



# The Castle & the Dragon — Lesson Plan

Grade: Pre-K–2 | Duration: 40–50 minutes | CASEL Domain: Social Awareness

---

**Objective:** Students will practice empathy and perspective-taking, learning that things that seem scary are often misunderstood and that listening is braver than fighting.

**Essential Question:** *"What happens when you sit down and listen instead of running away?"*

**Materials:** The personalized story, Cardboard and foil for "armor", Paper and crayons, Puppets or stuffed animals

**Vocabulary:** Castle, Dragon, Knight, Lonely, Misunderstood, Empathy, Brave, Friend, Quest, Armor

## ANTICIPATORY SET (5 MIN)

Show two pictures of the same face: one angry, one sad. Ask: "Are these the same feeling? How can you tell the difference?" Discuss: sometimes anger is sadness in disguise.

## DIRECT INSTRUCTION (15 MIN)

Read aloud. Pause when the dragon is revealed as lonely. Ask: "Did anyone expect this?" Pause at the friendship moment. Emphasize: the bravest thing was NOT fighting. It was LISTENING.

## GUIDED PRACTICE (10 MIN)

Empathy Interview Pairs: practice listening to the "dragon's" story. Use: "Tell me more. How did that feel?" Switch roles.

## INDEPENDENT PRACTICE (10 MIN)

"Other Side" drawing: same creature, two perspectives. Write: "The dragon was really feeling \_\_\_\_."

## CLOSURE (5 MIN)

Don the "Armor of Kindness." Share: "Next time something seems scary, I will \_\_\_\_."

## ASSESSMENT

Observe listening skills during empathy interviews. Review "Other Side" drawings. Exit ticket: "Why was listening braver than fighting?"

## DIFFERENTIATION

**Support:** Provide emotion cards for the dragon to hold. Use puppets for empathy interviews.

**Extend:** Write the full story from the dragon's perspective. Create a "Kindness Quest" adventure for other classrooms.

## HOME CONNECTION

Send home the "Other Side" drawing. Encourage families to discuss: "When have we misjudged someone?"

---