

A Book of Kindness

Writing and Art Activity

Objectives:

The students will:

- define the term kindness.
- brainstorm examples of kind deeds.
- describe a kind act they did or received.

Materials:

writing materials; drawing paper; colored marking pens, crayons, or pencils; glue; a large three-ring binder

Procedure:

Write the word kindness on the board. Ask the students to help you define its meaning. In the process, make these points about kindness:

- Kindness is a quality that is developed from being kind.
- Being kind means being considerate, thoughtful, or helpful.
- An act of kindness is something you do. It is a deed or behavior. It's possible to have kind thoughts and feelings, but they are private until you express them in an act of kindness.
- A kind act is always done voluntarily, not because it is required.

Ask the students to brainstorm examples of kind acts. List their suggestions on the board. Encourage a variety of ideas, by asking questions like "What are some kind acts you can do for a friend? ...a classmate? ...brother or sister? ...parent? ...neighbor? ...your teacher? ...grandparent? ...a stranger? ...the environment? Include things like:

- make friends with a new student
- offer to share things
- talk to or play with kids who seem left out
- give someone a compliment
- read a story to a younger child
- visit senior citizens in a retirement or rest home
- help a friend do his/her chores
- help a classmate solve a tough math problem
- surprise your parent by doing an "extra" chore at home
- hold a door for someone
- pick up trash when you see it lying around

Announce that the students are going to write about and draw an act of kindness they've done — or one that someone else has done for them. Distribute writing and drawing materials. In your own words, explain:

Describe the kind act, tell who did it, and for whom it was done. You don't have to mention names, just use words like "friend," "teacher," "sister," or "older person." Then write about the feelings of the person who did

the kind deed, and the feelings of the person who received it. Draw a picture that shows the kind act being done.

Use whatever system you normally use to have the students correct their spelling and grammar and then complete a rewrite. As a final step, have the students assemble the story and drawing, either by writing a final version somewhere on the drawing itself, or by gluing the drawing to the story page, or vice-versa.

Have the students share their stories and pictures in small groups. Then place all of the finished work in the three-ring binder. Insert a cover page titled, "Book of Kindness." (Have one of the children illustrate the cover page.)

Note:

Adjust the demands of the assignment to the ability levels of your students. Younger students need only write a sentence or two; older ones could be asked to write a true or fictional story about kindness. Have non-writers draw a picture of the kind act and dictate a sentence or two for you or an aide to letter at the bottom of the drawing.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why is it important to try to turn kind thoughts into kind deeds?
2. When you have a kind thought about someone, how can you express it?
3. Why can't chores and assignments ever be acts of kindness?
4. Why do acts of kindness have to be voluntary?

