



# OUR BEST SELVES

Lessons on Social-Emotional Learning With ELA

## STRATEGIZING AND ACTING WITH EMPATHY

**GOAL:** Students will demonstrate their understanding of empathy and of emotional management strategies.

**TIME:** One to two 40-minute class periods

**MATERIALS:** Skit Activity Sheet

### LESSON STEPS:

1. Remind students that they have learned different strategies for understanding themselves and others. Brainstorm these strategies as a class to review.
2. Explain that students will use the strategies they have learned to work in teams to write a skit about empathy and perform it for the class.
3. Divide students into groups of four and distribute the **Skit Activity Sheet**. Explain that students should complete the “Planning Your Skit” questions before writing their scripts.
4. Invite each group to brainstorm possible topics for their skits. Check in with each group to ensure they have a solid idea before they write their scripts.
  - If your students need more support, provide each group with a scenario, such as the following:
    - a classmate is sitting alone in the cafeteria and looks lonely
    - a friend found out that his or her pet is sick
    - a teammate is upset after losing a sports game
5. Before students present, have them check in about how they are feeling about presenting in front of the class. Acknowledge that we all get nervous when presenting (even adults). This is an opportunity to practice strategies we learned about. We are all here to support each other in a safe space where we can have fun and be ourselves! Review the “Presenting Your Skit” tips section on the **Skit Activity Sheet**.
6. Invite each group to present their skit to the class.
7. After the presentations are complete, have students complete the “Reflecting on Your Skit” question on the **Skit Activity Sheet**. Then, lead a discussion with the class about the process.
  - How did students feel while planning their skits? While presenting?
  - What went well when students were working in teams? What could be improved?
  - How did students support themselves or their teammates during frustrating moments?



Photo: © Sean Locke/Stocksy.

STUDENTS WITH SEL  
SKILLS GET BETTER  
**GRADES**  
AND MAKE HEALTHIER  
**DECISIONS.\***

\*Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence, [ruleryale.edu](http://ruleryale.edu)

MY NAME

MY MOOD TODAY (CIRCLE)



SKIT  
ACTIVITY  
SHEET

# STRATEGIZING AND ACTING

## Planning Your Skit



Goal (what will the audience learn?):	
Who are the characters?	What is the situation or problem?
How is the problem resolved?	What role will each team member perform?

## Presenting Your Skit

It's time to perform! Keep these tips in mind:

- Take deep breaths or use mindful breathing to calm yourself before presenting.
- Remember to speak loudly and clearly so your classmates can understand you.
- Support your group members while your team is presenting.
- Have fun!

## Reflecting on Your Skit

What character showed empathy in your skit? How?

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How did you feel when you were planning your skit with your group? Why?

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How did you feel when you were performing with your group? Why?

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How did you and your group members manage frustrating moments?

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