

Empathy Maps for Global Citizenship

Category of Competencies: Ethics and Diversity skills

Description:

This activity encourages participants to explore a global issue from the perspective of people in different countries. By creating an empathy map, participants consider the perspectives, emotions, and challenges faced by those directly impacted by issues such as climate change or access to education.

Activity Categories:

Individual or Group, Interactive

Main Competencies Involved:

Cultural Awareness, Global Citizenship, Work with Diversity

Other Competencies (Different Category):

Conceptual Thinking, Critical Thinking, Empathy

Resources Needed and Practical Considerations:

Empathy map templates (various online) or blank sheets of paper for drawing the map, markers, pens, and coloured pencils for visual representation

Optional: Access to online articles or videos for research on selected global issues

Estimated Time:

60 minutes

Description of Activity:

Step 1: Introduce the concept of global citizenship, explaining the importance of understanding global issues from diverse cultural perspectives. Explain that participants will choose a global issue and create an “empathy map” that represents the experiences, challenges, and emotions of people affected by this issue.

Step 2: Present several global issues for participants to choose from, such as:

- Climate change impacts in vulnerable regions
- Access to education in underserved communities
- Clean water scarcity in developing countries
- Health disparities related to poverty
- Refugee and migration challenges



Step 3: Ask each participant (or group, if done as a group activity) to select one issue and a region or country where this issue is particularly relevant. Encourage participants to spend a few minutes researching basic information on the challenges faced by people in that location.

Step 4: Provide each participant with an empathy map template, divided into sections for “Seeing,” “Hearing,” “Thinking/Feeling,” and “Saying/Doing.” Instruct them to complete the map based on the perspective of someone affected by the issue in the chosen region.

Seeing: What do they see around them?

Hearing: What messages or opinions do they hear from others?

Thinking/Feeling: What emotions or concerns might they have?

Saying/Doing: How might they express or respond to their situation?

Step 5: After completing their maps, invite participants to present their empathy maps to the group, sharing insights into how the chosen issue impacts people’s daily lives in the region. Encourage participants to reflect on how this activity influenced their understanding of the global issue and their sense of empathy for people from different backgrounds.

Processing Questions:

What did you learn about the experiences and challenges of people in other parts of the world?

Did anything surprise you about how people in different countries are impacted by this issue?

How did imagining these perspectives change your view of the issue?

How can developing empathy and cultural awareness impact your own actions and responsibilities as a global citizen?

What actions could you take to help address or raise awareness about this issue?

