

# INSTRUCTIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

for helping students create insightful answers for the question about **Unmet Needs**  
in **Compassionate Comprehension with the Common Core**

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For a complete list of all 5 Key Questions, please contact: LKW\_BetterWorld@yahoo.com

**#5. What do you think were the character's **unmet needs** that resulted with the feeling or feelings? That is, what was it that they valued greatly, but were not getting or experiencing? What were they wanting, or what were they going for with their words or actions?**

Acceptance	Creativity	Recreation/ fun
Appreciation	Empathy	Respect
Autonomy: Choosing our own dreams and plans	Harmony	Rest
Belonging	Honesty	Safety
Calm	Love	Self-Worth
Closeness	Peace	Support
Compassion	Protection	Understanding
	Reassurance	

Did the character have any other unmet needs or values that are not listed above?

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What part of the text led you to that conclusion? (Give the page number and quote.)

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## TEACHING ABOUT "UNMET NEEDS":

*IMPORTANT: Tell students that, in discussing "Unmet Needs," they'll be learning about something that would be new learning for many, many adults. In fact, many people older than they are have never asked themselves, "Why am I feeling this way? What are my unmet needs?"*

\* In the boxes/ table above are some needs we all have. When these needs go unmet, we may feel sad, afraid, and/or angry. Do whatever vocabulary expansion activities are needed to help students understand the terms used above. (Please see below for a more extensive list.)

\* Creating a poster/ chart with the students with definitions of **Unmet Needs** would be a wonderful introduction, and could then be posted as reference for months to come. The poster might be done in list form, or as semantic map/ mind map/ graphic organizer.

\* Unmet needs = something that a person values/ is needing/ is wanting but which that person does not have/ enjoy.

Pat Kurtz offered the following:

- \* Needs can also be thought of as what I care a lot about... what is really important to me.
- \* In attempting to identify and understand someone else's needs, we can ask ourselves, "What was he/ she going for when he said/ did that?"
- \* If you were this character, how would you feel? What do you think you'd be needing?

**\* What "Unmet Needs" are NOT:**

Unless a person's needs for "food/ clothing/ shelter" are not met, an "Unmet Need" is NOT something tangible--- that is, something that can be bought/ sold/ given as a concrete gift.

An example: If, in a story, a child's pencil is purposely broken by an angry classmate, students may say that the victim's unmet need was a pencil. Teachers will need to guide students to understand that the victim's unmet needs are perhaps a mixture of the following:

Respect, Safety, Calm, and Empathy from the teacher and other classmates.

Also, especially if the angry classmate was a friend, the victim could also be needing Understanding and Harmony with the perpetrator.

There are a number of different ways to phrase the question that can help students understand the concept of Unmet Needs:

- 1 \* What do you think were the character's **unmet needs** that resulted with the feeling or feelings?
- 2 \* What was it that the character valued greatly, but was not getting or experiencing?
- 3 \* What was each character wanting, or what were they going for with their words or actions?
- 4 \* What do you think were the character's **unmet needs** that resulted with the feeling or feelings?
- 5 \* What did the character really need or want, but did not get in that situation?
- 6 \* How did the words or actions of that character show what was needed or wanted?

\* Dr. Marshall Rosenberg, the creator of "Compassionate Nonviolent Communication" (cnvc.org) encouraged us to view any/ all attacks--- whether verbal or physical--- as "the tragic expression of unmet needs."

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS to explore, perhaps in a class discussion, wherein the teacher can help students become aware of answers which they may not have arrived upon on their own--- and, of course, have students continually refer back to the text to support their answers with evidence from the text:

Q: What unmet needs still exist?

Q: How can they best be met?

Q: Who might be the best person/ people to meet those unmet needs?

Q: If you were able to be a character in the story, how would you choose to best try to meet the unmet needs?

Q: Did the character make choices which resulted in his/ her needs being unmet?

Q: Did the character later make choices which resulted in his/ her needs being met?

(This is also offered as support for helping students answer Q. #4):

**Additional potential conversations with students to deepen learning and understanding**  
**--- also recommended in assisting students in answering Q. #4, pertinent here, as well:**

\* Have students reflect upon the difference between what they "could" and "would" do to help; that is, there are many possibilities of what COULD be done... however, the students are called upon to choose the very best ones, to report what they WOULD do. Have students explain why they chose those particular compassionate and/or Restorative words or actions as what they WOULD do.

\* Challenge the students to also explain why they believe their choice/s is/are arguably more helpful than another option, again returning to the text for any evidence to be found there. (Compare/Contrast)

\* Introduce the concepts of **Trauma Informed Care (TIC)** and **Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE)**, and challenge students to tailor their solutions to take those concepts into account, when appropriate.

**For example**, the author might make the reader aware of factors that are unknown to the victim--- perhaps the child who angrily knocked his classmate's lunch off the table for no apparent reason, just said goodbye to his mother as she was being incarcerated... or, perhaps he had been beaten at home... yet again.

For more information for exploring TIC and ACE, many resources are available online, and efforts have recently begun in the SDUSD; notably, both are employed at Cherokee Point Elementary.

In real life, RJ conferences often uncover the need for wrap-around services for the victim and/ or the offended, since, in that venue, ACE's may be discovered which then need to be addressed, viewed through the lens of TIC.

**Recommended:** Trauma Informed Care: <http://www.nasmhpd.org/TA/nctic.aspx>

<http://acestoohigh.com/> and, from a recently begun local group:

ACEs 101 <http://www.acesconnection.com/collection/aces-101>

\* This much more extensive list might prove quite helpful: (c) 2005 by Center for Nonviolent Communication Website: [www.cnvc.org](http://www.cnvc.org) Email: [cnvc@cnvc.org](mailto:cnvc@cnvc.org) Phone: +1.505-244-4041

CONNECTION	PHYSICAL WELL-BEING	AUTONOMY
acceptance	air	choice
affection	food	freedom
appreciation	movement/exercise	independence
belonging	rest/sleep	space
cooperation	safety	spontaneity
communication	shelter	
closeness	touch	<b>MEANING</b>
community	water	awareness
companionship		celebration of life
compassion	<b>HONESTY</b>	challenge
consideration	authenticity	clarity
consistency	integrity	competence
empathy	presence	consciousness
inclusion		contribution
intimacy	<b>PLAY</b>	creativity
love	joy	discovery
mutuality	humor	efficacy
nurturing		effectiveness
respect/self-respect	<b>PEACE</b>	growth
safety	beauty	hope
security	communion	learning
stability	ease	mourning
support	equality	participation
to know and be known	harmony	purpose
to see and be seen	inspiration	self-expression
to understand and	order	stimulation
be understood		to matter
trust		understanding
warmth		

