Hello!

This year, all the schools in the Pentrehafo Cluster have been working with EmpathyLab on a fantastic project to develop pupils’ empathy skills through stories.

Empathy is one of the most important life skills your child can develop, and helps keep communities together too. As we are all away from school at the moment, we’ve put together some resources in case you might be able to continue this important work at home.

What is empathy? How does it work?

Empathy is our ability to imagine and share other people’s feelings. Vital for helping children become great citizens, workmates, parents. We’ve been sharing this lovely Sesame Street video with pupils – you might like to watch it: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_1Rt1R4xbM.

Reading is an empathy workout!
Empathy is a learnable skill and we can train our brains with stories. The more your child empathises with book characters’ feelings, the more they’ll understand how other people work.

If you can...

If you’re able, we’d love you to follow up the school’s EmpathyLab work in these ways:
- If your child has brought a book home, or can get some for the library, read, share and talk about it. Here is a link to some fabulous Read for Empathy books: https://www.empathylab.uk/2020-read-for-empathy-collections
- Ask them about the empathy work they’ve been doing – they’ve been learning about it in assemblies and lessons
- Encourage them to dig deeper into empathy-boosting books by drawing the characters, writing a book review through an empathy lens, writing a postcard from one character to another
- Get them to rank books for their empathy power! Has a book really helped them see things through someone else’s eyes?

www.empathylab.uk  @empathylabuk  @empathylabuk
Book Talking

One of the best ways that we can develop our empathy skills is by sharing stories with one another and then talking about what we have read. Here is a list of key questions for both primary and secondary pupils that you could ask after sharing a book.

QUESTIONS FOR PRIMARY AGE PUPILS (Year R-6)

- Could you tell me about the story and people in it?
- Which character stuck in your mind most?
- Who in your book had a strong feeling?...what was it...?
- I wonder how x (e.g. The Gruffalo) felt – did you find any clues about their feelings?
- Which characters needed empathy, and which showed it?
- Tell me, was there a character you felt sorry for, proud of, worried about...?
- I’d love to hear what questions you might ask the character?
- Had any of the characters changed by the end of the story?
- Would you nominate any of the characters for an Empathy Award?

QUESTIONS FOR SECONDARY AGE PUPILS (Year R-6)

- I wonder how it would feel to stand in the character’s shoes?
- If you only had three words, which would you use to describe the character?
- Were there any characters you empathised with...or didn’t empathise with?
- I noticed that when you talked about (name of character) you looked __ __ (e.g. a bit puzzled/amused/sad)?
- I’d be interested to hear what you thought of the character at the very start?...and by the end...?
- Were you surprised by anything the character did?
- I’m wondering how the different characters felt about the same situation?
- Was there a character in the book who solved a problem?
- Would you recommend this book to another child...why?
Empathy Day – 9th June 2020

Empathy Day is definitely happening on 9 June, and we’ll be developing lots of activities for you to do at home, even if the Covid19 complications continue.

People share recommended reads, take part in all sorts of creative activities and share these online with the rest of the world using the hashtags –

#readforempathy &
#empathycymru

You can find out more at www.empathylab.uk