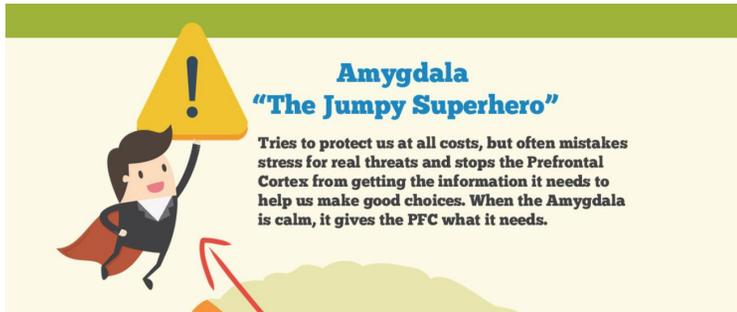


**Lesson/Goal:** *Self Management - Mindfulness*



Now that we've learned a little bit about our brains, let's talk about your Amygdala. The Amygdala (can refer to their brain map) is a group of cells in the middle of your brain. The amygdala is like the brain's super hero, protecting us from threats. It helps us to react quickly when there is danger. Sometimes it's good to react—when there's a real physical threat, like when you see a football coming your way. The amygdala simply decides that there's not enough time to think about it and makes us react quickly: you move your head away from the path of the football.

In this way, the amygdala can decide whether we get to think about the information our body gathers through our senses or not. But there's a problem. The amygdala can't see a difference between real danger and something stressful. You could say it's jumpy and that it makes mistakes. When we're angry, sad, or stressed the amygdala thinks there's real imminent danger. We then simply react without thinking. We might say or do something we regret immediately. We might even start a fight or just freeze when we're offended, or supposed to take a test, or speak in front of the class. Fear and stress shuts down our thinking in this way. This is where

**Lesson/Goal:** *Social Awareness - Empathy*

With the understanding that our amygdala's can be a jumpy super hero and make mistakes if we are not calm, it's important that we also be mindful of our peers and empathetic when their amygdala's are not calm. It's also important that we are empathetic and understanding to others all the time - we never know what someone is going through that we may not see or know about.

**Empathy** is the ability to imagine how someone else is feeling in a particular situation and respond with care. Sometimes you might hear "putting yourself in someone else's shoes" as a way to describe this.

Listen/Watch Read Aloud: [The Last Stop on Market Street by Matt De La Pena](#) & discuss where you saw Empathy being practiced and taught. How did you know?

Empathy Activity:

**CH/LE:** [Situations](#) - From two peoples shoes

- Talk through the two pictures and the perspective that each person in that situation may have. What are they feeling? What would you say to them?

**UE/AP:** What empathy is not, but often times with good intentions gets confused as:

1. Trying to solve a problem when comforting someone
2. Offering unsolicited advice
3. Dismissing feelings
4. Using sarcasm

**Situations:** Either individually or as a class (maybe do a few as a class and

Mindfulness comes to the Rescue!

mind.



### Mindfulness To The Rescue

Mindfulness helps us to calm down, and this, in turn, calms the amygdala so that it allows the information flow to the prefrontal cortex—that part of our brains that helps us make good choices. When we're calm, we can more easily be mindful and make good choices.

CH & LE:

[Watch this Video](#). One way we can be mindful is through our breathing! 1. How do you feel after taking time to breathe? 2. When could you use breathing to help you tame your beast? There are many other ways you can be mindful, but controlling your breathing is one way to be present and calm your amygdala!

**UE & AP:** [Watch this Video](#). This exercise teaches how to gain control of your stressful energy when it becomes too hard to handle. Ask students to take a moment after and think about situations, times of day, or current things that are bringing stress upon them and ways they can try to be mindful and combat that.

then put the remainder and have students work through on their own).

1. Have students read the situation card.
2. Label what emotion/feeling they think someone in that situation would have.
3. What would be an empathetic statement/response you could say to someone in that situation?