

Session 4: Empathy and Tolerance

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- What does “perspective” mean?
- What is empathy?

Overview: In this session, families will interact with the chapter book, *Lisa of Willesden Lane: A True Story of Music and Survival During World War II (Lisa of Willesden Lane)* by Mona Golabek and Emil Sher, adapted by Sarah J. Robbins. The themes for the activities are empathy and tolerance while the literacy focus is on perspective.

Component	Materials	Digital Materials
Children's Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book: <i>Lisa of Willesden Lane</i> • Chart paper and markers • Chart: "<u>Lisa of Willesden Lane</u>" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Moonlight Sonata</u> (performed by <u>Mona Golabek</u>) (5:20)
Parent Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book: <i>Lisa of Willesden Lane</i> • White board/chart paper • Writing materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Facilitator Resource: Coenraad Rood testimony bios and transcript</u> • <u>Facilitator Resource: Pinchas Gutter bio and transcript</u> • Clips of testimony: Coenraad Rood <u>https://bit.ly/CRood-Testimony</u> (1:17) and Pinchas Gutter <u>https://bit.ly/PGutter-Testimony</u> (0:41)
Parent and Child Together (PACT) Time®	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book: <i>Lisa of Willesden Lane</i> • Poster paper • Art materials such as poster paints, markers, alphabet stencils/stickers, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clips of testimony: Coenraad Rood <u>https://bit.ly/CRood-Testimony</u> (1:17) and Pinchas Gutter <u>https://bit.ly/PGutter-Testimony</u> (0:41)

CHILDREN'S EDUCATION

Learning Goals

- Learn how perspective can affect how we think and understand.
- Identify the perspective in *Lisa of Willesden Lane*.
- Learn what empathy is and how we can use it to help others.

Welcome

Welcome children to the workshop. Remind them of any expectations for the space (sitting vs. moving around, noise level expectations, etc.) and make introductions.

CONSIDER:

Opening Activity

1. Remind children that in the previous sessions, they learned about comparing and contrasting—finding what is the same and what is different. They also learned what it means to have resilience—to keep going even when things are hard. Ask if anyone can share a time that they showed resilience since the group last met.
2. In this session, they will learn how not everyone feels the same way about things. Often, different people feel differently about the same things. For example, one child may love reading and think it is easy, and another child might find it difficult. They may love a certain food, and their sibling or friend might dislike it.
3. Explain that understanding another person's perspective and their feelings is called empathy. They may have experienced empathy when: someone helped them when they were having a hard time; a friend offered them some of their snacks when they were hungry; someone was kind when they felt lonely or sad.
4. Invite more examples from children. Have they ever felt like someone tried to understand their feelings or experiences? How did that help them feel better?

COLLECT:

Literacy Skill: Perspective

1. Remind children that in real life, everyone sees things a little differently, and that is what we think of as their perspective. Offer an example, for instance: To a toddler, one of our participants might seem really tall. While to an adult, one of our participants might seem really short. Or, think about the different genres of music children like— some may like a genre or style that others do not. Perspective can be physical—things that are closer look larger than things far away—or it can be based on thoughts and experience.
2. Ask children to imagine that every character in a book is like a real person and sees things differently based on their thoughts and experiences.
3. With participants, quickly create a list of characters from the first three chapters of *Lisa of Willesden Lane*. If participants do not have a complete list, supply the rest of the characters. The characters are listed below; however, children might just note “mother” rather than “Malka.” Children may also not think of all of the minor characters. (Facilitators may want to keep this chart and add to it throughout the remaining sessions to support children in recalling the story and character’s names.)
 - a. Lisa (Liseleh) Jura
 - b. Mother - Malka Jura
 - c. Father - Abraham Jura
 - d. Sisters - Sonia and Rosie
 - e. Professor Isseles
 - f. Sid Danziger - Father’s cousin (chapter 3)
 - g. Alfred Hardesty - Bloomsbury House (chapter 3)
 - h. Captain and Mrs. Richmond - Peacock Manor (chapter 3)
4. Ask children to consider from whose perspective the story is told and what evidence supports their thinking. Record their responses on the chart paper. If they do not come to the conclusion by themselves, explain that the book is from the main character’s perspective. The story follows Lisa Jura, and we see what she thinks and feels, not how others think and feel. Because we know her thoughts and feelings, we “see” things that happen in the book from her perspective.
5. Let learners know you will read aloud the train station scene (Chapter 2, p. 17–19).
 - a. As you read the text aloud, pause to discuss Lisa’s perspective—especially the first full paragraph of p. 17.

- b. Also pause to discuss emotions and actions in the text. A few emotions are expressly identified, but even more actions happen. Oftentimes, actions are connected to emotions. When the story is not from that character's perspective, we have to infer—or make a guess based on our thoughts and experiences—that character's thoughts and feelings. Refer to the Chart in this resource for support.
 - c. When you reach an emotion or action, ask participants what the character might have been thinking or how they think the character felt.
6. Ask children to brainstorm how they could use the skill of empathy—understanding another person's perspective and their feelings—in real life. How can empathy help us get along with others (tolerance)? Examples could include:
 - a. During/after an argument with friends/caregivers/siblings, trying to understand the other person's perspective can help them compromise on a solution.
 - b. If they see someone at school being teased or bullied, understanding how the other person feels can help them remember to be kind and help them.
 - c. Ask children to share a time when someone made a decision they did not agree with or may have hurt their feelings. They can talk about what the other person might have been thinking when they made the decision, and other participants can offer options as well.
7. Let children know that during PACT Time, they will be making posters to encourage people to use empathy and tolerance toward others. Invite them to start thinking about what they might like to draw/write on their poster.

Facilitators' Note:
If children are having a hard time coming up with examples of tolerance, use an appropriate example from your own life. Using your own lived experiences allows participants to connect with you in a different way, and the examples are often richer and have more details.

PARENT TIME

Goals

- Help caregivers understand how and why to talk about perspective with children.
- Encourage caregivers to talk to children about books before, during, and after reading together.
- Help caregivers build their children's reading comprehension skills.

Welcome

Welcome caregivers to the workshop. Invite questions or comments about the previous workshop or anything that came up during the interval. Encourage caregivers to talk to a partner about comparing/contrasting. Did they use compare/contrast since the previous session? If so, how did it go? If not, are there any questions we can address about comparing/contrasting?

CONSIDER:

Opening Activity

1. Explain that this week, we are going to be talking about perspective and how understanding someone else's perspective can build empathy—understanding another person's perspective and their feelings.
2. Talk through a specific example of how your own experiences have influenced your perspective and have shaped your opinion on different ideas (examples could include: time with family, religious/cultural traditions, fun activities).
3. Ask caregivers to think about their perspective and what has helped shape their perspective (on any topic). Examples could include the above suggestions, or ask participants to brainstorm topics.
4. Use chart paper to record their responses. Examples could include: age; country/culture of origin; educational background; family of origin; their school experiences (positive or negative); number/age of children; religion; etc.
5. Ask caregivers to share with the group one or two examples of how their perspective might change if one or more of their life circumstances were different.

Facilitators' Note:

Helping children to develop a strong sense of empathy helps them to build a sense of security and stronger relationships with other children and adults, positioning them well for learning. It promotes good mental health and social harmony, and can reduce the likelihood of bullies.

Facilitators' Note:

Using your own lived experiences allows participants to connect with you in a different way, and the examples are often richer and have more details.

COLLECT:

Literacy Skill: Perspective

1. Explain to caregivers that we will be talking with children about identifying perspective in different texts. This is an important literacy skill for a few reasons:
 - a. Understanding perspective is part of reading comprehension, and empathizing with characters can help children enter the world of a book and gain more from the experience of reading.
 - b. Storytelling shows and builds empathy. By identifying others' emotions and relating them to their own self, they draw upon these feelings and lessons within the story when they're faced with a similar situation.
 - c. Remind caregivers that we define text broadly, and identifying perspective is an important critical thinking skill when watching the news, looking at Instagram posts, and more. If we expand our view further, understanding others' perspectives is essential for developing empathy for others in the real world. Invite discussion from participants.
2. With participants, create a list of main characters from the first two chapters of *Lisa of Willesden Lane*. The characters are listed below; however, participants might just note "mother" rather than "Malka."
 - a. Lisa (Liseleh) Jura
 - b. Mother - Malka Jura
 - c. Father - Abraham Jura
 - d. Sisters - Sonia and Rosie
 - e. Professor Isseles
 - f. Sid Danziger - Father's cousin (chapter 3)
 - g. Alfred Hardesty - Bloomsbury House (chapter 3)
 - h. Captain and Mrs. Richmond - Peacock Manor (chapter 3)
3. From that list, ask which character's perspective we see the clearest. Whose emotions do we understand the best? Why is that?
4. Invite caregivers to brainstorm, as a group, how the book might be different if it were from a different perspective. What do we gain from knowing Lisa's thoughts and feelings? How would the book change if it were written from the perspective of Lisa's caregivers?

PREPARE FOR PACT TIME

1. Explain to caregivers that we will be watching two short clips of testimony from Holocaust survivors. We will be listening to understand their perspective. Display the biographies and transcripts for Coenraad Rood and Pinchas Gutter.
2. Play the testimony recordings. Coenraad Rood <https://bit.ly/CRood-Testimony> and Pinchas Gutter <https://bit.ly/PGutter-Testimony>
3. Ask caregivers to consider:
 - a. How did Coenraad's and Pinchas's life experiences shape how they think?
 - b. Why might they (Coenraad and Pinchas) think it is important to be tolerant of others?
 - c. Why do you think it was important to them to promote love, respect, and tolerance in their messages? What resonated with you?
 - d. What about their experiences and perspective has made them feel that way?
4. Tell caregivers that they will listen to the video clips again during PACT Time and discuss similar questions with children.
5. After listening to the video clips and discussing, we will make a poster that encourages others to have empathy and tolerance.

Parent and Child Together (PACT) Time®

Literacy Skill: Perspective

1. Let families know that we will be listening to recordings of Holocaust survivors talking about the importance of being accepting and tolerant of one another.
2. Introduce the testimony clips of Coenraad Rood and Pinchas Gutter.
 - a. Coenraad Rood
 - i. Coenraad was a Jewish survivor who was born on August 12, 1917, in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. In his testimony Coenraad shares a message for future generations, promoting love, respect, and tolerance instead of hatred.
 - ii. Play the recording of Coenraad Rood's testimony: <https://bit.ly/CRood-Testimony>
 - b. Pinchas Gutter
 - i. Pinchas is a Jewish survivor who was born in Lodz, Poland on July 21, 1932, and was only eight years old when the war started. In his testimony Pinchas asks today's youth to be accepting and tolerant of one another.
 - ii. Play the recording of Pinchas Gutter's testimony: <https://bit.ly/PGutter-Testimony>
3. Ask families to discuss these questions in family groups or pairs of family groups. Display these discussion questions. Families may not feel comfortable or have time to answer all of them; encourage them to choose at least 3 to discuss. (Facilitators' note: Project these questions, write them on chart paper, or make a handout. Share an experience from your own life to demonstrate d. and e. for participants.)
 - a. What about Coenraad Rood's and Pinchas Gutter's life experiences might have shaped how they think about acceptance and tolerance?
 - b. Do you agree with Coenraad and Pinchas? Why or why not?
 - c. How has your own families' experiences shaped your perspective about acceptance, tolerance, and empathy?
 - d. Why is it hard to have empathy for people who may have a different perspective than you?
 - e. Why is it important to have empathy and tolerance for others?
 - f. How does thinking about another person's perspective through stories and testimonies help us to develop empathy and tolerance?
4. Shadow families to aid in discussion.

CONSTRUCT:

Make a Poster

1. Invite families to make a poster together. Explain that they can use any means (words, images, etc.) to encourage empathy and tolerance. Show participants the art materials provided.
2. Ask the group to choose an example from their lives that illustrates the themes of tolerance and empathy.
3. Provide posters and art supplies for families.
4. Shadow groups to assist where needed.

COMMUNICATE:

Share the Poster

1. At the end of the session, have half the families hang up/display their art and stand near their work; invite the other half to walk around the room to see what others have made. Then switch groups.
2. Remind families that we will add these to the final display at the end of the sessions to share their work with others.

Wrap-up

1. Have families gather together for debriefing.
2. Invite families to share their experiences during PACT Time.
3. Answer any questions that families have.
4. Provide reminders about how families can use perspective as an entry point to talk about books and other texts. Caregivers can practice identifying perspectives with their children and talking about how to empathize with characters in texts (and people in real life).
5. Invite families to watch for examples of empathy in media or real life before the next session. Can they find opportunities to use empathy toward others?
6. Suggest that families read further in *Lisa of Willesden Lane*; ideally they will finish the book before the next session.
7. Thank families for attending. The next session focuses on Family Legacy, which involves preserving family stories. Invite families to think about a memorable tale to share. Remind families of the celebration or culminating event during the next session, in whatever form that may take for this group. Encourage families to continue learning about empathy and tolerance by exploring Wonder of the Day® 2672: “What Does It Mean to Be an Ally?” <https://bit.ly/Wonderopolis2672>

Facilitators’ Note:
Be specific when discussing the celebration planned for your site. By letting families know what to expect, they come prepared to participate.



Chart: “Lisa of Willesden Lane”

Chapter 2, pages 17–19

Think about what is happening in this scene as Lisa prepares to leave her family. Read the text from the book in the first column. Think about what the different characters might feel or do at each point. Use inference—a conclusion reached by looking at evidence—to determine emotions and actions. Write how they might feel in the emotion column. Write what they might do in the action column.

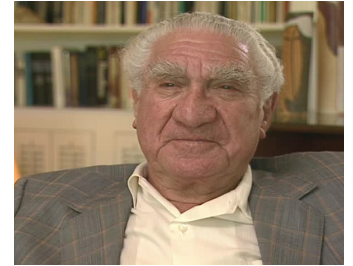
There are a few extra spaces at the bottom—see if you can find more text that supports emotions and actions!

Book Material	Emotion	Action
Lisa: woke before everyone else	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example • Lisa: Lisa might have woken before everyone else because she was nervous or excited. 	
Lisa: determined to remember everything she loved.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example • Lisa: she walked through the house touching things to make sure she had a very recent memory of all the things in the house that she loved.
Lisa: rolled up the sheet music she loved and put it in her suitcase.		
Abraham: He put his arm around Rosie, easing her toward Lisa.		
Sonia: Lisa slipped Professor Iseles' tiny gold charm around Sonia's neck.		

Book Material	Emotion	Action
Abraham: hugged Lisa so tightly she could hardly breathe.		
Malka: held Lisa close.		
Malka: "You must hold on to your music,"... "Please promise me that."		
Lisa: sobbed, "How can I do that without you?"		
Lisa: Looked at the photograph and what was written on the back: "From the mother who will never forget you."		

Biography

Coenraad Rood, son of Hartog and Marianna, was born on August 12, 1917 in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. He had five siblings – Aäron, Maria, Jonas, Machiel and Elisabeth. Coenraad's father worked as a peddler and sold plants, shrubs and trees. Coenraad attended synagogue until his Bar Mitzvah. From 1931 -1938, Coenraad worked as a tailor. On September 1, 1939, Nazi Germany invaded Poland, and World War II began. Nazi Germany invaded the Netherlands on May 10, 1940. Coenraad and his first wife, Elisabeth, married in September 1940. During the war, Coenraad was deported to several concentration camps, including Westerbork, Ravensbrück and Flossenbürg. While imprisoned, Coenraad was forced to paint barracks, construct airplanes, and to build runways. Coenraad was liberated by American forces on May 2, 1945. He spent time in a Displaced Persons' camp, and then returned to Amsterdam. Coenraad and Elisabeth had two children, Magdalena and Herman. Herman died in 1953. The family immigrated to the United States in 1962. After Elisabeth's death, Coenraad married Jannie. They had one daughter, Josepha. They settled in Texas, where Coenraad worked as a tailor. This interview was conducted in Sherman Oaks, California on August 19, 1996.



Testimony Transcript

Coenraad: *"We should try to understand each other. We should try to live with each other, accommodate each other as much as we can. Don't be a boss. Don't be bossy. And especially don't hurt each other. And if somebody speaks to you, listen. But if you don't believe what they're saying, don't be afraid to say so. I do. I do it at my customers."*

Interviewer: *"And then I know you have been speaking out for a long time about your experiences."*

Coenraad: *"Yes."*

Interviewer: *"And now again here for the Shoah Foundation. Is there a special message you would like to pass on to future generations?"*

Coenraad: *"At the end of my presentation for children, I always say don't hate. Don't ever hate each other. It starts by hating. Try to understand each other. And if you cannot love each other, at least respect each other."*

- Coenraad Rood, August 1996

Biography

Pinchas Gutter was born to a Hasidic family in Lodz, Poland on July 21, 1932. Alongside his twin sister Sabina, he grew up in a religious Jewish community. Within a month of the Nazis' 1939 invasion of Poland, the Gutter family, under false Christian identity, moved to Warsaw to avoid danger in their hometown. The family was interned in the Warsaw Ghetto, where they hid in a bunker during the April 1943 Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. They were eventually discovered and deported to the Majdanek concentration camp, where Pinchas' parents and sister were murdered. Pinchas was then transferred to forced labour camps in Skarzysko-Kamienna and Tschenstochau-Rakow, Poland and later to the Buchenwald and Colditz concentration camps in Germany. From Colditz, he was sent on a death march to the Theresienstadt ghetto in Czechoslovakia (now Czech Republic). Pinchas was liberated from Theresienstadt by the Red Army in May 1945. After the war, Pinchas lived briefly in the United Kingdom, where he married his wife Dorothy, and then in Israel, before settling in South Africa for many years. He then immigrated to Canada in 1985 where he served as a lay chaplain at the Baycrest Jewish Home for the Aged in Toronto and as an honorary cantor at his local congregation. Pinchas and his wife had three children and three grandchildren. Pinchas' story became the film *Political, Polish Jew: The Story of Pinchas Gutter*. Pinchas was first interviewed by USC Shoah Foundation in Toronto, Canada on January 12, 1995. In April 2014, he was also the inaugural participant in USC Shoah Foundation's Dimensions in Testimony project.



Testimony Transcript

“My message to the youth of today is to be as tolerant and as accepting of all different human beings, whatever religion, whatever color, whatever culture, whatever their mode of living is. And try and make this world a better place. And that is my message, that is why I tell my stories, and that is what I hope the youth the leaders of the future will achieve.”

- Pinchas Gutter, April 2014