

Kindness Counts

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Take students on an exploration of kindness at school with this engaging lesson.



Objective: Students will be able to define kindness and cite examples of kindness at school.

Grades: K–5

Time: 60–75 minutes

Materials: Kindness Questions (cards provided), cut apart; Kindness Court (cards provided), cut apart; tape

DIRECTIONS

Bell-Ringer Activity

1. Before students arrive, loosely tape a different Kindness Question card under six students' chairs.
2. When the lesson begins, invite each student to check under his or her chair for a card. If a child has one, direct him or her to carefully remove it, read it aloud, and provide a quick answer. (Help students read their questions as needed.)
3. Explain to students that the focus of today's lesson is kindness and that by the end of the lesson, they should be able to tell what kindness means and cite examples of kindness at school.
2. Tell students they are going to serve as judges on the Kindness Court. Their job is to determine whether each of the events you share has an example of kindness or not. Remind students of some of the ideas their classmates shared about kindness in the Bell-Ringer Activity.
3. Have students stand. Read (or invite a student to read) the top card on the stack. Instruct students to stand near the left side of the board if they think the event has an example of kindness or stand near the right side if they do not think it has an example of kindness.
4. After students are situated, invite a student to share the reason he or she went to the chosen side of the board. If time allows, guide other students to share their thinking too. Lead students to understand why the event did or did not show kindness, and then tape the card to the corresponding side of the T chart.

Whole-Group Instruction

1. Make a T chart on the board, labeling the left side "Kind" and the right side "Unkind." Set the stack of Kindness Court cards and four strips of tape near the board.

- Repeat Steps 3 and 4 with the other cards. Then have students find a partner and define kindness. Provide time for students to share their thinking with the class; then write a class definition of kindness on the board.

Small-Group and Whole-Group Practice

- Have students form groups of two to four children. Direct students to plan a short skit with their group that shows an example of being kind at school. Encourage originality.
- Provide time for groups to practice; then have each group perform its skit. After each group performs, have a student from the audience explain why the skit shows kindness. Then have each child repeat in unison, "Kindness at school counts."

- Draw students' attention to the class definition of kindness. Have them read it with you; then have them recite one more time, "Kindness at school counts."

Progress Check

Have each student describe in a journal entry one way he or she can show kindness at school. Also, have the child tell why he or she thinks it is important to be kind at school.

Homework

Have each child reflect on a time when he or she was greatly affected by an act of kindness at school. Instruct the student to write a personal narrative that details the event and tells why it had the effect it did. For younger students, have students dictate or draw pictures of a time they were affected by an act of kindness at school.

Can you create kindness in the classroom?

Our popular course **Kindness: Can It Be Taught?** explores how to help students build the key components of kindness: empathy, perspective-taking, honesty, and trustworthiness. You'll learn tools and techniques to help students interpret and show compassion for others' behavior—even when it's very different from their own.

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MY NOTES

Kindness Questions

Cut apart and tape under six students' chairs.

How do you feel when someone is kind to you? Explain.



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How do you feel when someone is unkind to you or someone else? Explain.



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What are some examples of kind words?



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Does it take a lot of effort to be kind? Why or why not?



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What does it look like when people are kind to each other?



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Why is kindness important at school?



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**Kindness
Court**



Maria and Tex are cleaning after an art lesson. Tex is finished cleaning his area, so he helps Maria clean her space. Maria smiles and says, "Thanks, Tex."

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**Kindness
Court**



Cal and his classmates are playing kickball. When it is Cal's turn to kick, he misses the ball three times. He shrugs his shoulders and goes to the end of the line. One of his classmates says, "You'll never be a pro kickball player, Cal!"

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**Kindness
Court**



Flo and Martin are sitting next to each other at lunch. The two students are whispering and giggling about the foods their classmate Alex is eating.

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**Kindness
Court**



Dakota is writing a thank-you note to her bus driver, Ms. Kathy. That is because after Dakota got off the bus this morning, Ms. Kathy saw that Dakota had left her lunchbox on her seat. Ms. Kathy brought Dakota's lunchbox to her classroom.

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