

30 Random Acts of Kindness

This lesson gives students an opportunity to work as a class to perform a number of random acts of kindness (RAKs) in various ways throughout the school. Students will mark their RAKs on a master calendar and work to complete them all by a deadline set by the teacher. At the end, students can share their experiences and brainstorm ways to continue showing kindness even when school is done for the year.

Kindness Sub-Concept(s)

Vulnerability, Humility

Lesson Timeframe

25-30 minutes. Spread out over time depending on how long students have to complete their random acts of kindness. This could be introduced at the beginning of the day and completed at the end, or introduced at the beginning of the week and completed at the end of the week.

Required Materials

- Random Acts of Kindness List (attached)

Standards Map

This lesson aligns with CASEL Competencies, National Health Education Standards, and Common Core State Standards. Please refer to the [Standards Map](#) for more information.



DESIGNATED BY CASEL
AS A RECOMMENDED PROGRAM
FOR SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING.
See last page for details.

Lesson Objective

Students will be able to:

- Understand what a random act of kindness is.
- Complete a certain number of acts of kindness by a given deadline.
- Discuss the experience and impact of engaging in random acts of kindness.

Teacher Connection/Self-Care

As we head into the final week or so of the school year, the courage to respond with kindness leads us out of the classroom and back with our families and friends as summer vacation looms in the not so distant future. Do you have the courage to respond with kindness at home?

At times, it can often feel harder to lean into kindness with those closest to you as they are also the people that know firsthand how to press your buttons and dampen your mood. However, the real test in your ability to respond with kindness is how you treat those in your inner circle. This week, and throughout the summer this year, use our namesake, Random Acts of Kindness, as a motto for how to treat others each day. Become more conscious of the people closest to you. Find one small thing you can do for each of them daily. Something small, but meaningful; something simple, but kind. No random act of kindness is too small to impact another.

Your concentrated effort to make your immediate world a better place has a ripple effect on the larger world around you. How can you courageously respond with kindness on a daily basis?

Tips for Diverse Learners

- Illustrate the choices on the list.
- Write the list in English and in another language especially if there are ELL students in the class.
- Adjust the number of choices based on the ability and class size; 12 choices may be too many for your students to remember/process.



Share

5-7 minutes

For this last unit, we have been talking about courage. Based on the lessons we've had so far, can someone review the definition of courage for us?

Invite a student's response.

Courage is being willing to try new things, to stand up for yourself and for others, and to do the right thing even if others pressure you to do the wrong thing.

Does anyone have an act of courage they want to share, either that they have done or that they have witnessed since we started this unit?

Invite 2-3 students to briefly share.

Thank you for having the courage to share! Ultimately, it takes courage to do what is right and what is kind.



Inspire

7-10 minutes

For today's lesson, we are going to do a random act of kindness! A random act of kindness can sometimes be a fun surprise of kindness given to someone else without them expecting it! These acts of kindness are not announced, not necessarily planned, and not rewarded. You are doing kind things for others just because you want someone else to feel good, not because you want anyone to notice you. (However, it's okay if others witness you in your act of kindness! Science says that a random act of kindness boosts the mood of the receiver, the giver, AND the witness!). The difference is that you aren't announcing how wonderful you are; you are simply acting and letting the kindness flow wherever it may!

This can also take courage because often we want to be recognized for the good things we have done. It takes discipline to develop the skills of kindness and of doing the right thing without expecting recognition. Does anyone remember what core concept we have studied this year that has a similar definition? Doing the right thing even when no one is watching or will reward us?

Invite student response; we are looking for "integrity" here.

Yes - integrity! We have to work to build skills that enable us to make careful, correct, and considerate decisions each time we are faced with a choice. That is what we have been trying to do all year! How many of you feel you have the skills to make good, kind choices, even when it feels hard or unpopular?

Invite a show of hands. If there is time, invite a few students to share one skill or strategy they have learned this year.

This is great! Today we are going to put those skills to work by committing a random act of kindness for someone else.



Empower

15-20 minutes

Here is how we are going to do our random acts of kindness (RAKs). You all have a choice of which RAK to complete: where, when, and for whom. We have a RAK ideas list (attached) with different ideas on them. Project the RAK calendar on the smartboard or print/handout a copy to each student.

You have until _____ to complete at least _____ of these RAKs for someone else. Extend this as long as you need/want to and set a minimum number to complete; one is perfectly fine, though you may want to challenge your students with more.

The object is to complete your act without notice or expecting recognition. When you complete your RAK, sign your name in its respective square on this master calendar. Ensure you have a “master” calendar printed or created - ideally large enough so there is room for multiple people to sign each square - prominently displayed in the room.

To review: the goal is for everyone to have signed at least _____ square(s) by _____. We also want to try and accomplish every RAK on this calendar, so check the calendar regularly to see which RAKs are left and try to do them! Let students know that you will be participating, too!



Reflect

7-10 minutes

Because this lesson may extend over a period of hours or days, you will wrap it up on or just after the final deadline that you set. When you are ready to wrap up, though, consider going through the following prompts with students:

- Display the master calendar and discuss what RAKs students did. Note if there were any that were accomplished most and/or least (or any that students didn't try at all, as the goal was to do them all at least once). Ask students to share their experiences or if one RAK was easier to complete than another, etc.
- How did you feel when you completed your RAK(s)?
- Were there any instances where someone recognized you for your RAK? (Common recognitions might include a “thank you” or a smile or another comment.)
- How can you continue performing RAKs even after school is out and you are at home or in other environments for the summer? What are some RAK ideas for home and in the community? Adjust this last prompt if your school does not have a traditional “summer break” and will be in session.



Extension Ideas

- As some of the RAKs on the calendar involve specific props (like painting a peace or kindness rock or writing a thank you note), you might consider having a “kindness station” in the classroom with some of these props or supplies to fulfill the RAK. Students can visit the kindness station during downtime or if they finish their work early, etc. It could be a reward for staying on task and having extra time.
- Create your own RAK calendar as a class with as many squares as students and let them each develop a RAK to add to the calendar.



DESIGNATED BY CASEL
AS A RECOMMENDED
PROGRAM FOR SOCIAL
AND EMOTIONAL
LEARNING.

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) has been reviewing evidence-based SEL programs since 2003. Kindness in the Classroom® meets CASEL's SElect Program and is included in the CASEL Guide to Effective Social and Emotional Learning Programs.

Kindness in the Classroom® met or exceeded all of CASEL's criteria for high-quality SEL programming. Kindness in the Classroom® received CASEL's highest designation for high-quality SEL programming.

<https://casel.org/guide/kindness-in-the-classroom/>

30 Random Acts of Kindness Ideas for Students

On the Playground	In the Hallway	In the Classroom	Toward Adults	Toward Other Kids
Pick up litter and put it in the trash.	Smile and say hello to someone new.	Make an encouraging note for someone in your class.	Help the cafeteria workers wipe the tables.	Donate the clothes you've outgrown to your school's clothes bank.
Give up your swing to someone who is waiting.	Let someone go ahead of you in the water fountain line.	Give your good behavior prize to someone who deserves it, but didn't win.	Write a thank-you note to your gym teacher for teaching you how to stay healthy.	Tell another student 'nice job' in class or on the playground.
Invite someone playing alone to join your game.	Pick up something that has fallen off the wall and return it to a teacher.	Partner with someone who usually has trouble finding one.	Pick up papers you see in the building so the custodian doesn't have to.	Bring an extra lunch dessert from home and share it with someone.
Let someone go ahead of you down the slide.	Let someone who had to leave for something get back in line in front of you.	Tell someone how much you like their new haircut, back pack, or shoes.	Smile and show parents the way to the office.	Help another student carry a heavy book bag to their classroom.
Help put the playground balls away when the bell rings.	Help someone who has dropped their books or papers.	Straighten up the classroom library.	Tell other teachers how nice they look.	Make friends with the new kid at school.
Write a positive message on a rock and hide it for someone to find later.	Leave a positive sticky note to brighten someone's day!	Leave a nice note for your teacher.	Put a kindness card in a returning library book for the librarian to find.	Paint a kindness rock for a friend.