

What Is My Child Learning?

Unit Themes

Your child is learning how to use empathy to help make their school community a better place. For example, they might make a plan to keep the school grounds clean or to help younger students safely use playground equipment. Fifth graders practice using empathy—feeling or understanding what someone else is feeling—as a way to identify potential problems and propose solutions that could work for everyone.

Why is it important?

Research shows that children who learn the skills in this unit are more likely to:

- **Build stronger relationships**
- **Resolve conflicts more effectively**
- **Exhibit positive behaviors**
- **Be more connected and compassionate**
- **Develop increased empathy**



Practice at Home

What to Look For

Notice and praise your child when they describe a problem from someone else’s point of view. For example, your fifth grader might say, “There’s a new student in our class. I noticed she didn’t have anyone to play with at recess. I kind of felt bad for her.” You can say, **I can tell you’re really thinking about her point of view. It’s nice to hear that you’re trying to understand how she feels.**

Try This!

Discuss: Ask your child, **If you could change anything about your school, what would it be and why?** Take turns talking about how different groups of people—such as teachers, younger students, older students, and parents—might be affected by the change.

Practice: When you’re in a place such as a grocery store, community center, or park, ask your child to notice the different groups of people using the space. For example, you may see older people and young children, workers as well as first-time visitors. Help your child think about what those groups might be experiencing. For example, **We’re seeing some older people in the store. Can they easily do what they need to do? Are they safe? Can they enjoy themselves?**