Objectives:
• Students will reflect on their own character and identify ways they could improve it.
• Students will understand what empathy is.
• Students will practice walking in someone else’s shoes and showing empathy.

Materials:
• Image: CharacterDare Image Set
• Image: Empathy Definition
• Image: Empathy Scenario
• Supplies: Paper and/or notebook and writing utensil for each student

CharacterDare (5-7 minutes):
• *Project Image: Previous CharacterDare.*

• Review the previous CharacterDare. In partnerships or small groups, have students discuss the previous Dare using the Truth or Dare format.

• *Project Image: Truth or Dare.*
  - Truth: “What do you think about our most recent Dare?”
  - Do you like or dislike the Dare? Why?
  - What was most difficult when considering this Dare?
  - What do you think would happen if more people did this CharacterDare?

  - Dare: “Reflect on your experience with our most recent Dare.”
  - What did you learn about yourself in attempting this CharacterDare?
  - What did you learn about others in attempting this CharacterDare?

• Ask for volunteers or randomly select some students to share their Truth or Dare reflections. Encourage them when appropriate and take advantage of any teachable moments, especially when a student shares a struggle. Remind your students that it is not about being perfect or completing every Dare. This process is about striving to improve our character with intentional practice. For some people, the challenge is simply in thinking about the CharacterDare and discussing it.
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• *Project Image: Current CharacterDare.*

• Introduce the current CharacterDare. Answer and clarify any questions about the Dare. Encourage students to modify the CharacterDare if it does not seem to specifically fit your school situation. If necessary, talk about ways you could increase or decrease the challenge of the CharacterDare.

Discussion (2-4 minutes):
• *Write the word “empathy” on the board and ask your students if anyone knows what the word “empathy” means.*
  o Take a few responses.
  o *Write the simple definition, “Being able to put yourself in someone else’s shoes.”*
  o Say, “It is not literally putting yourself in their shoes, but it is understanding and trying to feel what they might be feeling.”

• Ask any or all of the following questions:
  o Why is it important to learn how to feel for others? How does it benefit us?
  o Can we get better at thinking about what others might be going through?
  o Have you ever gone through a tough situation but people didn’t know, and you wish they did? Why would you want them to know?

Discussion (4-6 minutes):
• Say, “Today we are going to practice empathy.”

• Say, “Empathy is being able to put yourself in someone else’s shoes and try to feel what they might be feeling.”

• Say, “You will be getting a scenario of a student, and you will be asked to take on that role.”

• *There is an option to print out and cut out the scenarios if you want or are able*

• Number kids off and have all of the 1’s get together and tell them their scenario, all the 2’s, 3’s, etc. until you have told each group what their scenario is.
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• Say, “You are going to have a minute to figure out how you are going to talk to someone about the situation going on in your life.”
  o Say, “An example might be, if you had just gotten an ‘A’ on a math test that you studied really hard for, you might approach someone excitedly and exclaim, ‘I studied every day for the last week for the math test in Mr. Thompson’s class, and I just found out that I got an ‘A’ on it!’ If you are the partner listening to the individual, you might respond with empathy by stating, ‘Wow, that hard work really paid off. Nice job!’”
  o Say, “If your scenario states something like ‘You and your mom got into an argument before school because your chores were still not completed and she is not letting you hang out with your friends after school,’ you might approach someone in the room very seriously and tell someone, ‘Sometimes I get so frustrated with my mom, she doesn’t understand how busy I am with school. I’m playing volleyball, and I’m in two clubs. My friends are going to be upset that I can’t hang out with them this weekend.’ As the partner listening, you might respond with empathy by stating, ‘I’m so sorry that happened this morning. That would be frustrating.’”

• Say, “To determine what you will say for your role, think about these two things. One, what is the situation you are dealing with? Describe it to your partner. Two, how does this make you feel?”

Activity—Walk in Someone Else’s Shoes (9-11 minutes):
• Say, “In a minute you will find someone in the classroom and play your scenario part by confiding in them what is going on in your life.”

• Have students get a partner from one of the different groups.

• Say, “The partner from the higher numbered group will start. Tell your partner what is going on in your life. Share the situation you were given and how that is making you feel. The lower numbered partner’s job is to listen.”
  o Give them 15-20 seconds to share

• Say, "Lowered numbered partner, now you must try to put yourself in their shoes. Your response should include how you would feel if you were in their situation, by attempting to see it as they see it and feel it as they feel it."

• Say, “Now we are going to switch. The partner from the lower numbered group will start. Tell your partner what is going on in your life. Share the situation on your card and how that is making you feel. The higher numbered partner’s job is to listen.”
• Give them 15-20 seconds to share
Say, “Higher numbered partner, now you must try to put yourself in their shoes. Your response should include how you would feel if you were in their situation, by attempting to see it as they see it and feel it as they feel it.”

• If time allows, do the activity again and have students get a new partner from one of the different groups.

Exit Intentionally (1-2 minutes):

• Say, “Take out a small sheet of paper or your notebook and write down one way you can practice more empathy towards students in your school.”

• Say, “Remind yourself about your plan by looking at it every day.”
Taking Time For Others

Hang out with one of your family members, a kid in the neighborhood, or a younger student, and do something that they enjoy doing for at least a half hour!

We don’t always know the positive influence our actions can have on others. Taking the time to patiently slow down and give our time to others can make a positive difference in others' lives, and we may not even know it.

PATIENCE
TRUTH
What do you think about our most recent Dare?

OR

DARE
Reflect on your experience with our most recent Dare.
You First

When working in a group or while with your friends this week, ask others to share their ideas before you share yours.

Instead of thinking about what you are going to do next, act interested, and truly listen to what is being said.
Empathy - Being able to put yourself in someone else’s shoes.
All of your friends are excited to go shopping this weekend and to the movies, but your dad just lost his job and is struggling to find work so you don’t feel you can ask your dad if you can go and feel like you will miss out.

Your family has very strict rules and is very careful about who you can hang out with. Johnny wants you to come to his house on Friday, but your parents won’t let you go as they don’t know Johnny’s parents. Johnny told everyone in your math class that you’re a loser and too scared to come over.

You tried out for the basketball team and the musical at your school. All of your friends got selected for what they wanted but you were cut from both. Now your friends seem to be acting quiet and awkward whenever they are around them.

You and your friend both tried out for the soccer team. You made the team but your friend did not. At first your friend was it’s fine. But you can tell your friend is upset and starts to distance themselves from you.
Your best friend Jamie seems to be getting really close to a popular girl named Lacey. Today she decided to sit with Lacey. When you walked by she ignored you and pretended not to see you.

Your team made it to the playoffs for basketball. Your team was down by one and you got fouled with a few seconds left. You missed both free throws and your team lost the game.

Your favorite teacher asks you to stay after class and shows you your test and a classmate's and they are identical. You have had a feeling they have been copying you, but now your teacher suspects you were cheating.

Your mom got you a new shirt for Christmas that you really liked. At the lunch table the cutest kid in your grade made fun of it in front of everyone.
Your best friend told you about a surprise party they are throwing for their brother. You accidentally told him and now your best friend won't talk to you.

Two of your closest friends have started to hang out without you and at the lunch table today they were talking about the baseball game they were going to this weekend and once again they didn't invite you.

During the assembly you got called down for an activity and you ended up tripping over someone's backpack and fell in front of the entire school.

You have been working so hard in your math class to try and get your grade up. You just got your last math test back and you thought you did well but you failed it once again.