

Quick Consolidation: Show Empathy

Something shifts when another *gets* you. We feel special, more important, and more connected when another gives us a moment of empathy. Remember, empathy does not mean letting a student off the hook for a bad behavior. It means you care about the student. It means you want to help him or her get better so that he or she knows better options for next time. It is about you being an ally for how your students feel as much as how they behave. When you can consistently demonstrate empathy toward your students, you've just added another good reason for them to come to school, especially to your class. Answer the following reflection questions as you consider your next steps on the journey to connecting with your students using empathy.

1. What did you learn about the importance of empathy that you didn't know when you started this chapter? What differentiates empathy from sympathy?
2. What will you do or say the next time a student comes to you with a difficult problem to show that your first concern is for his or her safety?
3. Which of this chapter's quick-connect tools will you use to build empathy with your students? How could you adapt the tool to work even better for your teaching style and classroom culture?
4. How could you change your beginning-of-class and end-of-class routines to make time to get to know your students better?
5. What can you do to get to know your students better outside the classroom?