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Skype in the Classroom Activity Plan

Lesson Ideas to
Support Social Emotional Needs and Skills
Through Skype Activities

Webpage: http://www.skypeintheclassroom.com & aka.ms/SITCempathy

Subject: This lesson may be adapted to fit all content areas and grade levels. Ideas shared here may be used as a stand-alone activity or embedded with other Skype in the Classroom Activity Plans.

Skills: Communication, Collaboration, Critical Thinking, Writing, Reflection, Empathy, Compassion, & other Social Emotional skills

Learning Objectives

Students will
- Consider and reflect about their own social emotional needs and those of others.
- Learn about and use active listening skills.
- Gain experience considering situations from the perspective of others.
- Be able to ask questions of themselves and others and reflect about the responses.
- Practice self-reflection both before and after a Skype in the Classroom experience.
- Use brainstorming as both a questioning strategy and pre-writing strategy.
- Use speaking and listening skills.
- Use creativity and communication skills to share their ideas, thoughts, and feelings.
- What do you know now that you didn't know before our call?

Materials

Devices for students use

Teacher's guide

Skype in the Classroom activities embed and promote social emotional skills throughout every interaction. These activities provide authentic opportunities for students to experience, practice, and strengthen skills such as empathy, compassion, reflection, social awareness, and many others. This activity plan provides ideas that can be used as a stand-alone lesson/focus during as skype connection or integrated throughout other areas of focus/Activity Plans.

Resources for you

Emotion and Cognition in the Age of AI: New research from Microsoft Education and The Economist Intelligence Unit

Before the Skype Call
Ideas to Consider
STEP 1: Activate Background Knowledge

> **You might say:** *During our next skype call, we are going to especially focus on seeing the world through the perspective of the students/guest speaker with whom we will be connecting. Think about how they may be feeling and what may have shaped their thoughts and ideas.*

If connecting with another class, use Flipgrid to exchange responses with the class prior to the skype connection. Some possible Flipgrid topics to consider:

- Share what makes you happy/sad/frustrated/tired/excited, etc.
- Share about an experience that impacted you in a positive way.
- Tell about some things you do when you feel happy/sad/frustrated/tired/excited, etc.
- Share about how others can tell how you are feeling.
- Share what color/animal represents your personality and why you selected that color/animal.
- Share something about yourself that makes you feel proud.
- Share and explain a piece of artwork you created that represents something about you.

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Allow students time to view and respond to one another's video responses.

As an alternative to responding to the above prompts using Flipgrid, give students time to journal about their responses to the prompts. Then if time allows, have students share their responses in a small group setting.

> **You might say:** *Let's consider how the class/guest speaker we are connecting with may be feeling. Share your thoughts and ideas with your partner/group.*

Call on students to share their responses with the class. Prompt students to brainstorm why the other class/guest speaker may have those feelings.

> **You might say:** *I really appreciate how you are looking at things from a perspective different than your own. Raise your hand if you can share about a time when you felt this way/one of the ways shared by classmates.*

Call on students to share responses.

Instruct students to use dictionaries or an internet search to find the definition of *empathy*. Call on students to summarize what they found using their own words. You could also have students respond to a Flipgrid topic where they explain empathy in their own words, and how they think empathy affects people, experiences, and relationships.

> **You might say:** *Empathy is a social emotional skill. Let's do some research to find examples of other social emotional skills.*

Allow students time to research and share their findings. Have students add to a collaborative list using a OneNote Class Notebook or another resource/format of your choice.

> **You might say:** *Let's take a look at the list of social emotional skills we generated. Which of these do you think we can use, practice, or strengthen during a skype call experience?*

Allow students to share with a partner or small group, and then share/record responses as a whole group.

Step 2: Brainstorm questions

> **You might say:** *Let's brainstorm how we would like the class we are connecting with to feel both during and after our connection.*

Allow students to respond.

> **You might say:** *What are some ways we can help promote these types of feelings?*

Give students time to brainstorm with a partner or small group, then share their ideas with the class.

As a whole group, refer back to the list of social emotional skills generated by the class. Discuss ways to incorporate these skills as part of the skype call.

> **You might say:** *How can we use active listening to show _____? What would that look/sound like? Let's brainstorm some questions we can ask during the skype call to see how the other class/guest speaker uses skills such as grit, growth mindset, compassion, and empathy.*

STEP 3: Prepare for your Skype call!

Preparation for the call is important. In addition to preparing your students, it is a good idea to communicate in advance with your Skype connection. Share your goals for the call and if there are specific topics or learning standards you would like them to address with students.

The following are helpful resources as you prepare for the Skype call activity:

Top 10 tips for exemplary Skype call etiquette

Students' roles during the call

Room set up guide

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During the live activity

Step 1: Prepare your class

Communicate your expectations for student behavior. Remind students they are representing your class, school, state, and possibly country. Call on students to share ideas about how they should/should not act during the call.

- Model and have students practice active listening.

- Assign 1-2 students the role of using the emoticons available during a skype call. They should use the emoticons such as the "thumbs-up" when they agree or appreciate something being shared, the "heart" when they have positive feelings or reactions to something during the call, or the "laughing" emoticons during times of shared laughter.

- Allow students to practice these responses/feedback ahead of the skype connection as well as discuss appropriate times to use them.

Step 2: Connect

Ensure you are logged in to your Skype account and ready to connect at the scheduled time. Direct students to smile and wave hello at the beginning of the connection. Throughout the skype call, intentionally make note of interactions or topics from the connection to refer back to after the call with students for further discussion. If/when appropriate, you might also mute your microphone and ask students questions such as, "What do you notice about..."

Step 3: Facilitate

- Throughout the call, be prepared to help direct the flow of the Skype session and assist any students who are nervous or need reminders about their role. Be aware of any students who need reminders about active listening. Be mindful of the length of the call and be ready to help with the closure of the call. Consider taking pictures during the call to share with your students' families and social media using #Skype2Learn and also use them as a way to reflect about the interaction.

- Take pictures during the skype call you can refer back to later with students as you reflect about the interaction.

- Observe your own students' reactions and interactions during the Skype call, and use your observations to frame reflection questions after the call.

After the Skype call

Reflection & Assessment

- Have students use Flipgrid to respond and reflect about their takeaways after the Skype call. Use topics such as:
- Share about the feelings you have/had about the skype connection and why.
    - Tell how you used and strengthened social emotional skills during the skype call experience. Which social emotional skills did you use/strengthen?
    - What did you notice that you have in common with the students in the connecting class/guest speaker?
    - What do you now understand better about the connecting class/guest speaker/yourself as a result of the skype connection?
- Have students use Paint 3D, paper/markers, or modeling clay to create a picture or sculpture that represents their feelings after participating in the skype connection. Then allow them to share with the class, small group, or with the connecting class/guest speaker using a shared Flipgrid.
- Give students time to write/journal about their feelings about the skype call or specifically focus on the social emotional skills they used/developed as part of the experience.
- Allow students time to create poetry that relates to their feelings about the skype call experience.

You might also consider sharing all of these ideas with students and allow them the choice of how to reflect about their experience as a participant and learner.

Next Steps

- Share your students' reflections and takeaways by sharing on social media using @SkypeClassroom and #Skype2Learn.
- Keep connecting your students to the world with Skype in the Classroom activities! Continue embedding these skills to make learning relevant and fun for students.
- Survey students to gather input for future Skype in the Classroom connections to plan & schedule.

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