



EMPATHIC MATHEMATICS TEACHING AND LEARNING EMPATHY JOURNAL

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SENSE OF BELONGING GRAPHIC ORGANIZER

Part 1

WHAT DO YOU NOTICE?	WHAT DO YOU WONDER?
KEY REFLECTIONS	

Part 2

ARE THERE LANGUAGE BARRIERS HERE TOO? WHAT ARE THEY?	
KEY REFLECTIONS	

BOOK CLUB PROMPTS

This book discussion guide was developed by members of the North Carolina Collaborative for Mathematical Learning (nc2ml.org) and was modeled after the [PACEs Connections](#) Reading Guide which was developed after the [Neurosequential Network](#)'s study guide. Both organizations contain multiple resources to support building resilient communities and individuals that have experienced traumas and other adverse events. Our work connects with NC DPI's [Portrait of a Graduate](#) which suggests that students learn to develop empathy for one another. In order to support students to be empathic, this book club focuses on developing *mathematics leaders' and teachers'* empathy for students so that they can both engage empathically with their students as well as model empathy for them.

The [nc2ml](http://nc2ml.org) created this reading guide and complementary book discussion experience as Part One of a year-long Empathy Professional Development Series for mathematics education leaders at all levels of the education system. Our goal in this book discussion is to understand the neuroscientific explanation of trauma so that educational leaders can learn how to (and support teachers to) have empathic interactions with students. We know that when students feel a sense of belonging in mathematics classrooms and develop positive relationships with teachers, leaders and peers, their learning increases. Thus, understanding how the brain reacts to stressful and/or adverse events can help educational leaders empathize with students who may behave in ways that contradict their traditional expectations.

CONTENT WARNING:

While reading and discussing parts of this book, there may be times when you have strong emotional reactions to either personal stories shared in the book or by peers during a discussion. There are multiple resources listed throughout this guide if additional support is needed.

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[Instagram.com/henryseneyee_draws/](https://www.instagram.com/henryseneyee_draws/)

Setting the Ground Rules before a Discussion

Since some of the topics we will discuss contain sensitive topics, it is important to set some ground rules about how we will talk.

- **Center the Voices of Minoritized People:** While multiple perspectives are necessary for growth, it is important to center voices of people of color and people that represent other oppressed populations (e.g., impoverished, LGBTQ2S+, multilingual learners/immigrants, students with disabilities, etc.)
- **Do Not Impose a Teaching Tax:** Do not expect people from minoritized populations to teach the group; they are not required to do so, and should participate in ways that are affirming to them.
- **Speak Your Truth:** Share from your own experiences and do not speak for others.
- **Seek to Understand:** Listen to learn, not to find the flaw in someone's perspective; think about your reason for responding before doing so.
- **Respect Others' Experience:** We may have different OR similar stories to share and contexts to draw from. All are legitimate.
- **Disagree Without Discord:** Disagreement is expected. HOWEVER,
 - Approach unexpected ideas with curiosity, not accusation.
 - If you disagree, ask questions to understand. Don't attack the speaker.
- **Share the Air:** Make room for all voices to be heard, and don't dominate the conversation.
- **Confidentiality:** Do not share the experiences you hear in this space outside this space without the participants' permission.
- **Be Comfortable with Discomfort:** We are all learning and will make mistakes. Take risks and do not freeze someone in time if they make a mistake. Assume that each participant is engaging to learn.
- **New Ground Rules:** Ask participants if there are any other ground rules they would like to add.

Chapter 1, Question 1

In Chapter 1, Making Sense of the World, Dr. Perry shares his simplified image of the brain (Figure 1, p. 27), referring to the bottom of the triangle as the lizard or reptilian section due its mostly primal processing ability. External stimuli enter into the lower part of our brain first, and the processing of that information makes its way slowly to the top, most sophisticated region. *This sequential processing means that the most primitive, reactive part of our brain is the first part to interpret an act on the information coming in from our senses. Bottom line: Our brain is organized to act and feel before we think.* (p. 29).

Have you encountered a math student who had a sudden, unexpected outburst or other reaction that did not make sense to you in the moment? How does Dr. Perry's description of the brain's information processing help us understand the responses and actions of that student?

Chapter 1, Question 2

In the introduction, Dr. Perry says, *The title "What Happened to You?" signifies a shift in perspective that honors the power of the past to shape our current functioning. Oprah and I are convinced that asking the fundamental question "What happened to you?" can help each of us know a little more about how experiences – both good or bad – shape us.* Or as Joe Foderaro put it, we should change the fundamental question from "What is wrong with you?" to "What happened to you?" in order to better understand our students.

How does changing the question make you rethink your interactions with math students who are labeled as problematic or that you, yourself have labeled as problematic?

Additional Resources:

[Zero to Three](#)

[Centering on the Developing Child](#) (Harvard University)

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Chapter 2, Question 1

Reread Oprah's reflection on her own heart rhythms on pages 45-47. Dr. Perry follows:

Rhythm is essential to a healthy body and a healthy mind. Every person in the world can probably think of something rhythmic that makes them feel better: walking, swimming, music, dance, the sound of waves breaking on a beach...

What are some ways you notice your math students attempting to self-regulate through rhythm (e.g., tapping a pencil on the desktop rhythmically or shaking their foot)?

Chapter 2, Question 2

What is meant by Oprah's statement: Regulation, Relationship, Reward? This concept gets more attention in later chapters, but how does it make sense to you right now and what change does it inspire in you as a mathematics educator?

Chapter 2, Question 3

Dr. Perry and Oprah refer to regulating the stress-response-system (SRS). This idea returns throughout the rest of the book. What is your current understanding of the SRS, especially as it relates to the Tree of Regulation (Figure 2, p. 52), patterns of stress (Figure 3, p. 57) and Filling our Reward Buckets (Figures 4 & 5, pp. 62-63)?

Additional Resources:

[The Resiliency Collaborative](#)
[Stress Health](#)

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Chapter 3, Question 1

You likely had heard of the fight or flight responses, but Dr. Perry adds two new responses, Flock and Freeze. When an external threat is posed, our brain signals the body to prepare for a response, potentially increasing our heart rate, adrenaline and stress hormones. The Flock, Freeze, Flight, Fight stress responses are described through the experience of a deer in the woods (pp. 85-86). Dr. Perry also reveals that some people respond to threats with **arousal** responses such as fight or flight and others dissociate to help **rest**, survey injury or tolerate pain.

What is your primary stress response(s)? How might your knowledge of stress arousal/dissociation responses inform your interpretation of student behavior in your math class? How might your knowledge inform your own response to stress?

Chapter 3, Question 2

Re-read Oprah's story about the *Cereal Moment* on pages 81-82. This story suggests that long periods of time and attention may be **less impactful** than short, purposeful periods of full connectedness with a student. Brief *Cereal Moments* are those where the adult is fully present, engaged, and listening to the student.

Have you had a *Cereal Moment* with someone? Who was it and how did it feel when the other person was fully present with you or how did they react when you were fully present with them? With hundreds of interactions per day, how do you stay fully present with your mathematics students?

Chapter 3, Question 3

Dr. Perry and Oprah Winfrey discuss the need for professionals who work with youth to learn trauma-informed strategies. For mathematics teachers, that means we must understand the mental state a student is in and what adaptations they have made to regulate themselves when experiencing stress in school. Understanding this is critical for educators because *the hypervigilance of the Alert state* [Figure 5, p. 79] *is mistaken for ADHD; the resistance and defiance of Alarm and Fear get labeled as oppositional defiant disorder; light behavior gets them suspended from school; fight behavior gets them charged with assault* (p. 92).

How can shifting our question from "What's wrong with you?" to "What happened to you?" help to decrease rates of school suspensions, expulsions and the school-to-prison pipeline?

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Chapter 4, Question 1

One of the difficulties facing the field, especially with the word “trauma” being used in multiple, inconsistent ways in public discourse, is that trauma has not been adequately defined. Re-read the school fire story on pages 101-102 and re-explain trauma from the three E’s definition in the chapter: The Event, the Experience, the Effects. How does this definition of trauma help you rethink events that take place in your mathematics classroom? Can you think of examples of events that might be experienced traumatically by students (e.g., taking timed tests)?

Chapter 4, Question 2

Does your school use the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) questionnaire to put a number on a child? What are the main critiques of the ACE studies? In what ways can this be harmful or helpful in schools?

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Chapter 5, Question 1

Figure 10 on page 142 shows a sequential model of engaging with a student who is in distress. You will read about this model throughout the remainder of the book: Regulate, Relate, Reason (the 3 Rs). Discuss the meaning of each of these terms, perhaps using an example from your math classroom.

Chapter 5, Question 2

Dr. Perry mentions “getting to the cortex” (p.143) which is when you can speak rationally with another person, connect with the abstract part of their brain. This can happen when both people are regulated but *“if they’re dysregulated, nothing you say will really get to their cortex. This is essential to understand if you’re a teacher because while the regulated child can learn, the dysregulated child will not.”*

What strategies have you learned so far for helping a student regulate? What strategies will you use to regulate yourself before interacting with a distressed student?

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Chapter 6, Question 1

Dissociation has been given a negative label in our society, but Dr. Perry explains why it can be critical to surviving an adverse event. Daydreaming, in fact, is a form of dissociation which can lead to increased creativity. As Dr. Perry states, *Our current public education system is good at producing workers, but it can be a miserable place for creators, artists and future leaders...but in a developmentally informed, trauma-aware school...downtime plays a crucial role for memory consolidation. Dissociative reflection is encouraged* (p. 171).

In what ways does your classroom/school discourage positive dissociations (e.g., daydreaming, doodling, rocking)? In what ways can you encourage the mind to wander in mathematics classrooms?

Chapter 6, Question 2

On page 172, Oprah refers to “shutting down” in classrooms is a dissociative response to stress (such as a math test). In a classroom setting, this manifests as avoiding eye contact with the teacher, being quiet in discussions, desiring to be invisible. When called on, they may comply, but it’s a hollow engagement.

Can you think of students who shut down during a math test or a math discussion? How do you react when that happens? How might you engage differently so that the student develops the capacity to control their dissociation and be in “flow” or “in the zone” (p. 177)?

Chapter 6, Question 3

Chapter 6 is all about moving from coping to healing. At the end of the chapter, Dr. Perry briefly describes how to help students, particularly those experiencing trauma in the classroom, regulate. What are some of the key elements he mentions? How might you adapt those to your classroom?

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Chapter 7, Question 1

Chapter 7: Post-Traumatic Wisdom introduces us to these thematic words: “the painful path of wisdom.” *We can help each other heal, but often assumptions about resilience and grit blind us to the healing that leads us down the painful path to wisdom* (p. 189). What mistakes are easy to make in traumatic situations when we don’t respect the painful path of wisdom, when we assume resilience and grit?

Chapter 7, Question 2

Developing positive, strong relationships with adults in school is one of the most important responses to stress/trauma for students. Remember that every school year, students meet new classmates, teachers and new content that all produce a variety of stress. In terms of content, re-read the paragraph at the bottom of page 194 where Dr. Perry refers to the Goldilocks situation. How does this relate to mathematics instruction?

Chapter 7, Question 3

Read each of the statements from this chapter, choose one to discuss deeply, bringing examples from your classroom or school.

A child in an environment where they feel loved and safe will choose to leave their comfort zone.

It’s very difficult to meaningfully connect with or get through to someone who is not regulated. And it’s nearly impossible to reason with them. This is why telling someone who is dysregulated to “calm down” never works.

If you [the teacher] stay regulated, ultimately they will “catch” your calm.

Chapter 8, Question 1

This chapter explains how our brains came to have implicit biases, where those lie in the brain and why they are so hard to recognize (refer to pages 234 to 236). Because we have developed “clan sensitivity”, we tend to judge and compete with others not in our “clan” sometimes without recognizing it. When we encounter someone that is different from our “clan”, the brain’s default is to activate its stress response system, often sending us into dysregulation and may even cause us to feel threatened. How does this physiological reaction relate to the disproportionate number of students of color being referred to special education and/or school resource officers? How does “clanship” norms impact our interpretation of students’ behavior if they are not from our “clan?”

Chapter 8, Question 2

Trauma is not only an individual experience but can be passed on historically as well as epigenetically. Trauma is present and passed along across generations, families, communities, cultures, societies, and yes, school systems. What practices are present in your math classroom that perpetuate these historical traumas (e.g., discouraging girls and students of color to excel in math)?

What practices/policies are present in our school system?

How do we avoid repeating these stressors that exacerbate the effects of trauma?

How do we make sure we don’t “retraumatize” someone by unintentionally continuing the marginalizing, dehumanizing experiences in mathematics classrooms?

Chapter 8, Question 3

On page 220, Dr. Perry says that truly trauma-informed systems are anti-racist systems. What does he mean by this?

Chapter 8, Question 4

Now imagine thirty children, sitting in rows in a classroom, passively listening to the teacher lecture... Does this sound familiar? According to neuroscience, why is lecture style teaching the least impactful way for the brain to learn?

Chapter 8, Question 5

Why is diversity training for teachers and students not enough?

Chapter 9, Question 1

Relational hunger/connectedness and empathy are the focus of Chapter 9. How does Dr. Perry define empathy and why is it so important for classroom interactions with students?

Chapter 9, Question 2

There has been a significant decrease in empathy due to the increase in technology platforms that allow individuals to interact with little personal risk. Online relationships are often shallow, but higher in frequency than ever before. This is true of adults too (put your phone down!). According to Dr. Perry, *poverty of real relationships can disrupt normal development, influence how the brain works, put you at risk for physical and mental health problems*. The typical college age student is much less empathic than 20 years ago.

How do you practice empathy with students in your math classroom? How can we promote social connection and prevent isolation in and out of the classroom?

Chapter 9, Question 3

Re-read the examples from Dr. Perry and Oprah on page 267 related to the power of appropriate touch in classrooms and the impact of making policies with good intentions but are developmentally un-informed. What other policies does your school have that have unintended, developmentally un-informed consequences? What about your classroom?

Chapter 10, Question 1

On page 282, Dr. Perry gives some good advice to teachers about how to engage empathically and with developmentally informed, trauma-based responses. Re-read that section and reflect on the advice. What can you do starting tomorrow?

Examine your classroom practices...how might you change them to engage with students more empathically:

- Physical arrangement and appeal of the room
- Nature of mathematics talk
- Teaching style (teacher centered, student centered)
- Instructional materials/activities
- Discipline procedures
- Who you encourage to continue studying mathematics

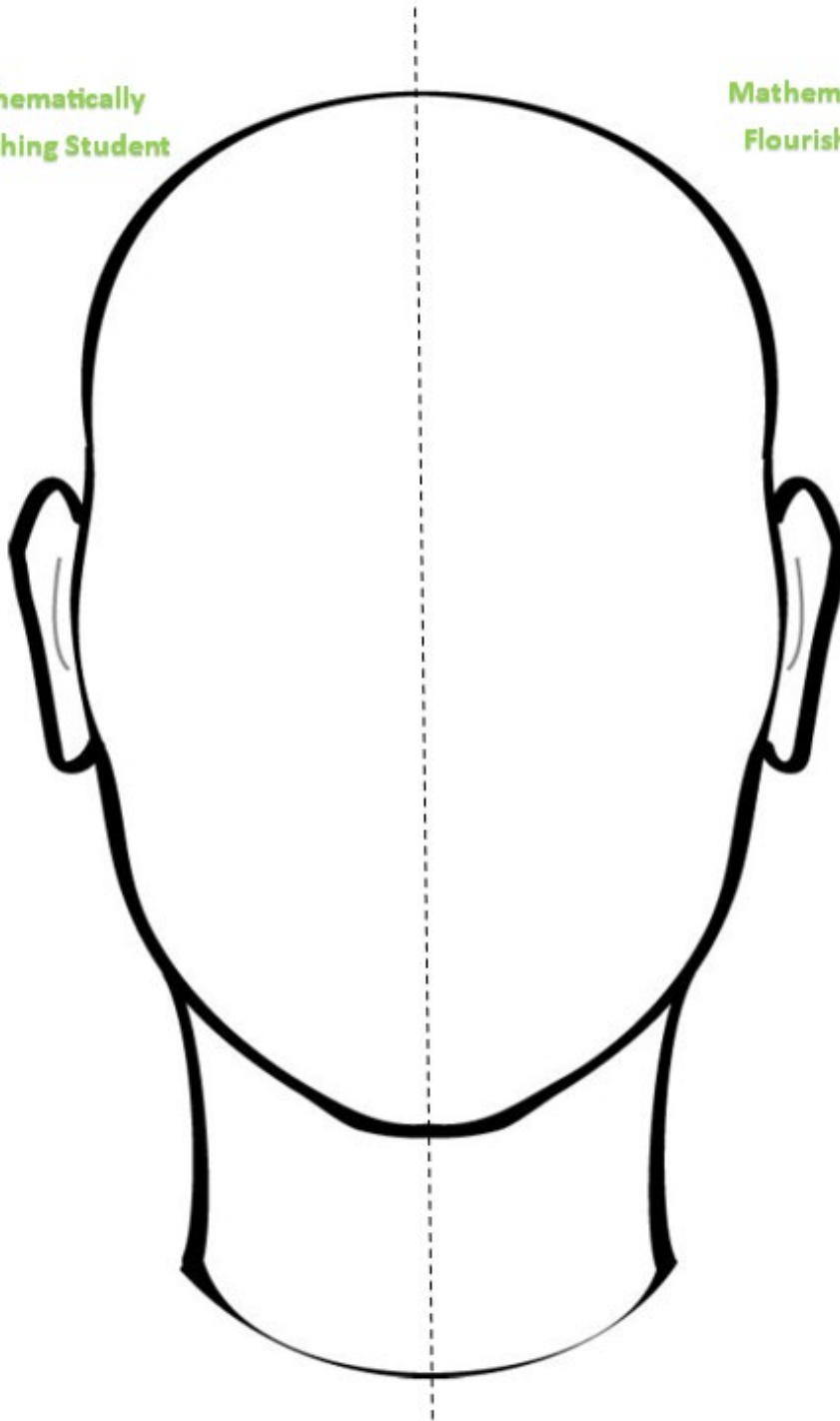
Examine your school practices and policies...how might you change them to facilitate empathic interactions:

- Physical space
- Discipline practices
- Professional development
- How (who) students are recommended for honors mathematics courses

Portrait of a Student: Creation

Mathematically
Flourishing Student

Mathematically NON-
Flourishing Student



Portrait of a mathematics student prompt:

What does the term flourishing mathematically in a school setting mean? Did you have any a-ha moments? What questions do you still have?

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Portraits of Students: Analysis

Portraits

De'Vincent

Initial Description

- De'Vincent is a student at Lincoln Middle School. He needs to perform well in his 8th-grade math class to be able to move on to high school.
- At least once a week, De'Vincent is sent to the principal's office by his math teacher and, based on his current performance, he will end the first quarter with an F.
- De'Vincent sits in the back of classes with his head down and often doesn't participate in class activities.

What does De'Vincent need to flourish (or continue to flourish) mathematically?

After the additional context is revealed, what does De'Vincent need to flourish (or continue to flourish) mathematically?

Saadia

Initial Description

- Saadia Mahmud is a new student at Jefferson Middle School. Her family just moved into the area from Pakistan.
- Saadia enjoys solving problems by figuring out and applying patterns. Saadia also likes the challenge of taking known information and using it to find “the unknown”.
- Based on her placement assessments, Saadia was put in an advanced mathematics class. At the end of the first quarter, Saadia had an A in the class.

What does Saadia need to flourish (or continue to flourish) mathematically?

After the additional context is revealed, what does Saadia need to flourish (or continue to flourish) mathematically?

Antwon

Initial Description

- Antwon is a 6th-grade student, in Advanced Math.
- He actively participates in discussions, asks questions, and completes all his assignments on time.
- He is the president of his middle school math club and regularly participates in math competitions.
- He currently has an A in mathematics class and has been recommended by his teacher, after consultation with his parents, to take Math 1 next year in 7th grade.

What does Antwon need to flourish (or continue to flourish) mathematically?

After the additional context is revealed, what does Antwon need to flourish (or continue to flourish) mathematically?

Zachary

Initial Description

- Zachary recently enrolled at Green Valley Middle School towards the end of the first quarter and was placed into a standard math course.
- When he first enrolled, he was completing most of his assignments regularly and had a good rapport with classmates and the teacher. He also made a B+ on his first major test.
- A few weeks later, Zachary began acting out in class. He was easily distracted, quick to get angry, and would often get frustrated and act disrespectfully towards his teachers.
- By the end of the second quarter, Zachary had disengaged from class discussions, held his head on the desk during most class sessions, had multiple missing assignments, and his math grade was now a D.

What does Zachary need to flourish (or continue to flourish) mathematically?

After the additional context is revealed, what does Zachary need to flourish (or continue to flourish) mathematically?

Reflection question: What assumptions did you make about each student prior to learning their context? How did learning about their background change the type of support you would give each student? What a-has did you have from engaging in this activity?

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Empathy Models: Video Case Analysis

E.M.P.A.T.H.Y™ Observation Protocol: Ms. Roberts and Amina

Adapted from Riess, H. (2018). The impact of clinical empathy on patients and clinicians: understanding empathy's side effects. *AJOB Neuroscience*, 6(3), 51-53.

Criteria	Example 1 Ms. Roberts and Amina	Example 2 Ms. Roberts and Amina	Reflection Questions
	Provide the context for each of the criteria especially when it happened during the interaction.	Provide the context for each of the criteria especially when it happened during the interaction.	Which example demonstrated an empathic interaction between teacher and student?
<p>E is for Eye Contact.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What do you notice about the eye contact of the teacher? ● What do you notice about the eye contact of the student? <p>Example: Staring, Use's eye glances throughout a discussion, no Eye contact.</p>			How did the empathic teacher's eye contact, facial expressions, and posture contribute to creating a supportive and understanding environment for the student? In addition, how did the same impact the willingness to engage and respond to the teacher?
<p>M is for Muscles of Facial Expression.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What do you notice about the facial expression of the teacher? ● What do you notice about the facial expression of the student? <p>Example: Stern, Calm, Teacher was mimicking the student's facial expression or vice-versa, annoyed, defeated.</p>			
<p>P is for Posture.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What do you notice about the posture of the teacher? ● What do you notice about the posture of the student? <p>Example: Teacher positioned themselves to make sure they are at the same eye level as the student, Teacher aligned their body posture with the student's posture or vice-versa, slouching</p>			

<p>A is for Affect.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What do you notice about the affect of the teacher? ● What do you notice about the affect of the student? <p>Example: I sensed (calmness, frustration, trust, helplessness, despair) emotions in the teachers/students response.</p>			<p>In both scenarios, what impact did the teacher's affect and tone of voice have on the student's willingness to share their struggles and engage in the learning process?</p>
<p>T is for Tone of Voice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What do you notice about the tone of the teacher? ● What do you notice about the tone of the student? <p>Example: Student spoke very softly and mumbled, Teacher was stern and yelling, Student sounded defeated.</p>			
<p>H is for Hear the Whole Person.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What do you notice about how the teacher demonstrates hearing the other? ● What do you notice about how the student demonstrates hearing the other? <p>Example: Leaned in as the other started talking, evidence of listening to understand.</p>			<p>How did the teacher's active listening and consideration of the student as a whole person (beyond just their academic performance) or a lack thereof such listening and consideration contribute to fostering a sense of trust and safety?</p>
<p>Y is for Your Response.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What do you notice about how the teacher responds to the other? ● What do you notice about how the student responds to the other? <p>Example: Teacher acknowledged the student's response and built the conversation on what they heard both verbally and physically or vice versa.</p>			<p>Reflecting on the student's response in both examples, what changes did you observe in their attitude, confidence, or motivation throughout the interaction with the teacher?</p>

Overall Reflection Questions:

- In both examples, when the teacher demonstrated empathic behavior vs non-empathic towards the student, what specific actions or behaviors did you notice that conveyed empathy or lack thereof?
- After reflecting on both examples, at what point of the interaction if and how could Ms. Roberts change their response? Why? Why not?
- Based on your observations of both examples, how would you describe the importance of empathy in a classroom setting and its potential impact on students' learning outcomes and emotional well-being?

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Enacting and Analyzing Empathy Plays

E.M.P.A.T.H.Y™ Observation Protocol

Adapted from Riess, H. (2018). The impact of clinical empathy on patients and clinicians: understanding empathy's side effects. *AJOB Neuroscience*, 6(3), 51-53.

Criteria	Notes	Reflection Questions Which example demonstrated an empathic interaction between teacher (or coach) and student?
<p>E is for Eye Contact.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What do you notice about the eye contact of the teacher/coach? ● What do you notice about the eye contact of the student? <p>Example: Staring, Use's eye glances throughout a discussion, no Eye contact.</p>		<p>How did the empathic teacher's or coach's eye contact, facial expressions, and posture contribute to creating a supportive and understanding environment for the student? In addition, how did the same impact the willingness to engage and respond to the teacher or coach?</p>
<p>M is for Muscles of Facial Expression.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What do you notice about the facial expression of the teacher/coach? ● What do you notice about the facial expression of the student? <p>Example: Stern, Calm, Teacher was mimicking the student's facial expression or vice-versa, annoyed, defeated.</p>		
<p>P is for Posture.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What do you notice about the posture of the teacher/coach? ● What do you notice about the posture of the student? <p>Example: Teacher/coach positioned themselves to make sure they are at the same eye level as the student, Teacher/coach aligned their body posture with the student's posture or vice-versa, slouching</p>		

<p>A is for Affect.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What do you notice about the affect of the teacher or coach? ● What do you notice about the affect of the student? <p>Example: I sensed (calmness, frustration, trust, helplessness, despair) emotions in the teacher's/coach's/student's response.</p>		<p>What impact did the teacher's or coach's affect and tone of voice have on the student's willingness to share their struggles and engage in the learning process?</p>
<p>T is for Tone of Voice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What do you notice about the tone of the teacher or coach? ● What do you notice about the tone of the student? <p>Example: Student spoke very softly and mumbled, Teacher or coach was stern and yelling, Student sounded defeated.</p>		
<p>H is for Hear the Whole Person.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What do you notice about how the teacher/coach demonstrates hearing the student? ● What do you notice about how the student demonstrates hearing the teacher/coach? <p>Example: Leaned in as the student started talking, evidence of listening to understand.</p>		<p>How did the teacher's or coach's active listening and consideration of the student as a whole person (beyond just their academic performance) or a lack thereof such listening and consideration contribute to fostering a sense of trust and safety?</p>
<p>Y is for Your Response.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What do you notice about how the teacher/coach responds to the student? ● What do you notice about how the student responds to the teacher/coach? <p>Example: Teacher or coach acknowledged the student's response and built the conversation on what they heard both verbally and physically or vice versa.</p>		<p>Reflecting on the student's responses, what changes did you observe in their attitude, confidence, or motivation throughout the interaction with the teacher or coach?</p>

Reflection Questions after Play 1:

- What assumptions is the teacher making about the student prior to the interaction? Where do those assumptions come from and have you made those assumptions in your past?
- When the teacher demonstrated empathic vs non-empathic behavior towards the student, what specific actions or behaviors did you notice that conveyed empathy or lack thereof?
- After reflecting on the example, at what point in the interaction could the teacher change their response? How and why?

Reflection Questions after Play 2:

- What assumptions is the teacher making about the student prior to the interaction? Where do those assumptions come from and have you made those assumptions in your past?
- When the teacher demonstrated empathic vs non-empathic behavior towards the student, what specific actions or behaviors did you notice that conveyed empathy or lack thereof?
- After reflecting on the example, at what point in the interaction could the teacher change their response? How and why?

Overall Reflection Questions:

- Based on your observations, how would you describe the importance of empathy in a classroom setting and its potential impact on students' learning outcomes and emotional well-being?
- What action steps can you take right now to ensure that you are not making deficit-based assumptions about students?
- Identify one or more students with whom you can make stronger connections. Make an action plan for getting to know them better and developing a stronger relationship.

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Championing Students

Mentoring Form (make copies as needed)

Meeting Date:

Brief Summary of Meeting:

From your perspective, is your student flourishing mathematically? Why or why not? Are there action steps that you think you should take?

Are there any concerns or requests that require follow up from, or a discussion with, the school social worker, counselor, teacher, or administration? What are they and what resulted from the follow up and/or discussion?

Overall Reflection Questions:

1. Based on your championing experience, what aspects of the student's life inside and outside of the classroom might be influencing their ability to mathematically flourish?
2. What positive changes have you observed in the student's attitude or behavior toward math since you started championing them?
3. Are there any patterns or common themes emerging from the feedback provided by teachers, parents, and other stakeholders about the student's experiences in mathematics class?
4. How can we effectively communicate with other staff members to address concerns about the student's behavior or effort in class while maintaining a focus on advocacy and support?

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Quality School Opportunities

Part 1: Questions to Consider (Beginning)

Are we inviting feedback from all families in our district? If so, are we asking the right questions to truly understand their obstacles and challenges when it comes to engaging with their child's education? Brainstorm obstacles to family engagement in your school.

- *What is your school/district vision for family engagement?*
- *Have you asked families what their concerns and priorities are? What solutions do they propose?*
- *How might you invite families to be a part of the decision-making process in your school?*
- *How does the language used with family communication reflect the school's desire to engage families as equal partners?*
- *How can we use the cultural experiences of families as an asset to school events?*
- *What obstacles are in place for families that do not feel engaged in the school process?*
- *Does your school always invite families to the school setting or are there opportunities to go into the families' community?*

Part 2: Questions to Consider (After)

1. Which family opportunities might work best for your school?
2. What opportunities already exist within your community for school to engage with families?
Are there cultural festivals or fairs where the school could set up a booth and have a presence?
3. How would creating engaging family opportunities allow you to better understand the students in your school?
4. What barriers exist that may inhibit you from successfully implementing an activity you've chosen?

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