



## EMPATHY CHECK-IN MONTH... WITH MICHAEL ROSEN

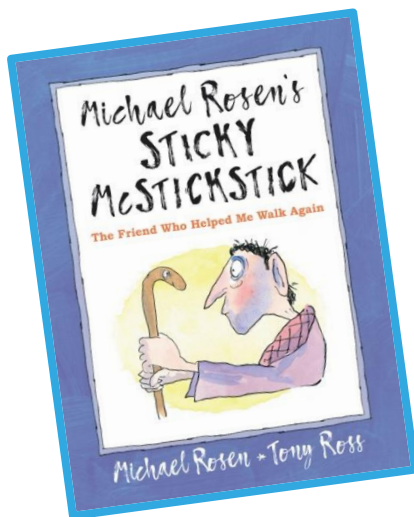
Nearly 6 months ago, as we prepared for [Empathy Day](#), people across the country went on [Empathy Walks](#) in their local community, read brilliant stories and made [Empathy Resolutions](#) - something they would do to help improve the lives of others.

Now, to inspire us all to keep building our empathy skills, November is [Empathy Check-In Month](#), led by Michael Rosen and linked to the publication of his new book, *Sticky McStickstick*. Michael's asking everyone how they're getting on - did we manage to keep our Resolutions? And encouraging anyone who hasn't yet been on a Walk or made a Resolution to join in!



### *Sticky McStickstick*

The walking and empathy themes in Michael's new book make it a perfect springboard for empathy-focused work in schools and libraries. After being seriously ill, he had to learn to walk again with the help of doctors, nurses and his trusty NHS stick - 'Sticky McStickstick'. As the book launches and as a way to celebrate and spread empathy Michael has made a video reflecting on his own Empathy Resolution and inspiring pupils to join in with Empathy Check-In month.



## SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

### READ

Share *Sticky McStickstick* as a read-aloud with your class.

**Take Michael's perspective**, and encourage pupils to use the words and illustrations to answer the following:

- Michael, what were your feelings when you were ill?
- What did it feel like to have missed 40 days because you were asleep?
- What were your feelings when you learned to walk again?
- List the ways hospital staff showed empathy towards you.

- Michael, what are your feelings once learned to walk without StickyMcStickstick?
- What if you couldn't have walked again - what challenges would you have faced?

**Take Sticky McStickstick's perspective.** Sticky must feel a HUGE sense of responsibility to keep Michael safe, to stop him from falling and to get his legs moving again. If you were to create a word wall to help Sticky feel pride in his important role, what words could you use? We could start with 'Sticky, you are strong, safe, supportive...' to get the wall going.

Sticky sometimes hides from Michael; have you ever hidden yourself away from something you do not want to do, how did you feel? Share that experience with a friend using the [Listening Switch](#) exercise to show you are listening to them.

**Make a Read For Empathy recommendation.** Michael Rosen discusses his Read For Empathy book recommendation at 7:40 on this [Empathy Conversation video](#). Discuss which books have helped you to see the world from someone else's point of view, and fill out a Read For Empathy recommendation card which can be found [here](#).

## CONNECT

**Do a new Empathy Walk, or revisit the one you did in June.** Watch [Michael's video](#) and then go on an [Empathy Walk](#), or revisit the one you did in June. You could do these around your community or even as a simple walk around your school. If pupils did an Empathy Walk for Empathy Day, they might want to repeat the Walk to see if anything has changed. Do they notice anything different on the Walk this time? Have their feelings changed or deepened since their last Walk? Did they make a Resolution tied to their original Walk, and if so how are they doing with it?

**Take an accessibility-themed Empathy Walk.** As Michael suggests, you could do an Empathy Walk from the perspective of someone, like him, who was struggling to move around. See [Chrissie Sains' Walk](#) as an example. Encourage pupils to take an Empathy Walk around their school or local community - thinking from Michael's perspective while he was learning to walk again.

- Which parts of school are easy to get around?
- Are there railings?
- Lots of stairs or slopes?
- Any slippery surfaces?
- Lifts?
- Where would be a good place for Sticky McStickstick to hide?
- Would there be places for Michael to stop and take a rest?

What could you do to make the school simpler to move around? Are there other issues people face that you might want to help make a better space for people to visit? What if a visitor had a hearing or visual impairment? Or used a wheelchair?

Would visitors living with other challenges find your school a helpful place to move around? Create a plan for helping to make your school the most welcoming place that you can.

**Create a Sticky trail.** Ask pupils to make their own Sticky McSticksticks, writing along the side some of the challenges people who struggle to walk might have. Hide them in plain sight around your classroom or in your school. Create a trail for people to find all the Sticky McSticksticks and learn about other people's struggle to get around.

## ACT

**Make or revisit your Empathy Resolution.** Think about the [Empathy Resolutions](#) you made on Empathy Day - have you done much to make it happen? Could you do a little more? If you haven't made an Empathy Resolution, don't worry - why not make one today? They could make an 'Every Day is Empathy Day' Resolution poster or they might want to write it on a lolly stick to keep to the *Sticky McStickstick* theme! Check out Michael's original Empathy Resolution from Empathy Day at 1:23:09 [here](#).

**Say thank you.** Michael wrote this book for doctors, nurses and other hospital staff who saved his life and helped him recover. He talks about the importance of the true kindness and care of others, writing this about Sticky: 'he reminds me of the kind people who taught me all those things right from the time I couldn't even stand up.' Who are the people who help you at school, at home and in your community? Create a card for them, including the words 'You showed me empathy when...' You might want to hold an awards ceremony where children recognise people in school who give support to others.

**Be more Sticky!** Sticky provides support to Michael through his recovery. Ask pupils to think about who might need their support, what support they need, and how they might best be that support for another person.

Whatever your class does, please remember to share it with us on Twitter, Instagram or Facebook tagging **@EmpathyLabUK** and using **#EmpathyCheckIn**, and you will be in with a chance of winning a free copy of *Sticky McStickstick* for your school! Terms and conditions [here](#). Good luck!