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Kindness Counts

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826LA

GRADES 1–3

TYPE
INFORMATIONAL
SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL
LEARNING

COMMITMENT
1 SESSION: 1 HOUR
AND 35 MINUTES

PRESENTED BY
CARTOON NETWORK

This lesson was developed and made possible as part of the Inclusion Storytelling Project, a collaboration between 826LA, 826 National, and Cartoon Network’s award-winning “Stop Bullying: Speak Up” campaign. The lesson is centered on writing as a vehicle for Social-Emotional Learning and is designed to encourage youth to share their individual stories about kindness and empathy in an effort to stop bullying before it starts.

SESSION:

YOU WILL NEED

- Post-It notes or index cards
- Kindness Essay Brainstorm Worksheet
- Kindness Essay Example

HOW TO BEGIN (10 MINUTES)

Students receive Post-It notes or index cards and will have 2 minutes to silently write a note about kindness. This could be an example of kindness, a nice thing about someone they

know, or how kindness makes them feel.

As students finish, ask them to hang the notes on the front wall, collecting all anecdotes about kindness together in one location. Allow students 2-3 minutes to read some of the notes on the wall before returning to their seats. Ask for a few students—possibly one from each table or row—to share one line on kindness that stood out to them. Then, ask students how it felt to see all those notes written on the wall. Students can discuss with their tables or as a whole group, depending on group dynamics.

STEP 1 (5 MINUTES)

Introduce Prompt

From there, display the prompt below to students on the board and ask a student to read it aloud to the group:

- *What do you think of when you hear the word “kindness?” Write an essay about ways people can show kindness to others. Include an example about a time you saw or participated in an act of kindness.*

Students will then read aloud the “Example Essay”. You can choose whatever read aloud method feels best, i.e. popcorn, choral, etc. Depending on the grade level of your students, ask students to identify details from the sample essay. What parts of the essay are easy to picture? What ideas are supported with details?

STEP 2 (20 MINUTES)

Brainstorm/ Graphic Organizer

Pass out the “Kindness Essay Brainstorm” handout to prompt students to further develop their ideas. Keep the example essay projected while students brainstorm for some added inspiration.

After completing their brainstorm, have students add or brainstorm a few more details, either on a separate piece of paper or the back of their worksheets. Consider these idea starters that are specific for this prompt:

- When I think about “kindness,” I think about...
- Being kind makes me feel...
- Showing kindness is important because...
- Have you ever done something nice for someone else?
- There are lots of/tons of/so many ways people can be kind to each other.

STEP 3 (30-45 MINUTES)

Drafting

It's time to write! Students will begin writing drafts of their Kindness Essays. They should use their notes from their brainstorm to launch their ideas into written pieces. Encourage students to add details to their piece based on their own experiences: what does kindness feel, sound, taste, smell like?

Ask early finishers to draw a picture of the act of kindness they described, add

more details to the wall of kindness that they wrote about in their essay, or help others finish.

STEP 4 (10-15 MINUTES)

Share out and Close out

In groups, students should share their writing, choosing the amount they wish to share. Encourage all students to share at least one line!

To close the lesson, ask students to write something they liked about someone else's essay down on a Post-It. Then, ask students to hang their Post-Its up again on the wall. Depending on yearly goals and what makes sense for your space, you and your class can continue to grow the "Kindness Wall" throughout the semester.