides guidance to help participants engage meaningfully during activity phases: o For beginners: "Focus on gestures, tone, or expressions—small details often reveal emotions." o For advanced participants: "How might these emotions connect to unspoken motivations?" 3.Respecting Communication Styles: Tools like visual templates and mapping sheets allow participants to express insights in diverse ways. F validates contributions by saying: "Let's honor all the ways we make sense of the character's journey—words, visuals, or symbols." 4.Safe, Reflective Space: F models open-ended, non-judgmental language and addresses interruptions neutrally: "That's an interesting perspective; let's hear how you arrived at that observation." "Let's allow [participant's name] to finish before responding." 5.Valuing Diversity: F summarizes inclusively to highlight varied perspectives: "Some of us noticed body language, others tone or actions—this shows how empathy is multi-layered."

12.	Promotion of democratic values and practices	The activity actively promotes democratic values such as equity, open dialogue, collaboration, and shared decision-making, fostering a respectful and participatory environment.
		1.Equity and Participation:
		F balances contributions by inviting quieter voices:
		"Let's pause and hear reflections from those who haven't spoken yet—every perspective matters."
		2.Open Dialogue and Respectful Exchange:
		F encourages exploration over debate and addresses disagreements constructively:
		"We're not judging who's right or wrong; let's explore both viewpoints to enrich our understanding."
		3.Collective Reflection:
		F facilitates shared meaning-making by summarizing inclusively:
		"By sharing our observations, we've seen how empathy can be understood in multiple ways."
		4.Transparency and Continuous Improvement:
		Constructive feedback is exchanged without criticism:
		"What new insights did your partner's reflection give you?"
		F highlights shared accountability:
		"By hearing all perspectives, we've built a collective understanding—let's reflect on how we apply this daily."
		5.Peaceful Conflict Resolution:
		F models neutral language to encourage learning from differences:
		"It's okay to see things differently; what can we learn by exploring both perspectives together?"
13.	Appropriation for digital PLCs	Video clips and visual maps can be shared digitally; breakout rooms facilitate dyad discussions, and tools like Padlet or digital mind maps enable collaborative mapping.
14.	References & suggested sources	Barrett, L. F., & Russell, J. A. (2015). Understanding Empathy and Its Role in Education. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1373293.pdf Costantini, G. (2019). Empathy in education: the successful teacher. In Empathy: Emotional, ethical and epistemological narratives (pp. 73-81). Brill https://brill.com/display/book/edcoll/9789004398122/BP000006.xml Jalongo, M. R. (2014). Humane education and the development of empathy in early childhood: Definitions, rationale, and outcomes. Teaching compassion: Humane education in early childhood, 3-21. https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-94-007-6922-9_1 McGowan, K., Christenson, L. A., & Muccio, L. (2021). Collaborative professional learning: An exploration of empathy in early childhood teacher education. Journal of Research in Childhood Education, 35(1), 111-121. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02568543.2020.1801537
15.	Appendix following	See Tools used in the activity below

Appendix 1. Video Clips list – For Facilitators Use

This categorized format supports thoughtful clip selection based on emotional accessibility, depth, and cultural/contextual complexity.

Emotion Type	Clip & Scene	Emotional Focus
Universal / Easily Relatable Emotions	Spider-Man (2002) – Peter discovers Uncle Ben has died	Guilt, grief, and responsibility
	Jurassic Park (1993) – T-Rex attack scene	Fear, panic, and survival instincts
	Frozen (Disney) – Elsa sings *"Let It Go"*	Fear of judgment, emotional release, self-acceptance
	Wonder Woman (2017) – Diana crosses No Man's Land	Courage, compassion, and moral responsibility
Transformational / Empowering Moments	Batman Begins (2005) Bruce Wayne confronts his fear in the cave	Vulnerability, fear, personal growth
	Game of Thrones (S1E10) Daenerys walks into the fire with the dragon eggs	Grief, rebirth, transformation into leadership
	X-Men (2000) – Rogue and Logan discuss her mutation	Isolation, longing for connection, fear of self
Subtle / Culturally Dependent Emotions	Friends (S5E14) – Phoebe tries to seduce Chandler (*"The One Where Everybody Finds Out"*)	Humor, awkwardness, discomfort, miscommunicatio
	Tangled (Disney) – Rapunzel sees the floating lanterns for the first time	Wonder, joy, inner conflict, emotional tension
	Joker (2019) – Arthur's breakdown in the subway	Alienation, internal chaos, emotional repression, societal pressure
Non-Verbal / No Dialogue Clips (for Warm-Ups or Emotional Nuance Practice)	Pixar Short: *Piper* (2016)	Bravery, curiosity, growth, parent-child dynamic
	Pixar Short: *La Luna* (2011)	Generational roles, wonder, identity
	Pixar Short: *The Present* (2014) by Jacob Frey	Surprise, acceptance, empathy, transformation
	Inside Out (Disney) – Silent memory scene (e.g., Sadness comforting Bing Bong)	Nostalgia, compassion, emotional support

Appendix 2: Emotional Mapping Prompt Sheet

Instructions:

1. After watching the video clip, take a moment to reflect on the character's experience.
2. Use the prompts below to guide your reflection and document your observations.

Prompt	Participant's Notes
What is the character feeling?	Observe and note emotional cues, body language, etc.
What is the character hearing?	Identify words or sounds affecting the character's mood.
What is the character saying?	Record phrases or expressions the character uses.
What is the character doing?	Describe actions that reflect the character's emotions.

Appendix 3: **Visual Mapping Template**

1. Choose one of the following templates that best suits your analysis style.
2. Transfer the insights from your *Emotional Mapping Prompt Sheet* into the visual format.

➢ **Mind Map:** Place the main emotion (e.g., sadness, joy, fear) in the center and use branches to connect related thoughts, actions, words and enviromental influences.

➢ **Flow Chart:** Show the progression of the character's emotions, detailing key moments that affect their experience. Use arrows to show transitions between feelings and key moments.

➢ **Diagram with Symbols:** Use shapes or symbols (e.g., hearts for emotions, arrows for actions) to illustrate the emotional journey.

Appendix 4: Reflection Questions for Dyad and Group Discussion

1. **Pair up with another participant and exchange your visual maps.**
2. **Use the questions below to guide your discussion.**

➢ **What similarities or differences did you notice in your observations compared to your partner's?**

➢ **How did the character's emotions influence their actions?**

➢ **Did you feel empathy toward the character? Why?**

➢ **What new insights did your partner's observations provide about the character's experience?**

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Co-funded by the European Union

Erasmus+
Enriching lives, opening minds.