

Community Kindness TOP TEN

This lesson on Courage focuses on courage within our own communities by exploring ways to be kind to others, nature, and our community as a whole through personal and communal actions. Students will create a Top Ten list of ways to be kind within the community.

Courage Sub-Concepts

Kindness

Lesson Timeframe

45 minutes

Required Materials

- "I Walk with Vanessa" by Kerascoët
- Index cards - one for each student
- 4-6 poster boards or large construction paper (one needed for each small group)
- Basic art supplies

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.

Lesson Objective

Students will be able to:

- Identify ways to be kind to the community they reside in.
- Explain how it takes courage to affect change in our community.

Teacher Connection/Self-Care

The end of the year can be hard- try a kindness tune up to keep spirits up. Start each school day with one specific gratitude for class. Open the floor for others to pipe in as well.

Tips for Diverse Learners

- Predetermine your groups of 4-6 students based on the strengths of each student.
- Assign different roles within the group based on needs (scribe, presenter, timekeeper, etc.).

Share



5-7 minutes

Let's play a game to highlight ways we have been courageous when others have said mean or hurtful things. Don't worry: I will not be asking you to share yours with others.

- Give each student an index card.
- Have each person write or draw one time they have used courage when someone has been mean or hurtful. Remind them to NOT put their name on their card. No one will know who wrote what.
- Place all the index cards in a hat or basket.
- Have students lay their heads on their desks to listen.
- Draw each one out and read it aloud. Remind the students that no one should try to guess who wrote what (or to identify themselves).
- If students try to guess, or start to self identify, remind them that the goal of the game is to highlight ALL the different ways we can use courage and kindness in the face of anger and negativity.



Inspire

Courage in our Community

10-15 min

Kindness to Environment: Our school is a terrific place to learn each day. Why? Because each one of us does our part to keep it safe, happy, and welcoming every day. Your courageous choice to show kindness in how you care for the school by treating our materials kindly, respecting our space, and being safe on the playground are all ways that help make our school the wonderful learning environment we have today! This same courage is needed in our community as well. We all want our community to be safe, happy, and welcoming to every single person, whether they are just stopping by or moving in next door! Sometimes when our community is NOT kind and welcoming for everyone, we need to use courage to push for positive changes that are needed to increase our kindness!

Read Aloud: "I Walk with Vanessa" by Kerascoët

Read Aloud Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bcwDXiK1QIs> (5 min)

This story explores the power of being kind when someone is being bullied. The girl in the story doesn't even have to speak to help and yet she inspires others to join her. This story has minimal words, so students will have to pay special attention to the pictures to track the story.

After watching/reading the book aloud, use the questions below to guide a group discussion:

- How does the bully treat Vanessa?
- What do the other children do at first?
- How does the girl help Vanessa?
- How does walking with Vanessa end the bullying?
- How can we use kind choices to make a positive impact on our own community?



Empower

20 minutes

To explore courage and kindness within the community, students will work in small groups to create a TOP TEN list of ways to show kindness within the community.

Let's think back to the story we just read. There were lots of examples of ways to harm and even destroy our community! It's now time to turn things around and come up with ways to be kind in our community. It takes courage to be the first to do something different, even when that something is kind and beautiful. However, if we create a list today, we can share it with the entire school and even the rest of the community. If our actions are able to inspire even just one person per student, we will have included 30 more kind acts within our community. The great thing about kindness is that it is courageous!

As you are working in your small groups, think about these three questions:

- How can I be kind to nature?
- How can I be kind to others, whether a child or an adult?
- How can I be kind to people that look, act, or "seem" different than me?

RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS FOUNDATION®

Break the class up into groups of 4-6. Provide the following rules:

- Each student must provide at least one of the examples on the Top Ten list.
- Students are encouraged to decorate their poster.
- One student can be the scribe if desired.
- 1-2 students must be the designated presenters. These cannot be the same students that wrote the list.

Allow 10 minutes for each group to create their list. Have each group present their list at the end of the lesson.



Reflect

5-10 minutes

It takes courage to start something new and invite others to join you. Sometimes we notice areas that need to be changed, but we are afraid to speak up. Use courage to stand up for what you believe in! Work with others and start small. Every little step for change builds on top of itself. No person is too small to help make a difference. All it takes is a little courage to get started!



Extension Ideas

- If desired, go through the Top Ten lists and highlight the similarities in each. Create a “Class Top Ten” and hang it up around town (library, grocery store, post office, etc.) to inspire others to take courage to be kind to the community as well!
- At Home: Using the same format, have families create their own Top Ten list for their homes. How can you be kind to the people and things in your home? Review the answers aloud in class!



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/>