



Random Acts of Kindness for Kids

Title: Random Acts of Kindness for Kids

Submitted by:

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Subject(s): Language Arts, Social Studies, and Character Education

Intended Grade Level(s): K-12



Description:

Students create an email chain around the world where they write about their acts of kindness.

Curriculum Benchmarks:

MI.ELA.2.EL.1 Write with developing fluency for multiple purposes to produce a variety of texts, such as stories, journals, learning logs, directions, and letters.

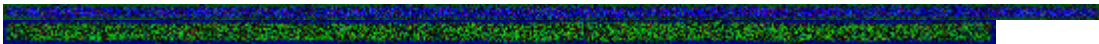
MI.ELA.1.EL.3 Employ multiple strategies to construct meaning, including word recognition skills, context clues, retelling, predicting, and generating questions.

MI.ELA.3.EL.8 Respond to the ideas or feelings generated by texts and listen to the response of others.

Materials/Hardware/Software:

One computer with email access

The book: Random Acts of Kindness by Conari Press (Editor), Dawna Markova, Daphne Rose Kingma (Authors) paperback, Jan 1993.



Pre Learning Activities:

Defining Random Acts of Kindness: The first step in teaching Random Acts of Kindness is defining the phrase. Most kids easily understand "act" and "kindness" but might be unfamiliar with "random". Helping them define and learn to use this word is crucial to understanding the phrase.

Explaining Random Acts of Kindness: Reading or telling children Random Acts of Kindness stories is a very effective way to get them to fully understand the concept.

Post a Call for collaborators looking for participant classrooms around the world. Some good sources are

Intercultural Email Classroom Connections

<http://www.awesomelibrary.org/>

International Education and Resource Network

<http://www.learn.org/learn/>

Global SchoolNet Foundation

<http://www.gsn.org/>

Electronic School House (ESH) on America Online

GrassRoots on Canada's SchoolNet

<http://www.schoolnet.ca/grassroots>

Classroom Connect

<http://www.classroom.net>

Activities & Procedures

1. Decide what role you want your partners to play and for this project limit the number of participants to the bare essentials. Since you are doing web collaboration, you may find you only need a few classrooms to meet your needs.

To meet your goals your call for Collaborators should include:

A brief description of your project

An outline of the educational objective of the project

Your project registration form

Your project's timeline

Details about whom you wish to partner

The project director's contact information

TIP: Post your call 4 weeks in advance of your project launch, including a timeline to help teacher's plan.

2. Begin by asking one student to write about a time when he or she did a good deed or was kind to someone. Create an order for each student in your classroom to respond (similar to a chain letter).
3. Have the next student in order respond to the first's essay with his or her own essay. They must begin their essay building on the previous person's essay (a single word, topic, theme, etc.). For example, they might begin with "I, too, helped a stranger..."
4. Email your class's essays to the list of participants with instructions on how to continue the chain to 10 or more classrooms (with a deadline). Keeping your classroom's email address at the bottom of the list.

Assessment/Evaluation:

1. Pose a challenge: once a week, practice anonymous acts of kindness for someone who might not expect it.
2. Mark on a wall map where the essays come from.
3. Create a scrapbook from the collection of essays and illustrate.
4. Have students read selected essays from the chain and discuss. How do these acts affect the world?
5. Watch as the essays flood in! Are there similarities between the essays? Are there differences? What have you learned from other students' acts of kindness.



Follow-up Activities

General

Create a web page posting the information and have students share some of the essays.

Create posters with samples of "acts of kindness" with pictures.

Share these activities with other classes.

Submit articles to the local newspaper.

Arrange for kids to attend a meeting of your local or state government and talk about the importance of RAK. They might want to bring RAK bags filled with little goodies and decorated with kindness pictures or sayings.

Have your principal start each day with a reading about kindness, or let kids do reading.

Hold a children's kindness drawing or coloring campaign; winner receives a copy of the Random Acts of Kindness book or other kindness book.

Collect food for your food bank or shelters for the homeless or abused.

Bridge the gap between "rival" school with a special event, encouraging kids to "look for the similarities" instead of the differences.

Raise money for your school's kindness programs through the kids, such as "Hat Day," where kids donate 50 cents in exchange for being able to wear a hat on that

day, or buy candy bars in bulk and see them back to the kids.

Hold a Teddy Bear Drive and donate the bears to a children's shelter for new arrivals.

Have classrooms create murals depicting kindness and bring them to nursing homes and senior centers.

Contact local restaurants and coffee shops. Ask them to provide blank paper place mats on which kids can write their kindness stories or drawings depicting kind acts. The restaurant can perpetuate the supply by offering customers a 5-cent discount in exchange for their creating a replacement Kindness Placemat.

Use a "button campaign" to spread kindness: Staff members get buttons each Monday as they sign in, then give them to kids they observe doing a RAK, telling them exactly what they did to earn the button. Kids wear the buttons all week (can receive more than one). At the end of the week, kids with buttons get their picture taken with the principal. One is enlarged and placed on a centrally located bulletin board.

Create a program where kids write their commitments to specific RAK's on construction paper cut out in the shape of footprints. The completed footprints are then put up on the walls of the school, with a sign saying, "Follow the way to a better school and a better community."

"Connect" classrooms in the hallway with cutouts in the shape of people, showing how "we are all connected".

Purchase a button-making machine and let kids design and create kindness buttons for themselves or community.

Establish specific days of the week that focus on kindness in different areas of their lives, such as "Kindness in the Classroom Day," "Good Manners Day" and "Kindness at Home Day".

Promote special classroom recycling projects; proceeds benefit special activity.

District-wide student rally with performances/storytelling/honorees/addresses/etc.

Create "Kindness Wands" for kids in grades K-4... children anoint each other as Kindness Kids when they witness kind deeds.

Try a "Pizza Kindness Kids" event, where each child gets a kindness pizza (cardboard) divided into sections. When they do a RAK for someone, they get that person's signature on one section. When all kids in the class have completed their Kindness Pizzas, they get a Pizza Party.

Put photos of kind acts in hearts on classroom or hallway walls.

Special RAK Day assemblies: sing kindness songs/give out "Caught You Being Good Certificates".

Teachers or PTO parents make a "Friendship Salad" from fruit brought in by kids... everyone shares.

Students and teachers donate pennies and purchase/plant flowers/ bulbs; or otherwise beautify school grounds.

Classrooms collect "cans for kindness" and hold "ant parade" assembly where students march up to collection bin with their donation made in the name of someone who's been kind to them; child send certificate to that person saying food was donated in honor of their kindness.

Music classes focus on kindness songs.

Help kids practice goal setting about kindness to be accomplished during weekday.

School library provides free cocoa for students.

School newspaper creates a special “kindness section” where good news about acts of kindness is reported. If there’s no school newspaper, create a classroom newspaper. Create school kindness chain. Each classroom uses precut 2” x 11” strips of construction on which students committing or witnessing kind acts can write about it. At the end of week read strips and make into chain. At end of project link all classrooms’ chains together and display them in the halls or at city hall. Make construction paper train engine. Write “Kindness Chain” on it; post it on the wall in main hallway. Each teacher gets a construction paper train car with his or her room number etc. on it. When student commits act of kindness, their name goes on train car. When all students in class have name on train car, teacher can hitch car for their class to train. Plan special even to celebrate when train is complete with car from each class. Class sends letter to local businesses offering suggestions for how they can make the world kinder. Look in newspaper for stories about acts of kindness; summarize for the rest of the class. Write and deliver “thank you for being a good neighbor” notes telling neighbors what makes them special to the child. Create and decorate collection boxes for kindness stories for merchants’ counters.

Kids

Send letters, poems, artwork, or special treats to our soldiers in Bosnia or other countries. Keep a Kindness Journal; younger kids include drawings. Make kindness posters for display in the windows of local merchants. Draw Kindness Buddy names and secretly do something kind for that person during the week. Older kids write poems, raps, songs, plays, etc. Create kindness bird feeders. Bring double lunches for the week; extras given to homeless. Give coffee/donuts/chocolate kisses and hugs or other goodies to crossing guards/school bus drivers/school staff/police, firemen, etc. Create kindness posters and deliver them to city service workers with smiles and treats. Write their own stories on hearts and place them on a wall; try surrounding a large heart with a kindness slogan on it. Make banners, put up in sponsoring/participating merchants' stores thanking them for their help. Form a group of kids to help the school staff... in the cafeteria, younger kids can clean lunch trays while older kids can patrol the aisles to give the adult monitors a break; pick up trash or dust classrooms for the evening custodian. Create special kindness banners for display near principal's office. Present signed petition to local Senator/Representative requesting state Kindness Week. Pick up litter on school grounds. Write positive notes to another child in their class. Write letters to your mayor asking for an official community RAK Week. Write appreciation notes to their homeroom teachers.

Write letters of appreciation to past teachers/school support/parents/friends who made a difference in that child's life.

Pair up during the day and read to one another.

Make coupon books for parents/siblings/friends to do kind deeds/tasks for them.

Older students "adopt" younger students for the day; read to them, etc.

Student Council launches poster campaign; creates kindness slogan marquee.

Tutors do acts of kindness for teachers for whom they tutor.

Special interest clubs brings theme goodies to classrooms.

List their fears related to kind acts (such as intervening when another child is being bullied). Then divide fears into two columns: those that should stop them from doing an act of kindness (such as being alone with a stranger), and those they can try to overcome so that kindness can be done.

Make a kindness collage for a friend from pictures and words found in magazines or newspapers; it should tell something about that friend.

List words and short phrases that could be used to describe a kind person; class reviews to see how many different words/phrases they all came up with.

Make a crossword puzzle with names of kind people from history; when puzzles complete, discuss how each of them was kind.

Forms "Kindness Gangs," with a great name; a symbol, mascot, or color; write a mission statement telling why gang was formed/goals/etc.; establish any rules to follow. Write list of acts gang can do right away;

Write theme/rap song using a tune they all know.

Create a "smile file" with cartoons that make them smile, when a friend seems down, give them a cartoon.

Great Web Sites for Random Acts of Kindness

Random Acts of Kindness for Kids

<http://www.conari.com/>

Random Acts of kindness for Kids: Kids' Random Acts of Kindness is filled with inspirational stories of generosity written by children of all ages. From whimsical and funny to moving and thoughtful, these stories reveal the surprisingly insightful ways our children feel about kindness and compassion.

Kids Act – neat site



<http://www.scsn.net/users/kidsact/>

Random Acts of Kindness page where you can share your stories

<http://www.readersndex.com/randomacts/>

