

The Forgiveness Project

Why do people forgive? – Lesson Plan 2

Lesson 2 of 3 – Can compassion for an offender influence your decision to forgive?

Mary Foley's story - Part 2

55 mins



Can compassion for an offender influence your decision to forgive?

Lesson objectives: 1. To be able to explain a personal experience of forgiveness. 2. To be able to explain how empathy and compassion can influence people’s actions.

Key vocabulary: empathy, compassion.

Teacher activity	Learner activity	Time
<p>Recap Place question on board – What can we remember from the last lesson – the story of Mary Foley and her relationship with forgiveness? Ask students to read through the previous lesson’s booklet. Prompt question: Has anyone thought about the film since last week? Quick reminder of ground rules.</p>	<p>Read through the previous lesson’s booklet.</p>	5 mins
<p>Review Ask the class to discuss some of the reasons why Mary decided to forgive. Write down ideas for the class to refer back to if needed on the smart board / flip chart. Invite classmates to respond to others’ opinions. Use prompt themes / ideas if needed. Discuss what empathy and compassion mean and display the definitions. Ask students to individually write down some reasons why Mary chose to forgive.</p>	<p>As a class discuss why Mary chose to forgive. What was her motivation? Individually write five reasons in your student booklet.</p>	10 mins
<p>Explore Ask students to work in small groups or pairs to discuss the questions and explore possible answers. Invite students to answer the questions in their own words.</p>	<p>In small groups or pairs discuss the questions in your student booklet. Answer the questions in your own words.</p>	15 mins
<p>What happened next? Invite students to individually read the statement in their student booklets. Using the prompt questions on the board discuss the letter with the class.</p>	<p>Individually read the statement about Mary and Beatriz’s next steps. Discuss the letter with your class.</p>	10 mins
<p>Dear Mary... Ask students to individually write a letter to Mary telling her how her story has impacted their thinking of forgiveness.</p>	<p>Write a letter to Mary telling her how her story has impacted your thinking.</p>	14 mins
<p>Next lesson In the next lesson we will hear the story of Barry Mizen, whose son was killed by another young person from their local community, to explore the cycles of revenge and forgiveness.</p>	<p>Look at the slide regarding the next lesson.</p>	1 min

Definitions

Empathy: the ability to understand someone else's feelings or experiences by imagining what it would be like to be in that person's situation.

Compassion: a strong feeling of sympathy and sadness for the suffering or bad luck of others and a wish to help them.

Notes