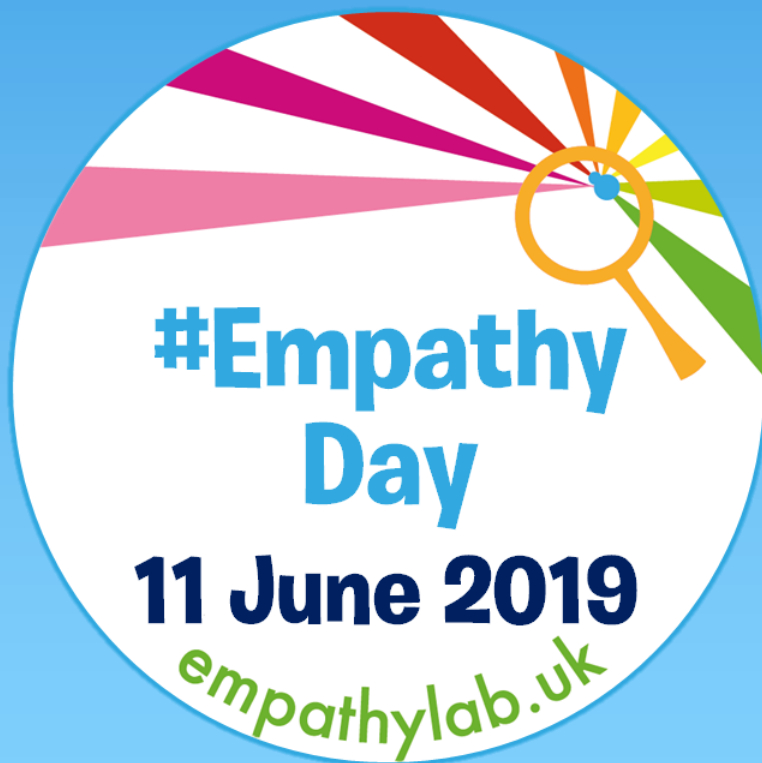


# PUBLIC LIBRARIES TOOLKIT



EmpathyLab

# Empathy Day - 11 June 2019



## EMPATHY

A beacon of hope  
in our divided world

### Why we need a new empathy movement

- Hate crimes are at their highest level since records began
- Our public discourse is increasingly divisive
- Our online lives can limit our experience of face to face human warmth
- Social media's algorithms drive us into silos, talking only to people like us

- EmpathyLab founded Empathy Day in 2017 to help the rising generation drive a new empathy movement. It focuses on using books to build understanding and connections between us all.
- Increased empathy is good for society and vital for young people's life chances - with strong empathy skills they will become great parents, workmates, and citizens.

### Using stories to build empathy

- EmpathyLab builds children's, literacy and social activism through a more systematic use of high quality literature. See [www.empathylab.uk](http://www.empathylab.uk) for details of our training and resources.
- Empathy is a skill we can all get better at - we're not born with a fixed quantity. EmpathyLab's strategy builds on exciting scientific evidence showing the power of reading to build real-life empathy skills.
- In identifying with book characters, we learn to see things from other points of view.

### What happens on Empathy Day?

Empathy Day is all about helping us understand each other better, the day to help young people take some new steps on their empathy journey. On 11 June we want everyone to ...

## READ

It builds real-life empathy

Find and share empathy-boosting books – use #ReadforEmpathy

Use our Read For Empathy Guides for young people  
[www.empathylab.uk/read-for-empathy-guide](http://www.empathylab.uk/read-for-empathy-guide)

Check out your library's empathy books and activities

Follow the special author blog tour; listen to their podcasts

## CONNECT

Join the Empathy Conversation

Snap up The Empathy Conversation, tickets  
Waterstone's Piccadilly, 7pm

Use #EmpathyDay to share which social issues need more empathy

Meet someone different in libraries' Empathy Conversation events

Make a giant workplace Empathy Wall – share ideas for changing things

## DO

Put empathy into action

Make an Empathy Resolution – special cards available March

Teachers: sign up; use our training, booklists, Empathy Day packs

Librarians: sign up; pilot The Empathy Conversation events





Buy a whole empathy book collection for 26% off:  
[www.peters.co.uk/empathy2019](http://www.peters.co.uk/empathy2019)

**#ReadforEmpathy - Read stories. Build empathy. Make a better world.**

# All about empathy



## What is Empathy?

-  The ability to feel and understand other people's emotions and perspectives
-  A core life skill; vital for successful relationships, collaboration and learning
-  A force for social change as empathy is put into action
-  3 main elements: affective; cognitive; empathic concern

## How does empathy work?



## Why empathy is important in libraries?



"In libraries we can find out how the world looks to other people. That's crucial for developing our empathy skills."

**Gillian Cross (Author)**



"Empathy is the basis of understanding our fellow human beings"

**Bali Rai (Author)**

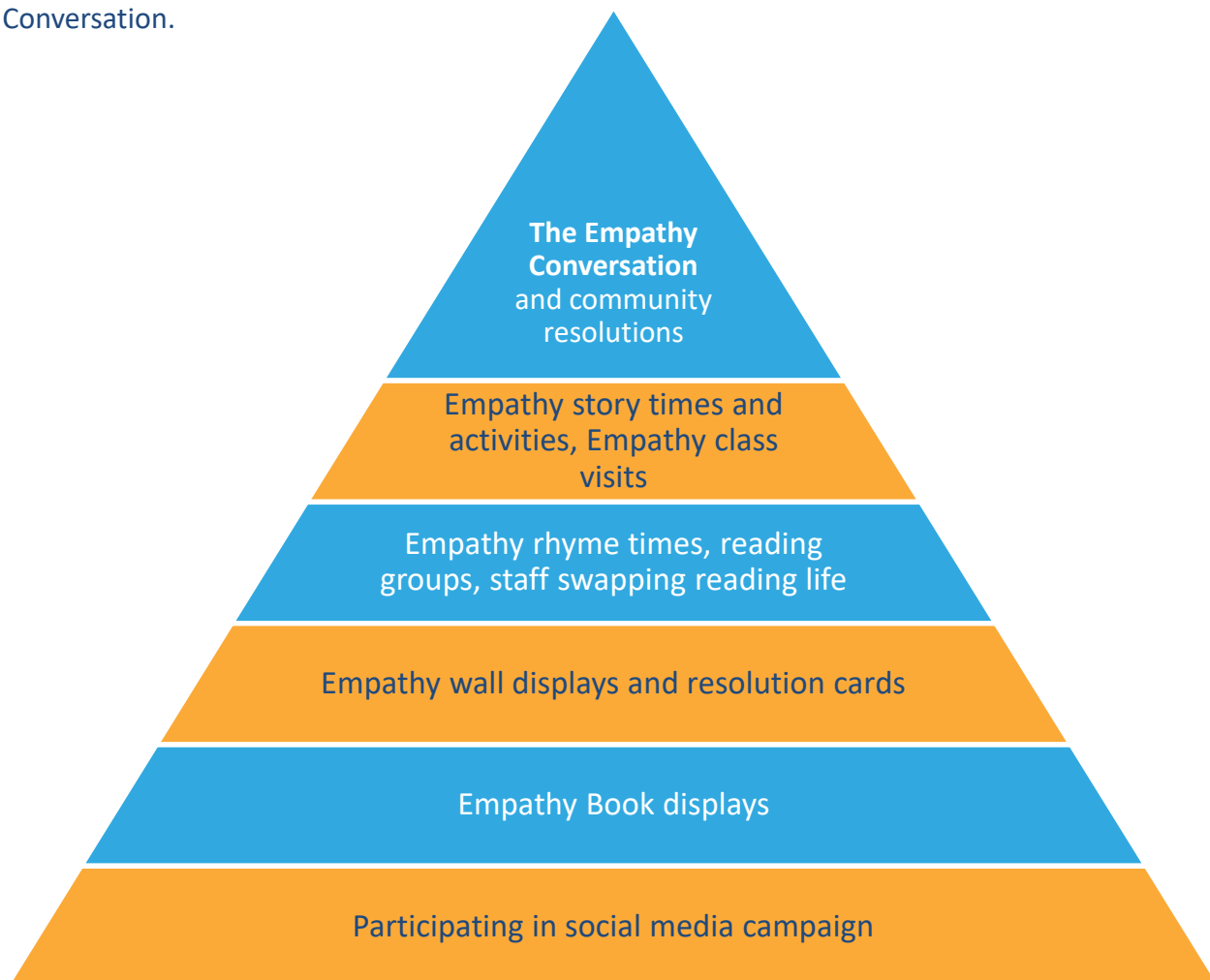
# Empathy Day and Libraries



Public Libraries are perfectly placed to foster greater connection and understanding in communities. Empathy Day has become an established annual event and is based on scientific research showing that reading builds our real-life empathy.

Last June 55 library services took part in the national Empathy Day founded by EmpathyLab in 2017. This year we are encouraging all library services to get involved. This pack has a range of ideas and resources to help you join in, including class visit and book activities. Libraries are also welcome to use the Early Years Empathy Day Toolkit with ideas to create empathy focused rhyme times and early years activities.

This pyramid highlights the opportunities supported by these toolkits, from encouraging participation in the #ReadforEmpathy campaign to social action activity including The Empathy Conversation.



# The Empathy Conversation



♥ Available to download

This autumn EmpathyLab worked with library leaders, practitioners and experts including Sir Peter Bazalgette. Together we shaped libraries' role in Empathy Day 2019. This includes **The Empathy Conversation**, a simple way for libraries to turbo-charge community connections and understanding, using their existing activities and networks.

**The Empathy Conversation** encourages communities to talk together about local issues that are important to them and where more empathy would help. They will be inspired by conversation prompts from children in EmpathyLab's pioneer schools.

We would love libraries to start The Empathy Conversation in June 2019, creating relationships between different groups and generations. It gives communities a way to share the issues that concern them, and work together to find empathetic solutions.

## How The Empathy Conversation works:

- Children in EmpathyLab schools have written postcards ♥ with empathy issues they want to share.
- Libraries invite two or more groups who use the library but don't usually meet together to have a cup of tea and meet each other (e.g. the Knit and Natter group meets with a reading group or the parents after rhyme time).
- Or invite a class to meet in the library with another library group.
- Library staff share the children's postcards as a conversation starter.
- The groups record their response and make pledges on Empathy Resolution cards ♥. The original cards and the responses/resolutions of the groups could be displayed in the library and on social media.

I read 'Mr. Slink' it helped me understand that you should never judge someone by how they look or smell and how tragic someone's life can be.

How could we make a difference to poor and Homeless people?

I read 'The Journey' it helped me understand what it must feel like to move from another country to another and I feel really sad for refugees. How could we make a difference to how refugees are welcome to the countries?



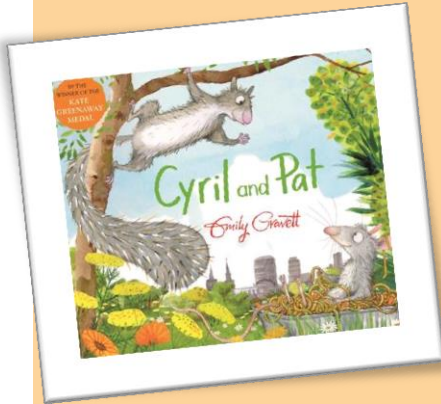
"I'm particularly excited to pilot the Empathy Conversation – where libraries bring completely different groups of people together for a first conversation, using prompts from children. I would love to see all library services take part and use the day as a springboard for empathy-focused conversations and activities."

**Mark Freeman, President, Libraries Connected**

**#ReadforEmpathy - Read stories. Build empathy. Make a better world.**

# Empathy Day Class Visits

♥ Available to download



## ***Cyril and Pat*** by Emily Gravett (Two Hoots)

For Years 2, 3, 4

40 minutes to 1 hour

You will need:

- Flipchart and pen
- Pens and cut out triangles to create Pat finger puppets♥
- Empathy resolution cards♥

## **This is a story about friendship and stereotypes**

1. Welcome the class into the library and settle them

2. Introduction to the library

- Give them a basic introduction to the library, check they understand what a library is and how it works.
- Ask how many have library cards.
- Talk about fiction and non-fiction. Check children's understanding of the difference.

3. Empathy Introduction

- Then say: today we're going to be focusing on fiction and a book called **Cyril and Pat**. Today is a special day – it's Empathy Day and we are going to be looking at how books and particularly fiction can help us feel empathy.
- Has anyone heard the word *empathy* before? Hands up.
- If children put their hands up, ask them to tell you what it means. Value all contributions and confirm that empathy means being able to put yourself in someone else's shoes and understand how they feel. Some children may say empathy means being kind. If they say this, you can say that being kind is part of empathy, but that empathy goes deeper – it's not just about caring for someone but thinking about
  - why they feel the way they feel
  - understanding what has their experience been
  - then understanding the best way to help them
- Tell the children it needs imagination and say: but I can see you've all got lots of imagination, so I think you are probably very good at empathy. Reading lots of stories can help you develop your empathy skills by introducing you to lots of different characters with different needs and feelings and in the story, I'm going to introduce you to **Cyril and Pat**.

Continued overleaf ...

# Empathy Day Class visits



♥ Available to download

## Cyril and Pat ... continued

4. Read **Cyril and Pat** all the way through.

A. Ask the children: what do the other people and creatures in the park and town think about Cyril and what do they think about Pat?

- On a sheet of paper write '**Cyril**' on one side and '**Pat**' on the other
- Children call out words they think people would use to describe Cyril and words to describe Pat. These are written on the correct side of the flip chart.
- Ask the children why they think people have those feelings?

B. The other characters keep telling Cyril that "squirrels can't be friends with rats". What do the children think?

- Use the library space. On one wall label "squirrels **can't** be friends with rats" and on the opposite wall place a label "squirrels **can** be friends with rats". Ask the children to stand up and move to whichever side of the room most reflects what they think. If they are not sure they can stand in the middle. Ask some to explain why they've chosen to stand where they have.

C. What do the children think Pat will feel about the way he is rejected?

- The pigeon says "dirty rat". The ducks say "thieving rat"
- How does Pat feel? Make a Pat finger puppet ♥.
- When all the Pats have been made, ask each child to put the puppet on their finger. They become Pat and in turn step forward and say how they feel as Pat.

D. Cyril however sees Pat is a very different way.

He describes Pat as a:

- Real Joker
- Brilliant Sharer
- Clever Squirrel
- Brave and clever best friend

Write these on the flip chart. Ask the children what Pat would feel about these words? Are there other words they would add?

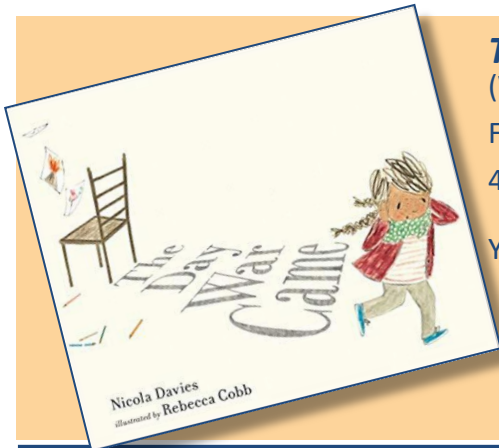
E. Conclude the session by congratulating the children – tell them they've shown how they can be "Empathetic Friends". Could they make a resolution about their own friendships – use the Empathy Day resolution cards ♥ and invite them all to write a resolution for the Empathy Wall ♥ wall.

F. Before they go remind them that there are lots of books in the library to help them understand other people. Highlight that the Summer Reading Challenge is coming and encourage them to take part.

# Empathy Day Class Visits



♥ Available as a download



***The Day War Came*** by Nicola Davies & Rebecca Cobb  
(Walker Books)

For Years 4, 5, 6

40 minutes to 1 hour

You will need:

- Flipchart and pen
- People shapes♥
- Pens and paper
- Empathy resolution cards♥

## This is a story about war, displacement and being unwelcome

1. Welcome the class into the library and settle them

2. Introduction to the library

- Give them a basic introduction to the library, check they understand what a library is and how it works.
- Ask how many have library cards.
- Talk about fiction and non-fiction. Check children's understanding of the difference.

3. Empathy Introduction

- Then say: today we're going to be focusing on fiction and a book called **The Day War Came**. Today is a special day – it's Empathy Day and we are going to be looking at how books and particularly fiction can help us feel empathy.
- Has anyone heard the word *empathy* before? Hands up.
- If children put their hands up, ask them to tell you what it means. Value all contributions and confirm that empathy means being able to put yourself in someone else's shoes and understand how they feel. Some children may say empathy means being kind. If they say this, you can say that being kind is part of empathy, but that empathy goes deeper – it's not just about caring for someone but thinking about
  - why they feel the way they feel
  - understanding what has their experience been
  - then understanding the best way to help them
- Tell the children it needs imagination and say: but I can see you've all got lots of imagination, so I think you are probably very good at empathy. Reading lots of stories can help you develop your empathy skills by introducing you to lots of different characters with different needs and feelings and in the story, I'm going to introduce you to a girl whose life is turned upside down on **The Day War Came**.

Continued overleaf ...



# Empathy Day Class Visits

♥ Available to download



## The Day War Came ... continued

4. Read **The Day War Came** – pause to let children really savour the illustrations.

A. Ask them for their initial reactions to the story. Talk to them about how the illustrations reflect the mood of the story.

B. Give every child a figure to represent the girl ♥.

Ask every child to imagine they are the girl in the story. What are your hopes and dreams, the thing you want more than anything? Write their thoughts in the figure's arms and legs or around them and decorate the figure. children think?

C. Return to the story and the section where the teacher prevents the girl going to school. As a whole group ask: why do people close doors to strangers? Think about it from the teacher's point of view – what might she have thought? You could write the children's thoughts on a flip chart. Look again at the picture where the girl has returned to her hut and talk together about what the illustrations say about the impact on her.

D. Then talk about the boy – why did he bring the chair? What made him take action?

- Do a hot seating exercise – invite one child to be the boy and sit on a chair in the middle of the circle of children
- Then ask him to explain to everyone else why he decided to take a chair
- Invite some other children to be the other children who also bought chairs. Ask them to stand around the boy on the chair. Ask them to explain what inspired them about the boy's actions to bring their chairs

E. Finally invite all children to draw a chair and, on the paper, write an empathy resolution ♥ about the welcome they will give newcomers to the community or their school.

F. Conclude the session by congratulating the children – tell them they've shown how they use stories to demonstrate empathy.

G. Before they go remind them that there are lots of books in the library to help them understand other people. Highlight that the Summer Reading Challenge is coming and encourage them to take part.

# Empathy Day Class Visits

♥ Available as a download



## ***The Last Chip*** by Duncan Beedie

For Years 2, 3, 4

40 minutes to 1 hour

You will need:

- Flipchart and pen
- Feather template♥
- Chip template♥
- Newspaper
- Pens and paper
- Empathy resolution cards♥

**This is a story about hunger, homelessness, cruelty and kindness**

1. Welcome the class into the library and settle them

2. Introduction to the library

- Give them a basic introduction to the library, check they understand what a library is and how it works.
- Ask how many have library cards.
- Talk about fiction and non-fiction. Check children's understanding of the difference.

3. Empathy Introduction

- Then say: today we're going to be focusing on fiction and a book called **The Last Chip**. Today is a special day – it's Empathy Day and we are going to be looking at how books and particularly fiction can help us feel empathy.
- Has anyone heard the word *empathy* before? Hands up.
- If children put their hands up, ask them to tell you what it means. Value all contributions and confirm that empathy means being able to put yourself in someone else's shoes and understand how they feel. Some children may say empathy means being kind. If they say this, you can say that being kind is part of empathy, but that empathy goes deeper – it's not just about caring for someone but thinking about
  - why they feel the way they feel
  - understanding what has their experience been
  - then understanding the best way to help them
- Tell the children it needs imagination and say: but I can see you've all got lots of imagination, so I think you are probably very good at empathy. Reading lots of stories can help you develop your empathy skills by introducing you to lots of different characters with different needs and feelings and in the story, I'm going to introduce you to a little pigeon called Percy.

Continued overleaf ...

# Empathy Day Class Visits

♥ Available to download



## The Last Chip ... continued

### 4. Read **The Last Chip**.

- A. Percy is a very hungry pigeon desperately trying to find food. Ask the children if anyone is feeling hungry? Then say: I want you to close your eyes and imagine you haven't had anything to eat for two or three days. How would you be feeling now? Ask children to share their feelings.
- B. The other birds were horrible to Percy – let's think about why they wouldn't let Percy have any of their food –ask children for suggestions and write their ideas on a flipchart.
- C. Thankfully someone kind gives Percy their last chip. That probably saves Percy's life. This person is homeless and probably hungry as well. Why did they give Percy their last chip? If you have a pair of old boots (or draw a boot print), children could take turns to stand in them to become the person who gave away the chip and explain why they gave the last chip to Percy.
- D. As a group let's think about what might happen next to Percy and his new friend. Write suggestions on the flip chart. Let's write some wishes for them. Children are all given paper with chips on them ♥ and write their wishes for the characters on the chips. A display could be made with the chips poking out of newspapers in the library.
- E. Conclude the session by congratulating the children – tell them they've shown how they can use stories to demonstrate empathy. Encourage them to write their own empathy resolutions ♥.
- F. Before they go remind them that there are lots of books in the library to borrow to help them understand other people. Highlight that the Summer Reading Challenge is coming and encourage them to take part.



# Other Activities

♥ Available to download



## Join in the national #ReadForEmpathy conversation – using the Twitter hashtag and book recommendations. Plan a social media campaign

The library service expresses its support for Empathy Day on its social media channels and invites customers to share their great empathy reads using the #ReadforEmpathy hashtag.

Sample tweets:

- The world badly needs more #empathy – books are a great way to understand others – on #EmpathyDay share your #ReadforEmpathy book recommendation
- Read, Connect, Do – celebrate #EmpathyDay with us by sharing your favourite #ReadforEmpathy book @EmpathyLabUK
- We're celebrating #EmpathyDay by asking for your recommendations for books that help us understand others. Share them using #ReadforEmpathy @EmpathyLabUK
- Celebrate #EmpathyDay. Which book characters have you felt #empathy for? #ReadforEmpathy
- Has a book ever inspired you to do something to make a difference? Tell us about it #ReadforEmpathy #EmpathyDay

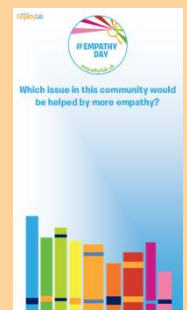
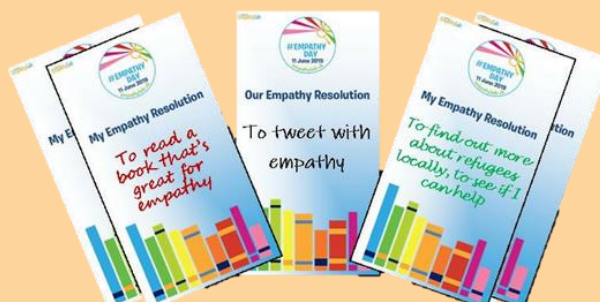
## Wall display ideas

Create an Empathy Wall using your wall area or a display stand with an Empathy Day banner♥. Ask people to join in the #ReadForEmpathy campaign, and recommend the book that made them feel empathy. Give them book recommendation cards♥ to pin up.

Create empathy-focused wall displays promoting specific books in the #ReadforEmpathy collection using images and props linked to the books

## Empathy Issue Wall

This activity also involves a wall display. Place a notice on the wall which asks people to identify the issues in their community which would be improved by more empathy. People could either write their thoughts directly on large sheets of paper on the wall or on Empathy Issue cards♥ which can be pinned to the wall. Empathy Resolution cards♥ could also be available so that people can write and display resolutions to respond to the issues.



**#ReadforEmpathy - Read stories. Build empathy. Make a better world.**

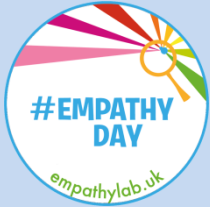


# Display Resources

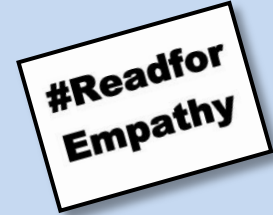


All available to download

## Empathy Day Logos



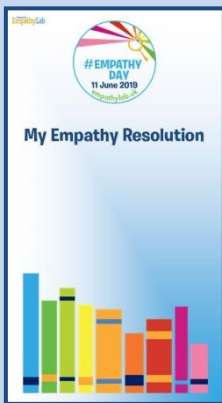
## #ReadforEmpathy cards



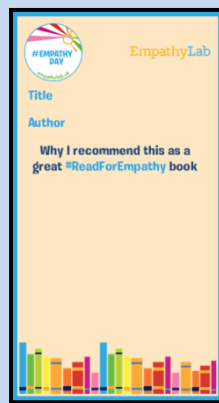
## Empathy Wall Banners (3 x A4 sheets)



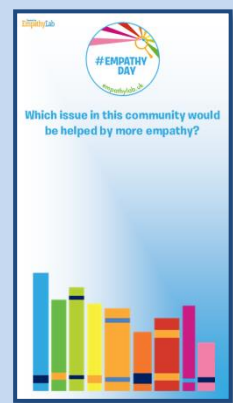
## Resolution cards



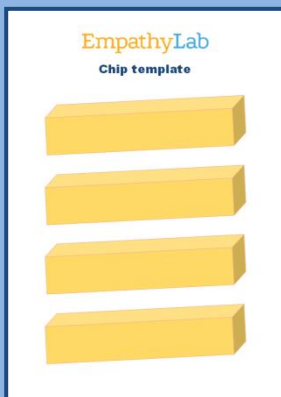
## Recommendation cards



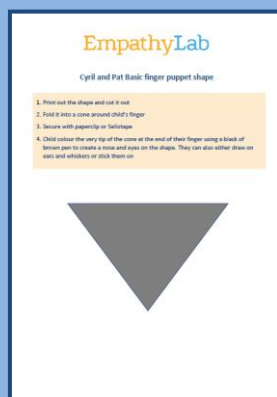
## Issue cards



## Chip template



## Finger puppet template



## Body template

