



GeoCivics Lesson: Kindness as Civic Action

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Teacher(s): David Sweeney	Lesson Title: Kindness as a Civic Action	Grade Level: 4th Grade
Notes: This lesson could take multiple days to complete.		
Pre-existing Knowledge: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students should have a basic understanding of what kindness means. ● Students should be able to participate in class discussions respectfully. ● Students should have experiences that can be shared in class. 		
Overview of Content: Being kind as a civic action involves actively practicing empathy, respect, and generosity in ways that contribute positively to the community and society at large. It goes beyond mere politeness, aiming to create a supportive and inclusive environment where everyone feels valued and respected		
Purpose: <i>What will students learn?</i> Teaching students to be kind through civic action involves integrating kindness into educational activities, fostering a culture of empathy and respect, and providing opportunities for practical application.		
National & State Social Studies Standard(s): Arizona: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Disciplinary Skills and Processes: C2: Citizens have individual rights, roles, and responsibilities ● SS04-S3C4-02 - Identify traits of character (e.g., responsibility, respect, perseverance, loyalty, integrity, involvement, justice and tolerance) that are important to the preservation and improvement of democracy. National: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Theme 4 Individual Development and Identity: Given the nature of individual development within social and cultural contexts, this exploration focuses on understanding the factors that influence 		

how people learn, perceive, and grow. Students will hone their personal skills, collaborate with peers, and develop their roles within society.

- **Theme 10: Civic Ideals and Practices:** Understanding the principles and values that guide democratic societies, such as justice, equality, and responsibility. By engaging in civic activities, students will learn the importance of active participation and their role in shaping public life. Emphasizing kindness, they will foster empathy, respect, and collaboration, building a more inclusive and compassionate community.

National & State Geography Standard(s):

Arizona:

- **Disciplinary Skills and Processes:** G2: Human-environment interactions are essential aspects of human life in all societies.

National:

- **Standard 4:** The Physical and Human Characteristics of Places: emphasizes understanding the distinct physical and human characteristics that define places and influence how people interact within these spaces.

ELA Standards: (To teach/review and support emergent multilinguals (EMLs) English language development):

- **4.SL.1.d** - Review the key ideas expressed and explain their own ideas and understanding based on the discussion.
- **III.LS.2.B-3** - expressing oneself and responding to others' needs and emotions in complete sentences.
- **III.LS.2.B-5** - asking and responding to academic questions (who, what, where, when, why, how) using complete sentences (e.g., making comparisons and describing events, etc.) with instructional support.

ISTE Teacher and/or Student Standard:

- N/A

Language Functions: (What language function(s) can be embedded in lesson discussions to build deeper understanding while supporting language development?)

- Discuss, describe, explain, share

Culturally Responsive Lesson Strategies: (See Rubric below. What strategies will you include in your instructions to make lesson/assignments more culturally responsive?)

- Voice, Connection, Social Justice

Objective(s):

- SWBAT: describe the importance of kindness and empathy in building a positive community.
- SWBAT: describe how kindness is part of civic action and engagement.
- SWBAT: actively participate in group discussions by contributing relevant information and ideas.
- SWBAT: accurately describe what kindness is and provide examples of kind actions.
- SWBAT: discuss the societal benefits of promoting kindness and empathy in their interactions with

others.

- SWBAT: collaborate with classmates to brainstorm and implement inclusive acts of kindness that support all learners in the classroom.
- SWBAT: share what we learned with other classrooms to help foster change across the campus.

SIOP

SIOP Elements		
Preparation	Scaffolding	Grouping Option
Adapting content Linking to background Linking to past learning Strategies used	Modeling Guided practice Independent practice Comprehensible input	Whole class Small groups Partners Independent
Integrating Processes	Application	Assessment
Reading Writing Speaking Listening	Hands-On Meaningful Linked to objectives Promotes engagement	Individual Group Written Oral

Evidence of Mastery (Measurable):

- **Formative** - The teacher will use observations, quick checks, and class discussions to assess student learning and understanding.
- **Summative** - Students will choose a writing prompt from the following: *Describe an act of kindness you performed this week. How did it make you feel to be kind to someone else? How can you continue to practice kindness in your daily life?* Students will explain in detail how they were successful in using kindness as a civic action and how they can share kindness around our campus. Students will also create a poster reflecting their learning about kindness. **Rubric included below.**

Key vocabulary:


- **Civic action:** a form of citizenship practice consisting mainly of collective initiatives aimed at implementing rights, taking care of common goods, or empowering citizens.
- **Kindness:** Being friendly, generous, and considerate towards others.
- **Empathy:** The ability to understand and share the feelings of another person.
- **Respect:** Treating others with kindness and consideration, acknowledging their worth and dignity.

Materials:

- [Kindness Video](#)
- [What is Civic Engagement](#) video
- Pencils, notebooks
- Kindness pledge cards - included below
- Kindness Scenario Cards - included below
- Kindness Discussion Cards - included below
- Flow Map - download separately
- Summative Rubric - included below

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Responsibility: Taking ownership of one's actions and their consequences. 	
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Sources:

- Animated video: ©2013 by *A Better World*. Learn more about *A Better World* at www.ABetterWorld.com, <http://www.thenedshow.com/kindness-video.html>
- Animated Video:©2019 by Presidential Precinct www.youtube.com/@PresidentialPrecinct
 What is Civic Engagement?

Engage

Teacher Will:

1. Introduce a video on Being Kind, making sure all students can see and hear it.
2. The teacher and students will create a circle map with the word kind in the center circle. (We will refer back to this map from time to time).
3. Teacher will begin discussion and ask students: *What does it mean to be kind? How does it feel when someone is kind to you? How does it feel when they are not kind to you?*
4. Ask students to share with a shoulder partner something they have done, or have done to them, that would be considered kind, and why. Then have students share out with the class.
5. Have students write words of kindness they have heard in the classroom or school - no names - crumple paper, and throw it into the front of the classroom.
6. Each student picks up one crumpled paper from the front of the room, and then will read and share at their table groups what the paper says.
7. Teacher will create a kindness wall- where students can share acts of kindness they see on the classroom or on campus.

(Preparation: Strategies used) (Scaffolding: Guided Practice)
NOTE: Teacher will use sentence starters to help support students if needed:

- *I remember a time ...*

Student Will:

1. Students watch a video to help supplement the forthcoming discussions.
2. Students will use the circle map to brainstorm as many words that mean kind and share with teacher (save for future use).
3. Students will think about the questions and take part in the discussion.
4. Students will share with a shoulder partner something they have done, or have done to them, that would be considered kind, and why. Then have students share out with the class.

(Preparation: Linking to background) (Integrating Process: Listening, Speaking, Writing)(Grouping: Whole Class, Independent)

5. Students write words of kindness they have heard in the classroom or school (ex helpful or picked up my pencil) - no names - crumple paper and throw it into the front of the classroom.

(Grouping: Whole class) (Processes: Writing) (Application: Hands-on/Promotes engagement)

6. Each student picks up one crumpled paper from the front of the room go back to their table groups and read / share what the paper says.
7. Students will post acts of kindness they see on campus, in the classroom on to the Kindness Wall .

(Grouping: Whole class/Individual) (Integrated Processes: Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking) (Application: Hands-on/Promotes engagement)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>One act of kindness that stands out to me is...</i> ● <i>I think kindness is ...</i> ● <i>When we show kindness...</i> ● <i>One way I show kindness is...</i> <p>(Preparation: Strategies Used) (Scaffolding: Guided Practice)</p>	
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Explore

<p>Teacher Will: IQ 1# <i>In what ways can someone demonstrate kindness?</i></p> <p>NOTE: Put students in small groups 3-5 depending on class size. Students that need support can be placed with a support reader to assist or student with the same language and EL.</p> <p>Task Cards</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hand out discussion task cards for each student. 2. Students will do Ask - Ask - Switch. 3. Students will stand up, hand up, pair up. Student A will read their card - student B will respond. Then student B will read their card and student A will respond. 4. When finished, they will switch cards and find a new partner. <p>(Preparation: Strategies used) (Scaffolding: Guided Practice)</p> <p>Scenario Cards</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Provide scenario cards, students pick a scenario and prepare a short role play to show how they would show kindness in that situation. 6. Students will share their thoughts on each presented act. 7. Students will offer their thoughts on the different ways of being kind in school can affect social change. 8. Discuss as a class - <i>what act of kindness was shown? How did it affect the person receiving</i> 	<p>Student Will:</p> <p>Task Cards</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students receive Task cards. 2. Students will stand up, hand up, pair up. 3. Student A will read their card - student B will respond. Then student B will read their card and student A will respond. 4. When finished, they will switch cards and find a new partner. <p>(Grouping: Whole class/Partners) (Integrated Processes: Reading, Listening, Speaking) (Application: Hands-on, Promotes engagement, meaningful)</p> <p>Scenario Cards</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Students pick a scenario and prepare a short role play to show how they would show kindness in that situation. 6. Students will share their thoughts on each presented act. 7. Students will offer their thoughts on different ways of being kind in school can affect social change. 8. Students participate in discussion. <p>(Grouping: Whole class/Small Group) (Integrated Processes: Reading, Listening, Speaking)</p>
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<p><i>the kindness? How did it affect the person giving the kindness?</i></p> <p>(Preparation: Strategies used) (Scaffolding: Guided Practice)</p> <p>NOTE: Teacher creates word wall to support unknown words in the presentation. The teacher will continue to have sentence stems on board for student interaction:</p> <p><i>I think/Believe...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>in my opinion...</i> ● <i>Based on my experience...</i> ● <i>I agree with _____ that...</i> ● <i>I disagree with you because...</i> <p>(Preparation: Strategies Used) (Scaffolding: Guided Practice)</p>	<p>(Application: Hands-on/Promotes engagement, Meaningful)</p>
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Explain - Formative Assessment

<p>Teacher Will:</p> <p>NOTE: The teacher will use observations, quick checks, and class discussions to assess student learning and understanding.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss what students learned during the role-playing activity and/or the scenarios 2. Ask: <i>How did the scenarios help you with role-playing? What did you enjoy about the role-playing activity? How did it feel to act out an act of kindness? Why is it important to be kind to others?</i> 3. Students will collaborate to create a kindness definition or statement. 	<p>Student Will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will share and discuss how role playing assisted in their understanding of kindness. 2. Respond to teacher questions. 3. Students will collaborate to create a kindness definition or statement. <p>(Grouping: Whole Class)(Application: Linked to activities)(Assessment: Oral, Individual)(Ap.</p>
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Elaborate

<p>Teacher Will: IQ #2: How does kindness relate to civic action?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss with students that kindness is a big part of civic action. We've discussed things we believe are acts of kindness, but <i>what other types of civic actions can you think of? Can you think of any issue you have come across at school, or in your community that you would like to help with?</i> Write ideas on whiteboard during the conversation. If needed, prompt students with suggestions such as a food or clothing drive, recycling, cleaning up campus or a neighborhood park, promoting kindness throughout their school community, etc. Ask: how do you think you could go about creating a civic activity? Show video about Civic Engagement to help students support their thinking and ideas. video - What is Civic Engagement Divide class into four-five groups and have each group discuss one specific civic action. <i>Provide student choice if possible.</i> <p>(NOTE) Hand out Flow Map to support student collaboration</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> In their groups, students collaborate on how they would go about setting up their chosen civic action; who would they need to talk to, how could they collect resources, where could they hold their event(s), etc. Student groups share out their civic actions, the kindness that it demonstrates, and what community benefits they believe will occur following their actions. 	<p>Student Will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in whole group discussion. Watch video What is Civic Engagement Each group selects a civic action to explore. <p>(Grouping: Whole class/small group) (Integrated Processes: Listening, Speaking) (Application: Hands-on, Promotes engagement, Linked to Objectives)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Students will work with their FLOW map to organize and collaborate. In groups, students discuss their specific civic action and collaborate on how they would go about setting up their chosen civic action: who would they need to talk to, how could they collect resources, where could they hold their event(s), etc. Student groups share their civic actions, the kindness that it demonstrates, and what community benefits they believe will occur following their actions. <p>(Preparation: Adapting Content)(Grouping:/small Group) (Integrated Processes: Writing, Reading Listening, Speaking)</p>
<p>Evaluate - Summative Assessment</p>	
<p>Teacher Will:</p> <p>WRITING - PART 1 of Summative Using a prompt of their choosing, students write a reflection about what they learned about kindness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Describe an act of kindness you performed this week.</i> 	<p>Student Will:</p> <p>WRITING Using a prompt of their choosing, students write a reflection about what they learned about kindness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Describe an act of kindness you performed this week.</i>

- *How did it make you feel to be kind to someone else?*
- *How can you continue to practice kindness in your daily life?*

POSTERS & PLEDGE CARDS - PART 2 of Summative

Hand out poster paper (11 x 17) and Pledge cards to each student.

1. Students will create a poster that reflects what they wrote in their essay using pictures and words. Students will also complete a pledge card.
2. Each student will hold up their poster and explain what it means personally to be kind and why.
3. Hang posters and pledges in front of the classroom and outside to promote other acts of kindness.

- *How did it make you feel to be kind to someone else?*
- *How can you continue to practice kindness in your daily life?*

(Preparation: linked to past learning) (Assessment: Individual) (Integrating Processes: Writing)

Grouping:Individual)

POSTERS & PLEDGE CARDS

1. Students each create a poster that reflects what they wrote in their essay using pictures and words. Students will also complete a pledge card.
2. Each student will hold up their poster and explain what it means personally to be kind and why.

(Preparation: linked to past learning)(Assessment: Individual) (Integrating Processes: Speaking,

listening, Writing) Grouping:Individual)

Extensions:

- This activity can be used by all classrooms.
- Have a Kindness Door competition.
- Create poems and share them on morning announcements.
- Share acts of Kindness in the school newspaper.
- Work with Administration/ Student Council? PTO to help support the Civic Actions

Kindness Pledge Cards

Here are four different kindness pledge cards for students. Each card has blanks for students to personalize their pledges.

<p>I, _____, pledge to show kindness every day by helping my classmates, saying kind words and sharing my things.</p> <p>Signed: _____</p> <p>Date: _____</p>	<p>I, _____, promise to make our classroom a kinder place by including others in activities, listening carefully when someone is talking, and offering help when I see someone in need.</p> <p>Signed: _____</p> <p>Date: _____</p>
<p>I, _____, commit to spreading kindness by: being respectful to everyone, giving compliments to others, and being patient and understanding.</p> <p>Signed: _____</p> <p>Date: _____</p>	<p>I, _____, vow to make others feel welcome, show empathy towards my classmates, and be a good friend.</p> <p>Signed: _____</p> <p>Date: _____</p>

Kindness Scenario Cards

Kindness Scenario 1

A group of students are playing tag on the playground and won't let you join in.

What act of kindness could you use in this situation?

Kindness Scenario 2

Two of your friends are arguing and refusing to speak to each other.

What act of kindness could you use in this situation?

Kindness Scenario 3

You are working on your assignment with several other students and one of them calls you a mean name because you don't understand the assignment.

What act of kindness could you use in this situation?

Kindness Scenario 4

You are walking outside, and a group of kids makes fun of you because you tripped.

What act of kindness could you use in this situation?

Kindness Scenario 5

Your brother is always slow to get ready for school and it makes you late for school which makes you upset.

What act of kindness could you use in this situation?

Kindness Scenario 6

Your friend looks upset and is sitting alone during lunchtime.

What act of kindness could you use in this situation?

Kindness Scenario 7

You witness a classmate being bullied by a group of students in the hallway.

What act of kindness could you use in this situation?

Kindness Scenario 8

A new student joins your class. They seem shy and unsure of how to make friends.

What act of kindness could you use in this situation?

Instructions for Printing and Using Task Cards:

- Print the task cards on cardstock for durability.
- Cut along the dotted lines to separate the task cards.
- Place them in a box or pouch for easy access during discussions or as prompts for journaling and reflection activities.
- Encourage students to pick a card at random or select one that interests them, then discuss their thoughts and responses with their peers.

These task cards are designed to stimulate meaningful conversations about kindness, empathy, and the importance of positive actions in various contexts.

Set 1: Everyday Acts of Kindness	Set 2: Kindness in the Community
1. Share an example of a time someone's small act of kindness made a big difference in your day.	11. Why is it important to be kind to neighbors and people in your community?
2. How can holding the door open for someone be an act of kindness? Why is it important?	12. How can you help a new student feel welcome at your school?
3. Discuss ways you can show kindness to your classmates during school hours.	13. Why is it important to show kindness to people who are different from us?
4. Why is it important to be kind to people we don't know well?	14. Share an example of a community service project that demonstrates kindness.
5. What are some kind things you can do for your family at home?	15. How can cleaning up litter in your neighborhood be an act of kindness?
6. How does helping someone who is struggling with their schoolwork demonstrate kindness?	16. Discuss ways to show kindness to elderly people in your community.
7. Why do you think saying "thank you" is an act of kindness?	17. Why is it important for businesses to show kindness to their customers?
8. Describe a time when you received unexpected kindness from someone. How did it make you feel?	18. How can you support local charities and organizations through acts of kindness?
9. How can you show kindness to animals and pets?	19. Share ideas for spreading kindness during holidays and special occasions.
10. Discuss the difference between being kind and being polite.	20. Discuss the impact of random acts of kindness on the community.
Set 3: Kindness Towards Yourself	**Set 4: Kindness and Empathy**
21. Why is it important to be kind to yourself?	31. Discuss how empathy plays a role in acts of kindness.

22. How can practicing self-care be an act of kindness towards yourself?	32. How can listening actively be an act of kindness?
23. Discuss ways to practice self-compassion when facing challenges.	33. Why is it important to consider other people's feelings when being kind?
24. Why is it important to forgive yourself for mistakes?	34. Share an example of a time when you showed empathy through an act of kindness.
25. How does positive self-talk demonstrate kindness towards yourself?	35. How can you show kindness to someone who is going through a difficult time?
26. Share an example of a time when someone's words of encouragement were kind to you.	36. Discuss the importance of putting yourself in someone else's shoes when showing kindness.
27. Why is it important to set boundaries as an act of kindness towards yourself?	37. Why is it important to practice kindness even when it's challenging?
28. Discuss the connection between kindness towards yourself and overall well-being.	38. Share ideas for resolving conflicts peacefully and with kindness.
29. How can you prioritize self-kindness in your daily routines?	39. How can kindness promote a sense of belonging and inclusivity?
30. What are some ways to practice gratitude towards yourself?	40. Discuss the role of kindness in building positive relationships with others.

Summative Assessment Rubric

Criteria	Highly Proficient/ Exceeds	Proficient/Meets	Partially Proficient/ Approaches expectations	Minimally Proficient/ Fails to meet Expectations
Content	Thorough and insightful reflection on all prompts. Demonstrates a deep understanding of kindness.	Addresses all prompts with clear and relevant responses. Shows a good understanding of kindness.	Addresses most prompts. Responses are mostly relevant but may lack depth.	Addresses few prompts. Responses are incomplete or lack relevance.
Clarity and detail	Responses are detailed and well-explained. Provides specific examples of kindness.	Responses are clear and mostly detailed. Provides some examples of kindness.	Responses are somewhat clear but may lack detail or specific examples.	Responses are unclear and lack detail. Few or no specific examples are provided.
Personal reflection	Deep personal reflection. Describes personal experiences and feelings about kindness thoroughly.	Good personal reflection. Describes personal experiences and feelings about kindness adequately.	Some personal reflection. Describes personal experiences and feelings but may be superficial.	Little to no personal reflection. Does not adequately describe personal experiences or feelings.
organization	Well-organized responses. Ideas flow logically and coherently.	Organized responses. Ideas are mostly logical and coherent.	Some organization. Ideas may be somewhat disjointed or unclear.	Poorly organized. Ideas are disjointed and hard to follow.
Grammar and Mechanics	Virtually no errors in grammar, spelling, or punctuation. Writing is clear and concise.	Few errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Errors do not detract from clarity.	Some errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation. Errors occasionally detract from clarity.	Numerous errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Errors significantly detract from clarity.

